

ANNUAL REPORT

2024-2025

Office of Indigenous Affairs
and Reconciliation



MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER

As Minister Responsible for the Office of Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation (the Office), I am presenting the Annual Report for 2024-25. I am accountable for the report and the results reported. This report outlines the Office's activities between April 1, 2024 and March 31, 2025 in achieving the goals and objectives outlined in the 2023-2026 Activity Plan. This report was prepared in accordance with the requirements of the **Transparency and Accountability Act** under which the Office is a Category 3 entity.

This report highlights important work completed during 2024-25, and identifies opportunities and challenges for the upcoming fiscal year. In 2024-25, the Office demonstrated its commitment to advancing Reconciliation through continued collaboration with Indigenous Governments, Organizations, communities and people. The Office works to build principle-based relationships grounded on the value of mutual respect. The Office will continue to strengthen our relationships based on respect, co-operation, and partnership.

I would like to thank Indigenous Governments, Organizations, communities, and people for their collaboration and work over the past year, as well as Office staff. I look forward to continued progress into 2025-26.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "M. Scott Reid". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Hon. Dr. Scott Reid

Minister Responsible for the Office of Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation

Table of Contents

- Departmental Overview 1**
 - Organizational Structure 1
 - Staff and Budget 1
 - Vision 2
 - Mandate 2
 - Lines of Business 2
- Highlights and Partnerships 4**
- Report on Performance 7**
 - Issue 7
 - Goal 7
 - 2024-25 Objective 8
- Opportunities and Challenges 11**
- Financial Information 12**

Departmental Overview

Organizational Structure

The Office of Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation supports the Premier and Minister in advancing Reconciliation and building principle-based relationships with Indigenous Governments, Organizations, communities, and people.

The Office of Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation works towards advancing Reconciliation with Indigenous people in Newfoundland and Labrador and has three core functions: Reconciliation; Policy, Planning and Consultation; and Negotiation of Land Claims, Self-Government and Other Agreements.

For more information on the Office of Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation, please see our website at <https://www.gov.nl.ca/exec/iar>.

Staff and Budget

Division	# of Employees	Budget
Office of Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation	11	\$2,247,900

As of March 31, 2025, the Office of Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation had a staff complement of 11.

The Office of Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation is located on the sixth floor of the Confederation Complex, East Block, in St. John's.

Vision

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

Mandate

The Office of Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation focuses on fostering strong relationships with Indigenous Peoples, characterized by mutual respect. This approach is the foundation for sound Government policies and programs which support vibrant and prosperous Indigenous communities.

Lines of Business

The Office of Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation is responsible for the following Lines of Business:

- Reconciliation
 - Work with Indigenous Governments and Organizations (IGOs), Provincial and Federal departments and agencies and other stakeholders with respect to issues of importance to Indigenous Peoples to advance Reconciliation.
- Policy, Planning and Consultation
 - Support the development and delivery of Provincial Government policies and programs that are culturally sensitive, meaningful, and appropriate.
 - Provide advice to Provincial Government departments and agencies on the conduct of Indigenous consultations.
- Negotiation of Land Claims, Self-Government and Other Agreements
 - Negotiate and implement land claims, self-government and other agreements to promote the self-sufficiency, self-governance, and

autonomy of Indigenous Peoples and to provide clarity and advice on Indigenous rights in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Highlights and Partnerships

The following outlines the Office of Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation's Highlights and Partnerships for the reporting period.

Ongoing Engagement: The Office of Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation continues to facilitate regular discussions between the Premier, the Minister for Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation and Indigenous Leaders. These discussions support and promote ongoing communication and help to ensure the priorities of Government are aligned with the priorities of Indigenous Peoples.

Innu Roundtable: The Innu Roundtable is an Innu-led initiative that includes representation from the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, and the Federal Government, and is mandated to address Innu community health and healing initiatives. The Innu Roundtable and its subcommittees met regularly during the reporting period to advance Innu priorities.

Trail of the Caribou Pilgrimage: Each year, students participate in the Trail of the Caribou Pilgrimage, a partnership between the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, the Royal Canadian Legion Newfoundland and Labrador Command, and the Historic Sites Association of Newfoundland and Labrador. This year, as part of the commemoration of the 75th anniversary of Confederation, the Minister was joined by 10 youth representing the five Indigenous Governments and Organizations (IGOs) in the Province (Nunatsiavut Government, Innu Nation, NunatuKavut Community Council, Miawpukek First Nation and Qalipu First Nation).

