

2022-2023 Annual Report

Labrador Affairs



Paving of the Trans Labrador Highway connecting border to border, July 2022.



MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER

It is my pleasure to present the former Labrador Affairs Secretariat Annual Performance Report covering April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023, which has been prepared in accordance with the **Transparency and Accountability Act** provisions. As the Minister of Labrador Affairs, I am accountable for the preparation of this report and the results reported herein.

On March 23, 2023, the Province announced the re-structuring of the Labrador Affairs Secretariat into the Department of Labrador Affairs. The mandate remains the same but the Department is now responsible for the administration of the Medical Transportation Assistance Program and the Medical Transportation Program for Income Support clients. This Annual Report will only account for the activities of the former Labrador Affairs Secretariat up to March 31, 2023.

This report illustrates the Secretariat's third year of progress in achieving the goals set forth in the 2020-23 Activity Plan. I would like to acknowledge and thank the staff at Labrador Affairs for their hard work and dedication.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lisa Dempster". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Hon. Lisa Dempster
Minister of Labrador Affairs

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Departmental Overview

Organizational Structure

As of April 1, 2023, the Labrador Affairs Secretariat (“Secretariat”) was re-structured to the Department of Labrador Affairs and assumed responsibility for the administration of the provincial Medical Transportation Assistance Program and the Medical Transportation Program for Income Support clients. This report covers the activities for the former Secretariat.

In 2022-2023, the Labrador Affairs Secretariat had 12 employees (seven female, five male); 11 located in Happy Valley-Goose Bay at 438-440 Hamilton River Road and one located in the Confederation Building in St. John’s. This included:

- Deputy Minister – St. John’s
- Assistant Deputy Minister
- Director of Labrador Affairs
- Director of Communications
- Secretary to the Deputy Minister
- Four Senior Analysts
- Clerk Typist III
- Policy, Planning and Research Analyst (term)
- Trail Inspector (seasonal)

The Policy, Planning and Research Analyst was a development position that ended September 2022. The Trail Inspector position is active from December to May annually.

Staff and Budget

Division	# of Employees	Budget
Labrador Affairs	12	\$2,349,906

Vision

The vision of Labrador Affairs is of a strong, sustainable and vibrant Labrador, where all people have the opportunity to prosper and contribute to their communities, regions and the province.

Mandate

The mandate of Labrador Affairs is to advance the social and economic development of Labrador by ensuring the unique perspectives of Labrador are considered in the formation of government policy and in the delivery of provincial government programs and services in Labrador.

Lines of Business

Policy, Programs and Planning

Labrador Affairs is responsible for the development, implementation and administration of provincial policies and programs respecting Labrador issues. It aims to ensure that provincial policies, programs and services consider Labrador-related issues by providing advice to provincial government departments and agencies and through its participation in provincial horizontal initiatives.

Labrador Affairs is responsible for the administration of Labrador specific programs and grants that include:

- the Labrador Transportation Grooming Subsidy;
- the Labrador Aboriginal Nutritional and Artistic Assistance Program;
- the Labrador Sport Travel Subsidy Program and School Sport Program;
- the Labrador Winter Games; and,
- an operating grant to support the Combined Councils of Labrador.

Coordination, Collaboration and Advocacy

To achieve its mandate to advance the social and economic development of Labrador, Labrador Affairs coordinates, collaborates, and advocates for Labrador-related initiatives. It collaborates with Provincial Government departments/entities, federal, territorial and municipal governments, industry organizations and social enterprises.

In addition to programming, Labrador Affairs often takes a prominent role on Labrador-focused committees. It liaises with other Northern ministries and assists in the management of intergovernmental relations on Labrador and Northern issues, such as the Northern Development Ministers Forum and the Arctic and Northern Policy Framework. It is also consulted on Labrador-related initiatives by other provincial departments and provides advice and support as required.

Labrador Affairs works in collaboration with the Public Engagement and Planning Division to support stakeholder engagement and consultation in Labrador. It also works with Labrador stakeholders on issues relevant to the region.

