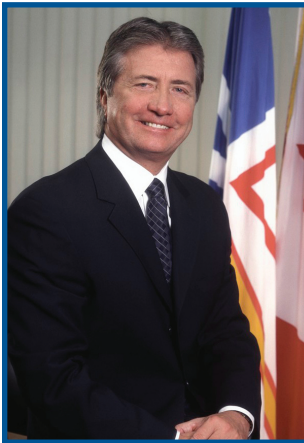


Office of the Executive Council

**ACTIVITY PLAN
2008 - 2011**



MESSAGE FROM THE PREMIER



I am pleased to present the 2008-2011 activity plan for the Office of the Executive Council (the OEC). It is the product of a consultation process with staff of the Office of the Executive Council, and I would like to thank all involved for their contributions.

The Office of the Executive Council carries out a vital role through its support to the Premier and Cabinet, government departments and the Lieutenant Governor. The activities and objectives outlined in this plan are developed with a view to maintaining excellent service delivery standards for our clients, embracing our organizational values, and continuing to fulfill our mandate.

The Office of the Executive Council is considered a Category 3 Government Entity under the *Transparency and Accountability Act*. It must, therefore, prepare an activity plan that sets a clear direction for the activities of the OEC, taking into consideration the strategic directions of government (see Appendix A), its legal mandate and current budget. As Premier, I am accountable for the preparation of this plan and for the achievement of its goals and objectives.

Our government has worked diligently over the course of our mandate, to improve the social and economic well being of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. We have made tremendous progress and we look forward to continuing our success in the years ahead.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Danny Williams". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end of the name.

Honourable Danny Williams, QC
Premier

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Message from the Premier.....	i
Introduction	1
Plan at a Glance.....	2
Overview	4
Mandate	5
Lines of Business.....	6
1. Support to the Premier, Cabinet and the Public Service	6
2. Support to the Lieutenant Governor and Other Dignitaries.....	7
Values	8
Primary Clients.....	9
Vision	9
Mission.....	10
Issues.....	11
Issue 1: Accountability.....	12
Issue 2: Coordination.....	14
Issue 3: Capacity Enhancement	16
Appendix A - Strategic Directions.....	18

INTRODUCTION

The Premier serves as the President of the Executive Council of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador. As the Premier's department, the Office of the Executive Council (OEC) combined with the role of the Clerk of the Executive Council play a critical role in supporting the effective operation of government - both the Cabinet operations and public service.

Governments are elected based on platform documents and the commitments they make to the people of the province. In its platform document, government has identified a very clear agenda that includes a number of strategic action plans which cross departmental, public service and provincial boundaries and are responsive to increasingly complex issues faced by the province. If government is to achieve the intended results for the people of the province, then effective visioning, planning, coordination, alignment and leadership is required.

The first section of the platform document, and perhaps most relevant to the OEC, is Strong Governance. The lines of business for the OEC are included on page six of this document, but in short, the OEC has four key roles which are: leadership, coordination, and the provision of advice and support. Many of the activities of the OEC focus on ensuring informed, effective decision-making which supports the strategic priorities of the government and ultimately contributes to government's efforts to meet its overall agenda.

The Office of the Executive Council provides support to the Premier, and to Cabinet and its committees including the Economic Policy and Social Policy Committees, the Planning and Priorities Committee, and any Special Committees of Cabinet. The OEC also coordinates policy, communication, and planning activities government-wide.

The 2008-2011 planning cycle marks an opportunity for the OEC to build upon previously identified priority action areas. In particular, the next three years will be focused on further developing planning and accountability, coordination and capacity building initiatives.

The priorities of the Office of the Executive Council for fiscal years ending March 31, 2009, 2010 and 2011 are outlined herein. Using the measures and indicators specified, each year annual performance reports will be presented in the House of Assembly to identify the OEC's progress on achieving the goals and objectives set out in this activity plan.