Consultation and Engagement: Throughout the reporting period the Office continued to provide consultation advice on resource developments, mineral exploration, environmental assessments, and other matters to provincial government departments and project proponents.

Land Claims: The Office continues to lead provincial negotiations on the Innu land claim and the provincial implementation of the Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement.

Day for Truth and Reconciliation: On September 30, the Day for Truth and Reconciliation in Newfoundland and Labrador, and in keeping with the spirit and intent of Call to Action #80 from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the Provincial Government encouraged all residents to take time to learn about residential schools and reflect on the histories and cultures of Indigenous peoples.

Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People: The goal of the Provincial Indigenous Women's Reconciliation Council is to coordinate and lead meaningful action to address existing challenges and obstacles in the areas of culture, health and wellness, justice and human security that impact Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. The Council held meetings throughout the year to discuss a variety of issues including: Policing Transformation, Child Protection, partnerships with Indigenous women and 2-spirit organizations, family violence prevention, and human trafficking. The Council is composed of 11 members, including six Indigenous women representatives, and five Provincial Government representatives; one of which is from the Office of Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation.

By engaging with the Calls for Justice regarding missing and murdered women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, fostering collaboration with Indigenous communities, and heightening public awareness about the imperative for reconciliation, the Indigenous Women's Reconciliation Council is just one example of the Provincial Government's commitment to advancing a more equitable and inclusive future for all residents.

Minister Dempster also participated in an event organized by the Qalipu First Nation to commemorate the National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2-Spirit people on May 5, 2024. The event commemorated individuals in Newfoundland and Labrador affected by trauma associated with loss and violence.

Honouring Indigenous Culture: A ceremony commemorating the cultural and historical significance of the Beothuk was held on October 11, 2024 at Confederation Building in St. John's. A bronze statute honouring Demasduit, her husband, Nonosabasut, and their infant son; and a piece of artwork depicting a Beothuk family were unveiled at the ceremony. The acquisition of a Beothuk statue and the Beothuk artwork is founded on a belief that actions which respect and honour the culture and heritage of Indigenous peoples are an important step on the path towards Reconciliation and is part of a broader objective to promote symbols that better reflect the diversity, resilience and history of the Indigenous peoples of the Province.

In March 2025, three commissioned works by artists selected by IGOs were unveiled at the Confederation Building. Ceremonies were held for each of the unveilings with representatives from the Province, the IGOs (Nunatsiavut Inuit, Miawpukek First Nation, and Innu Nation) and the respective artists. Each piece of artwork reflects the culture and heritage of the Indigenous peoples in each group.

Report on Performance

Advancing Reconciliation with Indigenous Governments, Organizations and Peoples and Enhancing Relationships

The Office of Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation works to advance Reconciliation and enhance relationships with IGOs. To achieve this, the Office:

- Works with IGOs and Provincial and Federal Government departments to advance Reconciliation and enable access to programs and services designed for and provided to Indigenous people in the Province;
- Works with IGOs and Provincial Government departments and agencies to provide advice on policies, programs, and legislation to better meet the needs of the diverse Indigenous peoples and communities of Newfoundland and Labrador;
- Provides leadership and advice with respect to the Duty to Consult IGOs; and
- Leads all Provincial Government negotiations of land claims and self-government agreements, and supports Provincial Government departments and agencies in their implementation of those agreements.

Goal

By March 31, 2026, the Office of Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation will have continued to advance Reconciliation and enhance the Provincial Government's relationship with Indigenous Governments, Organizations, communities, and people.

2024-25 Objective

By March 31, 2025, the Office of Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation will have continued to support initiatives to advance Reconciliation and build positive relationships with Indigenous Governments, Organizations, communities, and people of the Province.

Results Achieved:

Indicator 1: Provided advice and support to Provincial Government departments and agencies relating to public policy, programs, legislation and consultation obligations.

The Office of Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation worked to ensure the consultation obligations of the Provincial Government were met in relation to a variety of projects, including providing advice on Indigenous consultation in energy, forest and mining projects. The Office also supported departments with a mandate to provide health, social and educational services by helping them engage relevant IGOs on a variety of policies, programs and initiatives impacting their communities.

The Office also worked with IGOs, various Provincial Government departments, the Federal Government, and other provincial and territorial governments to promote Indigenous interests in policy development.