Highlights and Partnerships

The Provincial Government established an Acute Response Team in June 2022 comprised of provincial Ministers and Indigenous leaders. The Team has a mandate to address issues involving the vulnerable population in central Labrador. The Team is co-chaired by the Minister of Labrador Affairs and Minister Responsible for Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation, and the Minister of Justice and Public Safety. The Acute Response Team is in addition to the Action Team that was established in 2021.

On February 8, 2023, the governments of Newfoundland and Labrador and Nunavut signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The signing took place during the Northern Lights Conference and Trade Show in Ottawa and was well attended by various provincial, federal and Indigenous leaders and stakeholders. The MOU reflects the importance of cooperation between both jurisdictions on issues related to northern infrastructure, health and well-being, and Indigenous participation. The next steps include the establishment of a Cooperation and Implementation Committee and the development of a framework.

Labrador Affairs, on behalf of the Province, contributed \$500,000 towards the operating costs of the 2023 Labrador Winter Games. The Games are hosted every three years and involves athletes from across Labrador. The Games took place in Happy Valley-Goose Bay from March 12-18, 2023. During the closing ceremonies, Premier Furey, accompanied by Minister Dempster, announced \$50,000 to assist the Labrador Winter Games for sport development and delivery of regional games in Labrador for the coming year. An additional \$250,000 was announced to further sports development and support the 2026 Labrador Winter Games.

Report on Performance

Issue One: Socio-Economic Development of Labrador

Labrador Affairs supported the social and economic growth in Labrador through the administration of programs, providing feedback and advice from a Labrador perspective on provincial policies and programs and building relationships with stakeholders.

Goal

By March 31, 2023, Labrador Affairs will have supported the socio-economic development of Labrador through implementation, collaboration, communication and input from a Labrador perspective.

Indicators:

- Administered Labrador-specific programs to address the needs of Labradorians;
- Provided advice on all relevant government policies, programs and planning impacting Labrador;
- Facilitated supports related to social and economic development in Labrador; and,
- Participated on boards/committees and in consultations/meetings to provide input from a Labrador perspective.

Labrador Affairs accomplished the Goal for 2020-2023 as is noted in the results and indicators below. Results include administration of the Labrador Transportation Grooming and Labrador Sport Travel subsidies, chairing Action and Acute Response Team meetings, participating in various meetings across Labrador and engaging stakeholders on various topics. Labrador Affairs connected stakeholders to relevant departments and agencies to advance issues.

2022-23 Objective

By March 31, 2023, Labrador Affairs will continue to support the socio-economic development of Labrador through implementation, collaboration, communication and providing information from a Labrador perspective.

Results achieved:

Below highlights the Labrador Affairs progress towards the socio-economic development in Labrador.

Indicator 1: Continue to lead Arctic and Northern policy initiatives for the Province

Throughout 2022-23, Labrador Affairs continued to participate in monthly Arctic and Northern Policy Framework (ANPF) virtual teleconferences representing the province. In addition, officials from Labrador Affairs participated virtually in the ANPF Leadership meeting that took place in September 2022 in Yellowknife. The ANPF is comprised of northern provincial, federal and Indigenous officials and provides an opportunity to discuss and share information on topics of northern interests. The Leadership Meeting allows jurisdictions to highlight and prioritize relevant issues to attending federal ministers.

As noted in the highlights, the governments of Newfoundland and Labrador and Nunavut signed a MOU in February 2023. Prior to and post-signing, officials from Labrador Affairs met frequently with officials from Nunavut to discuss the signing logistics and begin the discussions on the establishment of a Cooperation and Implementation Committee between both jurisdictions. Labrador Affairs also met with officials from the Department of Industry, Energy and Technology, Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation, and, Intergovernmental Affairs to discuss provincial priorities in preparation for the establishment of the Cooperation and Implementation Committee and discussions with Nunavut.