The Office of the Executive Council comprises the following central agencies:

- The Office of the Clerk of the Executive Council and Cabinet Secretariat
- The Lieutenant Governor's Establishment
- Communications and Consultation Branch
- Intergovernmental Affairs Secretariat
- Office of the Chief Information Officer
- Protocol Office
- Rural Secretariat
- Transparency and Accountability Office
- Women's Policy Office
- Public Service Secretariat

For the purpose of this activity plan, the Office of the Executive Council includes the Office of the Clerk of the Executive Council and Cabinet Secretariat, the Lieutenant Governor's Establishment, the Transparency and Accountability Office, the Communications and Consultation Branch, the Protocol Office, the Strategic Human Resource Management Office, and Financial Administration. The remaining central agencies will have developed their own performance plans to independently inform the public about their respective priorities. They will also provide separate annual performance reports detailing their progress.

PLAN AT A GLANCE

VISION

The vision of the Office of the Executive Council is of a responsive Provincial Government with coordinated and effective decision-making and communication processes.

MISSION

By 2011, the Office of the Executive Council will have improved the capacity of the public service to provide advice to government in the support of good decision-making and implementation of government's agenda.

	ACCOUNTABILITY	COORDINATION	CAPACITY ENHANCEMENT
PRIORITY GOALS	By 2011, the Office of the Executive Council will have supported enhanced performance-based planning and reporting efforts within government.	By 2011, the Office of the Executive Council will have supported government departments and agencies in the advancement of government's agenda.	By 2011, the Office of the Executive Council will have supported capacity building enhancements throughout government.
2009 OBJECTIVE	Entities are supported in successfully meeting the 2008-09 planning and reporting requirements of the <i>Transparency and Accountability Act</i> .	Coordination efforts that are designed to respond to the needs of government departments are enhanced.	New capacity building initiatives are assessed and identified.
2010 OBJECTIVE	Policy and procedural documentation is developed / updated	Opportunities to further improve processes for coordination are identified.	Leadership provided and mechanisms developed to address opportunities for capacity growth.
2011 OBJECTIVE	Performance measurement practices and the development of plans for the next planning cycle are supported.	Processes for coordination to support policy development and ensure decision-makers have the best possible information on which to make decisions are improved.	Further leadership provided and priority mechanisms implemented for government-wide initiatives which support capacity building in the public service.

OVERVIEW

The priorities identified within this multi-year performance-based plan are applicable to the Office of the Clerk of the Executive Council and Cabinet Secretariat, Government House, the Communications and Consultation Branch, the Protocol Office and the Transparency and Accountability Office. These central agencies work collaboratively to support government's agenda and activities, the Lieutenant Governor, and to advise on protocol matters.

Within the Office of the Executive Council, corporate services activities are provided by the Strategic Human Resource Management and Financial Administration Divisions. The Strategic Human Resource Management Division provides human resource management advisory and consultative services to the Office of the Executive Council. The divisional team plans, develops and delivers programs, policies and services in the areas of employee relations, human resource planning, integrated disability management and organization and development.

The Financial Administration Division provides financial management and advisory services to various departments/divisions within the corporate structure. Responsibilities include the provision of all financial, accounting, purchasing, financial reporting, budgeting, budget monitoring and general operations servicing the designated departments, as well as ensuring that all employees are informed of departmental and general government guidelines and procedures relating to the above services.

Staff and Budget:

In delivering its mandate, the Office of the Executive Council has a staff complement of (approximately 72% female and 28% male) and an estimated budget of \$6,845,100 (Estimates, 2008/09).

Central Agency	Staff Complement	Annual Budget
The Office of the Executive Council and Cabinet Secretariat	26	\$3,358,400
Lieutenant Governor's Establishment	11	\$666,500
Communications and Consultation Branch	10	\$898,500
Financial Administration and Strategic Human Resource Management	22	\$1,659,700
Protocol Office	3	\$262,000
TOTAL	72	\$6,845,100

MANDATE

The mandate of the Office of the Executive Council is derived from government direction and includes the following:

- Support the Premier and the work of Cabinet and its committees
 - » Coordinate and support the Cabinet decision-making process
 - » Coordinate advice and initiatives on matters related to economic policy, social policy, and government operations
 - » Coordinate strategic/business/activity and operational planning within government
 - » Coordinate the evaluation of program effectiveness and advise on priorities for the achievement of government objectives
- Support the role of the Lieutenant Governor
- Advise on protocol matters
- Provide strategic communications, advice and support to the Premier, Cabinet, the Office of the Executive Council, and coordinate government-wide communications