Indicator 2: Participated in committees and forums with IGOs and other partners to advance the priorities of Indigenous Peoples and communities.

The Office continued to lead the Province's participation in the Innu Roundtable, a forum where the Innu Nation, Provincial Government, and Federal Government discuss issues of mutual importance. Multiple working group meetings were held throughout the year to advance Innu priorities.

The Office also participated in the Labrador Inuit Tripartite Health Committee - a committee established to work cooperatively to discuss, provide recommendations, and/or take actions that require a coordinated tripartite response to improve health programs and services for Labrador Inuit.

As well, the Office continued to participate in the Provincial Indigenous Women's Reconciliation Council that leads meaningful action to address existing challenges and obstacles in the areas of culture, health and wellness, justice and human security that impact Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.

The Office of Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation continued to negotiate land claims and self-government agreements with the Innu Nation and Federal Government, and work with the Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement Implementation Committee.

The Office participated in numerous meetings throughout the Province, at both the ministerial and executive levels, with leaders of each of the IGOs. Meetings were helpful to ensure continued discussion of shared priorities and issues of importance to each of their communities.

Indicator 3: Worked with IGOs and Provincial Government departments to advance the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action.

In the previous fiscal year, Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation, in partnership with the Public Service Commission, released an eLearning module titled *Toward Reconciliation: An Overview of Indigenous Histories Across Canada*. The course is mandatory for public service employees and provides an overview of Indigenous peoples in Canada and an introduction to Indigenous peoples in Newfoundland and Labrador. In 2024-2025, work continued with the IGOs to develop individual modules specific to each IGO's culture and history.

In addition, the Office continues to work with Government Departments to report on progress of initiatives advancing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action.

Opportunities and Challenges

In the 2023-2026 Activity Plan, the Office of Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation committed to advancing Reconciliation and enhancing relationships with IGOs. Actions to meet these commitments presented a number of opportunities and challenges.

Collaborative relationships with IGOs provide an opportunity to listen, understand and advance the priorities of Indigenous peoples in Newfoundland and Labrador. The Office continues to engage with IGOs to strengthen these relationships and better support the advancement of Indigenous priorities.

The Office has continued work with IGOs and the Federal Government to negotiate land claims, self-government agreements, and other agreements on matters of mutual importance. These negotiations provide an opportunity to support Indigenous communities on their path of self-determination.

Delivering provincial services to remote Indigenous communities and ensuring policies and programs are reflective of the unique needs of Indigenous peoples and communities remains challenging. The Office will continue to work with IGOs, Provincial Government departments, the Federal Government and other stakeholders to make advancements in these areas.

Financial Information

Expenditure and revenue figures included in this report are based on public information provided in the Program Expenditures and Revenues of the Consolidated Revenue Fund for the Fiscal Year Ended March 31, 2025.

REPORT ON THE PROGRAM EXPENDITURES AND REVENUES OF THE CONSOLIDATED FUND

DEPARTMENT OF EXECUTIVE COUNCIL (CONTINUED)

	Actual	Estimates	
		Amended	Original
	\$	\$	\$
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL			
INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS AND RECONCILIATION			
<i>CURRENT</i>			
2.7.01. MINISTER'S OFFICE			
01. Salaries	208,771	211,500	211,500
Operating Accounts:			
<i>Employee Benefits</i>	2,617	-	-
<i>Transportation and Communications</i>	76,887	128,800	128,800
<i>Supplies</i>	871	2,500	2,500
<i>Purchased Services</i>	1,425	1,800	1,800
<i>Property, Furnishings and Equipment</i>	817	500	500
02. Operating Accounts	82,617	133,600	133,600
Total: Minister's Office	291,388	345,100	345,100
2.7.02. INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS AND RECONCILIATION			
01. Salaries	1,030,069	1,166,800	1,166,800
Operating Accounts:			
<i>Employee Benefits</i>	3,510	4,300	4,300
<i>Transportation and Communications</i>	82,749	92,800	92,800
<i>Supplies</i>	6,412	10,000	10,000
<i>Purchased Services</i>	13,087	10,500	10,500
<i>Property, Furnishings and Equipment</i>	-	1,000	1,000
02. Operating Accounts	105,758	118,600	118,600
10. Grants and Subsidies	584,957	617,400	617,400
Total: Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation	1,720,784	1,902,800	1,902,800
TOTAL: INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS AND RECONCILIATION	2,012,172	2,247,900	2,247,900