Labrador Affairs represents the Province on the Northern Development Ministers Forum (NDMF). This Forum provides an opportunity for federal, provincial, and territorial ministers representing Canada's North with an opportunity to advance common interests, raise awareness of northern issues and accomplishments, and learn from experiences across jurisdictions. Manitoba will be hosting the 2023 Forum in Churchill in May. In preparation for the 2023 Forum, Labrador Affairs participated in bi-weekly senior official working group and Deputy Minister virtual meetings. Officials also attended the in-person forum planning meetings in Manitoba in November 2022.

Indicator 2: Administer Labrador-specific programs to address the needs of Labradorians

Labrador Affairs administers three programs and two operating grants relevant to Labrador. The Labrador Aboriginal Nutritional and Artistic Assistance Program provided \$50,000 in funding to the three Indigenous governments/organizations (IGO) in Labrador to support nutritional and artistic endeavors. In 2022-23, the IGOs used the funding to support food banks in their communities, offset the cost of transporting culture foods to communities and supporting youth activities

Labrador Affairs has administered the Labrador Transportation Grooming Subsidy since 2005. In 2022-23, the subsidy provided funding to 11 service providers to maintain and mark designated trails from Labrador's nine isolated communities to larger service centres in Labrador. The 14-week program has an annual budget of \$471,000 which is administered to the service providers for human resources, fuel, insurance, communications, and, marking and grooming supplies. Total expenditure in 2022-23 was approximately \$450,000.

The Labrador Sport Travel Subsidy (LSTS) provided funding for individual youth and sport teams travelling from Labrador to the island for provincial sport tournaments and try-outs. The Subsidy may also provide support for coaching and official development training as well as Labrador sport organizations hosting provincial competitions. In

2022-23, the LSTS approved 136 individual, team, coach and hosting organizations requests in Labrador across 16 different sports for a total of approximately \$330,000. The LSTS provided \$300,000 to School Sport NL (SSNL) to support Labrador school sport teams travelling to participate in school sporting events. Labrador Affairs contributed an additional \$25,000 to SSNL in March 2023 in recognition of higher travel costs.

Labrador Affairs, on behalf of the Province, contributed \$500,000 to the 2023 Labrador Winter Games which took place in Happy Valley-Goose Bay in March 2023. The Games are held every three years and consists of 15 events. Over 500 athletes from communities across Labrador participated from March 12-18, 2023 with Labrador City claiming the top spot. Labrador Affairs participated on the Board of Directors. At the closing of the Games, the Province announced \$50,000 for the delivery of regional games in Labrador for the coming year and an additional \$250,000 in funding for the 2026 Labrador Winter Games and to further support sport development and regional games in Labrador.

Labrador Affairs provided a \$50,000 operating grant to the Combined Councils of Labrador (CCL) in 2022-23. The Secretariat normally assists the CCL by arranging ministerial meetings with relevant provincial departments to discuss priorities areas for Labrador and logistics for the Annual General Meeting (AGM); however, the ministerial meetings and an AGM did not occur in 2022-23. Labrador Affairs support the CCL Board of Directors in organizing teleconferences throughout the year and an in-person meeting in March 2023.

Indicator 3: Provide advice on all relevant government policies, programs and planning impacting Labrador

Labrador Affairs reviewed and provided feedback from a Labrador perspective on approximately 400 provincial documents throughout 2022-23 which included government submissions, budget considerations, correspondence and communication

plans. It also reviewed five Environmental Assessments and Land Use Plans related to Labrador.

Indicator 4: Participate on boards/committees and in consultations/meetings to provide input from a Labrador perspective.

Labrador Affairs participated on various boards and committees throughout 2022-23 including, but not limited to, Violence Prevention Labrador; Reaching Home NL, Reaching Home Indigenous, Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Committee on Oceans Management (CNLCOM), Cooperative Management Boards for the Akami-Uapishk^u-KakKasuak-Mealy Mountains National Park Reserve; and, senior official and executive interdepartmental committees on the Social and Economic Well-Being Plan.

Labrador Affairs chaired and co-chaired interdepartmental meetings on homelessness in central Labrador. The Office engaged colleagues in relevant departments on areas such as Labrador's power supply, mineral development, fuel costs and food security.