Legislative Framework:

The mandate of the Office of the Executive Council is informed by the following legislation:

LEGISLATIVE RESPONSIBILITY	
<i>Bravery Award Act</i>	<i>Order of Newfoundland and Labrador Act</i>
<i>Conflict of Interest Act, 1995</i>	<i>Parliamentary Assistant Act</i>
<i>Executive Council Act</i>	<i>Parliamentary Secretaries Act</i>
<i>Financial Administration Act</i>	<i>Public Employees Act</i>
<i>Holocaust Memorial Day Act</i>	<i>Volunteer Service Medal Act</i>
<i>Newfoundland and Labrador Act</i>	<i>Volunteer War Service Medal Act, 1993</i>

OTHER LEGISLATION THAT INFLUENCES THE WORK OF THE OFFICE	
<i>Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act</i>	<i>Transparency and Accountability Act</i>

LINES OF BUSINESS

In delivering its mandate, the Office of the Executive Council provides the following lines of business:

1. **Support to the Premier, Cabinet and the Public Service:**

Premier and Cabinet

The OEC is the agency of the public service which provides support to the Premier in his role of setting overall government policy and coordinating initiatives brought forward by ministers. The OEC is also the primary support for the Cabinet and its committees. This role incorporates the preparation of briefing materials, the coordination and facilitation of Cabinet meetings, and the maintenance of Cabinet records.

Coordination

The OEC is responsible for coordinating policy activities, the development of responses to government level issues, and as required, the implementation of strategic directions related to horizontal initiatives. Through various coordination efforts, staff ensure consistency in the application of government policies and procedures.

Planning and Reporting

The OEC provides facilitative and supportive services to provincial government departments and public bodies in the development of multi-year performance-based plans. The Office also reviews multi-year performance-based plans and annual performance reports to provide feedback on the degree to which these documents comply with the *Transparency and Accountability Act* and to ensure consistency with government's overall agenda.

Organizational Development

The OEC is responsible for ensuring that the public service has the capacity and readiness to implement directions of government. This is carried out by focusing on priority areas such as enhanced policy capacity within government, the effective implementation of government's Human Resource Management Strategy, recognition of excellence, and executive development. Executive development includes, but is not limited to, secondment and various professional development activities in areas such as governance, planning and reporting, and policy analysis.

Communications and Consultation

Strategic communications advice and support are provided to the Premier and Cabinet. The OEC also manages government's corporate communications function and coordinates communications activities across government. This role includes developing communications and consultation policy and procedures, advising on communications and consultation planning, providing multimedia communications support, and managing information collection and distribution services (including media monitoring, public opinion research and news release distribution).

2. Support to the Lieutenant Governor and Other Dignitaries

The OEC provides executive, administrative, and household support to the Lieutenant Governor. It also advises government members and departments on official matters of provincial, national and international protocol and organizes state and ceremonial events. The OEC organizes itineraries for visiting diplomats, heads of state, senior government representatives and other visitors, and coordinates flag and regalia ceremonies and protocols for local and national events.

VALUES

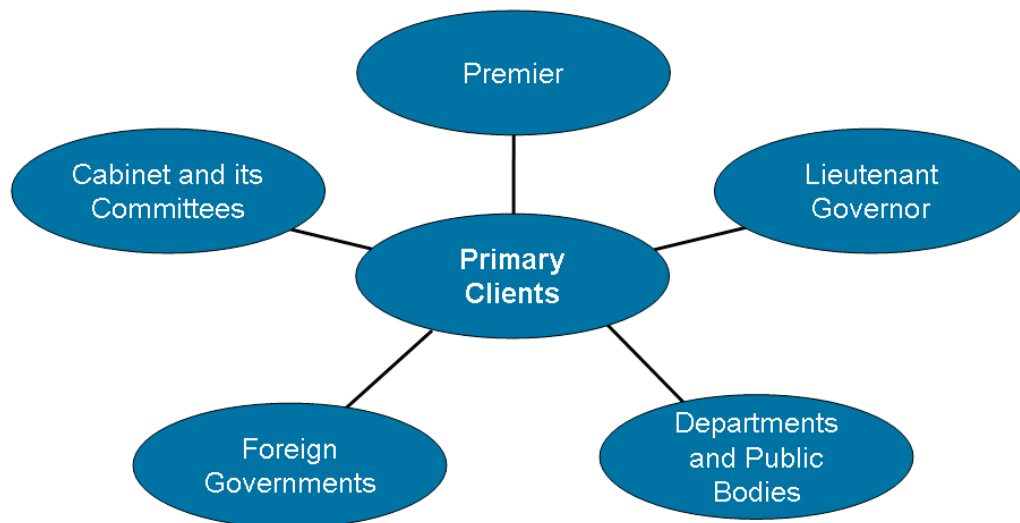
The Office of the Executive Council directly supports the Cabinet decision-making process and facilitates effective government policy development and service delivery processes. In fulfilling these responsibilities, the OEC fosters an organizational culture based on respect for the public and the democratic process. Professional integrity and impartiality of the OEC ensures the provision of timely, accurate, and comprehensive policy advice and information.

The character of the OEC is promoted and explained through the core values identified below. The following actions flow from the value statements and will guide the OEC during the subsequent three years:

Core Values	Strategic Values
Accountability	Each individual takes responsibility for their actions while adhering to deadlines, schedules, and timeframes.
Integrity	Each individual ensures the provision of accurate, unbiased advice and adheres to the confidentiality associated with the OEC.
Judgment	Each individual uses knowledge of policies, practices, and client needs as a foundation for all activities.
Leadership	Each individual carries out responsibilities and makes decisions to advance the priorities of government.
Respect	Each individual listens to and considers the ideas and opinions of others and works collaboratively to achieve results.
Responsiveness	Each individual exercises readiness to respond to changing priorities and identifies opportunities to address challenges in new ways.

PRIMARY CLIENTS

The Office of the Executive Council defines its primary clients as those individuals, groups and organizations who are the principle beneficiaries of its lines of business. These clients include the following:



VISION

The vision of the Office of the Executive Council is of a responsive Provincial Government with coordinated and effective decision-making and communication processes.

MISSION

The Office of the Executive Council is fundamentally responsible for supporting the decision-making processes of government. As a function of this role, the OEC must ensure that the government has the best advice and information in order to make informed decisions. To this end, our mission is founded upon the need to ensure that the public service is positioned to support effective decision-making.

Mission: By 2011, the Office of the Executive Council will have improved the capacity of the public service to provide advice to government in the support of good decision-making and implementation of government's agenda.

Measure: Improved capacity to support good decision-making and implementation of government's agenda

Indicators:

- Increased policy capacity (including policy development, evaluation, review and analysis)
- Provided leadership for communications and enhanced integration of strategic planning into the management of the public service
- Provided leadership for government's Human Resource Management Strategy in the areas of learning and development; managing human resource supply/demand requirements; managing the human resource function; internal communications; and performance enhancement
- Enhanced information management to support thorough analysis, informed decision-making and implementation

ISSUES

In consideration of government's strategic directions and the mandate and financial resources of the OEC, the following areas have been identified as the key priorities of the Premier for the next three years. The issues addressed in this activity plan are as follows:

1. Accountability
2. Coordination
3. Capacity Enhancement

These three issues were selected based on their critical importance to delivering the OEC's mandate. These issues are inter-related and do not exist in isolation of one another. Enrichment to each of the three will create synergy greater than the individual components.

The goals identified for each issue reflect the results expected in the three-year timeframe while the objectives provide an annual focus. Measures and indicators are provided for both the goal and the first year's objective to assist both the OEC and the public in monitoring and evaluating success.

Issue 1: Accountability

Government has committed to: be accountable and responsive to the citizens of Newfoundland and Labrador; make government more responsible, transparent and accountable; and provide an improved approach to government that is open and responsive to input and interaction.

In 2006, government proclaimed transparency and accountability legislation to provide a standardized legislative framework for accountability activities of government entities. The legislation included a transition provision which gave these entities a limited timeframe to align with the specific requirements of the Act. The Transparency and Accountability Office was established to support entities in meeting these requirements and timelines.

The 2006-08 plan for the Office of the Executive Council included a goal focused on the integration of planning into government entity business practices. At that time, a key target was to ensure that supports were provided to all (150+) government entities to position them to meet the April 1, 2008 transition deadline. Government overall was successful in meeting this deadline. To move forward, it is necessary to ensure that entities are afforded consistent messaging, methods, supports and resources.