Issue Two: Labrador Relationships

Labrador Affairs prides itself on building positive relationships with Labrador stakeholders and partners. It effectively fulfills its mandate by regularly meeting and engaging stakeholders across Labrador, collaborating with provincial, federal and Indigenous partners to support the priorities of Labradorians and learning from interest groups in Labrador.

Goal

By March 31, 2023, Labrador Affairs will have increased collaboration with Labrador stakeholders through communication, consultation and input from a Labrador perspective.

Indicators:

- Strengthen relationships through direct engagement with Government departments and entities;
- Provide input on Labrador perspectives in the development of government policy, planning and programs;
- Communicate and monitor provincial government initiatives related to Labrador; and,
- Participate on boards and committees and in consultations and meetings to provide input on a Labrador perspective.

Labrador Affairs accomplished the Goal for 2020-2023 as is noted in the results and indicators below. Results included engaging stakeholders on various topics such as homelessness, COVID-19, transportation, education and health. Officials and the Minister attended various events and meetings across Labrador including MineX in Labrador West, Northern Lights in Ottawa and Expo Labrador in Happy Valley-Goose Bay. The Secretariat also worked with provincial, federal and Indigenous partners on priorities for Labrador.

2022-23 Objective

By March 31, 2023, Labrador Affairs will continue to support Labrador relations through communication, consultation and input from a Labrador perspective.

Results achieved:

Below highlights the Labrador Affairs progress towards building relationships in Labrador.

Indicator 1: Enhance Labrador Affairs presence in all regions of Labrador by engaging Labrador stakeholders

There were many opportunities for engaging Labradorians throughout 2022-23. Labrador Affairs continued to meet with the town councils of Happy Valley-Goose Bay,

Labrador City and Wabush. In addition, officials and the Minister travelled to the communities of Rigolet, Postville, Makkovik and Hopedale in September 2022 where they met with Inuit Community Government members and visited Nunatsiavut Government offices. Minister Dempster also accompanied Minister Abbott, Minister Responsible for Housing, to Nain in January 2023.

Labrador Affairs attended the NunatuKavut Community Council (NCC) Career Fair in L'Anse au Clair in April 2022 and the NCC Annual General Meeting in Port Hope Simpson in January 2023.

In March 2023, the Minister visited Labrador West and met with various community stakeholders and participated in the opening ceremonies of the Cain's Quest snowmobile endurance race.

Officials attended meetings and engaged with various stakeholders in central Labrador regarding homelessness including the Town of Happy Valley-Goose Bay, the Labrador North Chamber of Commerce, Labrador's Indigenous Governments and Organizations, local business owners and residents.

Indicator 2: Continue to conduct meetings with service providers of the Labrador Transportation Grooming Subsidy program

Labrador Affairs held meetings with LTGS service providers in May 2022 to discuss the 2021-22 grooming season and in December 2022 prior to the start of the 2022-23 season. Discussions included on how to make the program more effective and efficient for both the service providers and users of the trail system. Labrador Affairs regularly communicated with the service providers throughout the grooming seasons regarding processing claims, repairs, trail conditions and marking.

Indicator 3: Assist with the coordination of meetings between the Combined Councils of Labrador and provincial government departments

As noted above, the CCL did not host an Annual General Meeting or ministerial meetings with provincial departments in 2022-23. Labrador Affairs assisted the CCL Board of Directors in arranging teleconferences and one in-person meeting in March 2023 and offered assistance as required.

Indicator 4: Participate in Labrador-related conferences and events such as Expo Labrador, Northern Lights, and Cain's Quest

Labrador Affairs attended various events throughout 2022-23 including Expo Labrador (June 2022), MineX (September 2022), Northern Lights (February 2023) and Cain's Quest (March 2023). In addition to providing \$500,000 in funding to the Labrador Winter Games, Labrador Affairs was an active board member and Minister Dempster met with the board on various occasions in advance of the Games.