Over the 2008-11 period, the office will continue to provide timely advice, encouragement and feedback to all who fall within the requirements of the *Transparency and Accountability Act*, including new entities set up by government. In addition to this role, the office will engage in research, development and documentation activities designed to evolve processes in a way that constantly promote the use of best practices, and to maintain the province's position as a leader in public service performance-based planning and reporting.

In addition to responsibility for the legislation, the OEC frequently exercises a leadership role in accountability activities that span multiple government entities (eg. Ministerial Expense Reimbursement Policies).

Goal 1: By 2011, the Office of the Executive Council will have supported enhanced performance-based planning and reporting efforts within government.

Measure: Enhanced performance-based planning and reporting efforts

Indicators:

- Completed analysis and provided information, advice and feedback on government entity plans and reports
- Completed research and analysis of best practices in public sector planning, performance measurement and reporting
- Customized supports provided to government entities which are responsive to the needs of the entity
- Developed/updated policy and procedural documentation

Objectives:

1. By 2009, the Office of the Executive Council will have supported entities in successfully meeting the 2008-09 planning and reporting requirements of the *Transparency and Accountability Act*.

Measure: Supported entities

Indicators:

- Completed analysis and provided information, advice and feedback on 2008-11 performance-based plans
 - Completed analysis and provided information, advice and feedback on 2007-08 performance-based annual reports
 - Facilitated the tabling (in the House of Assembly) process for plans and reports
 - Supported other planning and reporting processes
2. By 2010, the Office of the Executive Council will have developed/updated policy and procedural documentation for the office.
 3. By 2011, the Office of the Executive Council will have supported performance measurement practices and the development of plans for the next planning cycle.

Issue 2: Coordination - Supporting Coordinated Government Policy, Programs and Services

Policy, program and service delivery requirements are becoming increasingly complex. Issues frequently cross multiple sectors and jurisdictions requiring increased coordination. Elected officials and decision makers require comprehensive and coordinated analysis and advice. This coordination role is entrusted to the OEC to enhance the comprehensiveness of policy, program and service assessment; provide for the consistent application of policy and legislative considerations; and ensure the alignment of individual actions with overall government direction.

To accomplish these objectives, the OEC identifies opportunities for collaboration between government entities; provides advice on how to best deliver government's agenda; establishes a standardized and consistent approach to government planning and reporting activities; supports ongoing reviews of programs; and coordinates emerging initiatives that are not within the specific sphere of an individual department.

Goal 2: By 2011, the Office of the Executive Council will have supported government departments and agencies in the advancement of government's agenda.

Measure: Supported government departments and agencies

Indicators:

- Supported interdepartmental initiatives through:
 - » Leadership role for the establishment of mechanisms to address emerging policy issues
 - » Facilitate and support interdepartmental collaboration on ongoing and arising issues
- Ensured appropriate application of relevant policy lenses in development of government policy and programs
- Supported consistent and standardized planning and reporting processes for government entities
- Increased integration of communications across program and policy development areas

Objectives:

- 2.1 By 2009, the Office of the Executive Council will have enhanced coordination efforts that are designed to respond to the needs of government departments.

Measure: Enhanced coordination efforts

Indicators:

- Coordinated implementation of *Transparency and Accountability Act* requirements
 - Supported development and implementation of horizontal planning initiatives
 - Supported coordination through improvements to internal information management practices
- 2.2 By 2010, the Office of the Executive Council will have identified further opportunities to improve processes for coordination.
- 2.3 By 2011, the Office of the Executive Council will have improved processes for coordination to support policy development and ensure decision-makers have the best possible information on which to make decisions.

Issue 3: Capacity Enhancement

It is in the interest of the public, and in the interest of improved public administration, that government departments and public entities have the capacity to engage fully, and in a meaningful way, in policy development, and results-based planning and reporting to deliver government's agenda. Building this capacity within the organization is critical to positioning the organization to meet future demands.

Capacity building involves an assessment of future demands on the organization; comparison to the current situation; identification of gaps; and development of mechanisms to fill the gaps. To support enhanced capacity, it is necessary to develop a common set of competencies, knowledge and skills which support consistent behaviour.