Opportunities and Challenges

Transportation remains a top priority in Labrador. The completion of the paving of Route 510 of the Trans Labrador Highway in July 2022 was a major accomplishment for advancing accessibility for Labradorians. The preliminary study on a road to the North Coast of Labrador is underway to determine the potential for further road transportation infrastructure in the region.

Affordable and accessible housing is important in Labrador, including housing for seniors and those with complex needs. Through the Action and Acute Response Teams on homelessness and public safety, the Province engaged community members and interest groups on the design and layout of a facility to support those facing housing challenges. Efforts to increase public awareness on the facility is ongoing.

Healthcare within the province underwent a transition in 2022 to consolidate all regional health authorities into one. As in the rest of the province, Labrador continues to face a shortage of healthcare professionals. In Labrador access is further challenged based on its geography and distance from specialized services. The Province focused Budget 2023 on improving healthcare and health outcomes. As part of an ongoing process, recruitment incentives and additional bonuses are implemented to support recruitment of healthcare professionals to the province.

As previously noted, as of April 1, 2023, the Department of Labrador Affairs assumed responsibility for the administration of the Medical Transportation Assistance Program and Medical Transportation Program for Income Support clients. The Department will work towards ensuring that both programs are more responsive to the needs of Labradorians and the province as a whole, especially for those residents who have to travel from rural and remote areas to larger centres to access specialized insured health care services. As part of an ongoing process, the Department of Labrador Affairs will be assessing these programs and consulting stakeholders with a view towards improving medical transportation assistance and ensuring the programs operate as effectively as possible.

Climate change is having an impact on winter trail operations under the LTGS. Winter 2022-23 was unseasonably warmer in Labrador. Ice formation along coastal regions was delayed and limited snow in the interior of Labrador led to the inability to groom and safely mark some trails until later in the season. Discussions with service providers on how to manage changing climates and recruitment and retention challenges are ongoing. In consultation with Indigenous partners and stakeholders, Labrador Affairs is reviewing the LTGS program to consider options to support winter trail access.

The Department of Labrador Affairs looks forward to continuing its work in support of Labrador's interests, both socially and economically, in 2023-24. Ensuring Labradorians are heard and priorities are reflected in all provincial policies and programs is a priority.

Financial Information

REPORT ON THE PROGRAM EXPENDITURES AND REVENUES OF THE CONSOLIDATED FUND DEPARTMENT OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL (CONTINUED)

	Estimates		
	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Amended</u>	<u>Original</u>
	\$	\$	\$
LABRADOR AFFAIRS SECRETARIAT			
<i>CURRENT</i>			
2.7.01. EXECUTIVE SUPPORT			
01. Salaries	341,209	342,900	331,900
Operating Accounts:			
<i>Employee Benefits</i>	4,150	2,800	2,800
<i>Transportation and Communications</i>	34,530	47,500	47,500
<i>Supplies</i>	3,165	2,100	2,100
<i>Purchased Services</i>	194	1,000	1,000
<i>Property, Furnishings and Equipment</i>	590	1,000	1,000
02. Operating Accounts	42,629	54,400	54,400
Total: Executive Support	383,838	397,300	386,300
2.7.02. LABRADOR AFFAIRS			
Appropriations provide for the development and implementation of Government policy and programs which impact the Labrador region.			
01. Salaries	676,100	676,200	596,900
Operating Accounts:			
<i>Employee Benefits</i>	3,137	2,100	2,100
<i>Transportation and Communications</i>	30,343	48,600	48,600
<i>Supplies</i>	7,985	8,700	8,700
<i>Purchased Services</i>	7,856	10,000	10,000
<i>Property, Furnishings and Equipment</i>	821	1,000	1,000
02. Operating Accounts	50,142	70,400	70,400
10. Grants and Subsidies	1,239,826	1,358,900	1,351,000
Total: Labrador Affairs	1,966,068	2,105,500	2,018,300
TOTAL: LABRADOR AFFAIRS SECRETARIAT	2,349,906	2,502,800	2,404,600