The Office of the Executive Council coordinates and facilitates the implementation of public policy initiatives, and plays a leadership role in ensuring that government's policy capacity is optimized to facilitate effective decision making and implementation of government's agenda. Therefore, the OEC has a significant role in capacity building initiatives for planning, policy and communications.

In addition, there are other initiatives, particularly in human resources development, to which the Clerk of the Executive Council provides leadership as head of the public service. The intent is to ensure that the public service is ready and capable of implementing government's agenda. Other agencies are involved in this mandate as well, particularly the Public Service Secretariat and the Public Service Commission. Individual departments and agencies are also responsible for human resource planning and development related to their own mandates.

Goal 3: By 2011, the Office of the Executive Council will have supported capacity building enhancements throughout government.

Measure: Supported capacity building enhancements

Indicators:

- Leadership role in the implementation of the corporate human resources strategy
- Leadership role in the streamlining of financial management processes that enhance both strategic planning and accountability practices

- Supported executive search, orientation, mentorship and development activities
- Enhanced government capacity regarding strategic communications
- Supported increased capacity for performance-based planning, monitoring and reporting
- Supported enhanced policy capacity of the public service
- Developed enhanced central agency tools to better meet the needs of departments and central agencies

Objectives:

- 3.1 By 2009, the Office of the Executive Council will have assessed and identified new capacity enhancement initiatives.

Measure: Assessed and identified new capacity enhancement initiatives

Indicators:

- Reviewed organization structures
 - Reviewed work flow processes
 - Identified required development opportunities
 - Enhanced senior management developmental resources
 - Supported the development and monitoring of Executive Development Plans
 - Examined whether central agencies' tools are current, relevant and are supporting the achievement of the intended results
- 3.2 By 2010, the Office of the Executive Council will have developed mechanisms/ provided a leadership role in addressing opportunities for capacity growth.
- 3.3 By 2011, the Office of the Clerk of the Executive Council will have further implemented priority mechanisms/ provided leadership on government wide initiatives which support capacity enhancement in the public service.

APPENDIX A - 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.

Strategic directions define the priorities of government and bring focus to the work of a government entity. By definition, the strategic direction does not encompass the entire mandate of a government entity, but serves to identify government priorities. Therefore, each entity may administer a broader range of programs and activities than are identified in the strategic directions.

The strategic directions related to the Office of the Executive Council are provided below. Each strategic direction is comprised of a number of components, or focus areas. These focus areas will be addressed through the various planning processes of the OEC. As indicated in the table below, some have been addressed in this activity plan while others are addressed in the operational and/or work planning processes.

1. Title: Effective and Efficient Government

Outcome: Improved effectiveness and efficiency of government. This outcome supports the policy direction of government. It requires systemic intervention by the Office of the Executive Council in the following areas:

Strategic Direction Components	Applicable to other entities reporting to the Minister	This component is addressed...		
		In the Entity's Activity Plan	In the Entity's Operational Plan	In the entity's Branch/ Divisional Work Plans
On-going improvement of good governance including program effectiveness and efficiency			✓	
Facilitate and communicate the advancement of government priorities		✓		

2. Title: Transparency and Accountability

Outcome: Improved transparency and accountability of government entities. This outcome supports the policy direction of government. It requires systemic intervention by the Office of the Executive Council in the following areas:

Strategic Direction Components	Applicable to other entities reporting to the Minister	This component is addressed...		
		in the Entity's Activity Plan	in the Entity's Operational Plan	in the Entity's Branch/ Divisional Work Plans
Multi-year performance-based planning		✓		
Annual performance reporting		✓		
Performance contracts			✓	
Proactive and early release of information				✓

3. Title: Strategic Communication

Outcome: Increased awareness/understanding of the key priorities of government through strategic communication of government's agenda. It requires systemic intervention by the Office of the Executive Council in the following areas:

Strategic Direction Components	Applicable to other entities reporting to the Minister	This component is addressed...		
		In the Entity's Activity Plan	In the Entity's Operational Plan	In the entity's Branch/ Divisional Work Plans
Planning and enabling the coordination of government's communication in an effective/ focused manner		✓		
Promotion of progress on delivery of government's agenda			✓	

