

Intergovernmental Affairs Secretariat

Activity Plan

2020 - 2023





MESSAGE FROM THE PREMIER

I am pleased to present the Activity Plan for the Intergovernmental Affairs Secretariat for the period of April 1, 2020 to March 31, 2023.

Consistent with our Government's vision for a brighter future for our province and its people, this plan supports our Government's efforts to solidify our financial, social, and economic foundation, and emerge as a stronger, more sustainable, and more diverse province.

To realize this vision in these challenging times, we must work collaboratively with other governments across Canada and around the world, particularly the Federal Government. The goals and objectives outlined in this plan will help achieve Newfoundland and Labrador's intergovernmental and trade policy priorities, with a particular focus on working in partnership to leverage and optimize federal programs and policies to meet our Province's unique needs and circumstances.

As Premier and Minister for Intergovernmental Affairs, I am accountable for the preparation of this plan and the achievement of its goals and objectives. This plan was prepared in accordance with requirements for category three entities under the **Transparency and Accountability Act**, as well as Government's strategic directions.

Hon. Dr. Andrew Furey
Premier
Minister for Intergovernmental Affairs

Table of Contents

Message from the Premier	1
Overview and Mandate	2
Staff and Budget.....	3
Strategic Issues	3
Issue One – Advancing the Province’s Strategic Intergovernmental Priorities.....	3
Issue Two – Advancing and Defending the Province’s Domestic and International Trade Priorities.....	6
Annex A: Strategic Directions	i

Overview and Mandate

The Intergovernmental Affairs Secretariat (the Secretariat) is located within the Office of the Executive Council, and is the Provincial Government's lead entity for coordinating the Province's intergovernmental and trade priorities. The Secretariat provides strategic policy advice, analysis, and support to the Premier, ministers, and departments on intergovernmental and trade policy issues and priorities. The Secretariat also supports the Premier and ministers in building and strengthening relationships with other sovereign governments and international entities to advance provincial interests.

In addition, the Secretariat acts as the provincial liaison for military officials and the Department of National Defence.

The Secretariat has three divisions:

- The **Economic Policy** division formulates intergovernmental policy advice relating to the Province's resource, environmental, fiscal and economic, industry and technology, infrastructure and constitutional priorities.
- The **Social Policy** division formulates intergovernmental policy advice relating to social priorities, including health, education, immigration, and justice, as well as provincial interests related to national defence and foreign affairs.
- The **Trade Policy** division leads the formulation of trade policy advice and consultative services related to national and international trade, including trade agreement negotiations and implementation.

Additional information about the Secretariat is available online at: www.gov.nl.ca/ias.

Staff and Budget

As of March 31, 2020, the Secretariat had a staff complement of 16 (7 female and 9 male) and an estimated budget of \$1,869,500.

2019-20 Budget	Staff Complement
\$1,869,500	16

The entire staff complement is located in the Confederation Complex in St. John's.

Strategic Issues

Issue One – Advancing the Province's Strategic Intergovernmental Priorities

The Secretariat works to advance Newfoundland and Labrador's intergovernmental priorities through productive engagements with the Federal Government and other provincial and territorial governments in Canada, as well as other sovereign governments around the world. This work includes:

- advancing provincial objectives through First Ministers' Meetings, meetings of the Council of the Federation, the Council of Atlantic Premiers, and other multilateral, bilateral, and regional intergovernmental engagements; and
- providing strategic support to Provincial Government departments and agencies on intergovernmental matters, including the negotiation of intergovernmental agreements.

Activity Plan 2020-23

As Newfoundland and Labrador continues to work towards addressing its fiscal and economic challenges and recovering from the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, sustained and effective intergovernmental collaboration will be key to securing a brighter future for Newfoundland and Labrador. Effectively engaging with other provincial and territorial governments, and the Federal Government, on economic supports and funding opportunities will be particularly important in this regard.

Goal

By March 31, 2023, the Secretariat will have supported the advancement of Government's strategic intergovernmental priorities.

Goal Indicators

- Supported Government in advancing the Province's intergovernmental objectives by providing advice, analysis, and support for multilateral and bilateral meetings and policy frameworks.
- Provided intergovernmental policy advice and strategic support to Government departments and agencies, including supporting the negotiation of intergovernmental agreements.
- Leveraged federal funding to advance provincial and federal-provincial programs and initiatives.

Activity Plan 2020-23

Objective 2020-2021

By March 31, 2021, the Secretariat will have supported the advancement of Government's strategic intergovernmental priorities.

Objective Indicators

- Provided policy advice and strategic support on key intergovernmental issues, including the federal-provincial fiscal framework and responding to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Coordinated the Province's participation in intergovernmental forums, including First Ministers' Meetings, the Council of the Federation, the Atlantic Growth Strategy and the Council of Atlantic Premiers, and worked to ensure that provincial interests were appropriately considered through these forums and their associated initiatives.
- Participated in the negotiation of intergovernmental agreements, and supported Government-wide efforts to strategically maximize federal support in areas that align with provincial priorities.

Objective 2021-2022

By March 31, 2022, the Secretariat will have further supported the advancement of Government's strategic intergovernmental priorities.

Objective 2022-2023

By March 31, 2023, the Secretariat will have continued to support the advancement of Government's strategic intergovernmental priorities.

Issue Two – Advancing and Defending the Province’s Domestic and International Trade Priorities

Trade policy refers to the goals, rules, regulations, agreements, and other arrangements pertaining to trade relations between governments. In practice, trade policy is generally focused on reducing and eliminating barriers to the free movement of persons, goods, services, and investments. The Secretariat’s Trade Policy division is the Provincial Government’s lead for negotiating and implementing trade agreements.

The Secretariat will ensure that Newfoundland and Labrador is well-positioned to capitalize on opportunities to access new markets, reduce barriers to interprovincial trade within Canada, and respond appropriately to any protectionist policies that may be implemented by other jurisdictions.

Goal

By March 31, 2023, the Secretariat will have supported the advancement and defence of the Province’s domestic and international trade priorities.

Goal Indicator

- Provided advice and consultative services related to international trade agreement negotiations and disputes.
- Coordinated and supported Provincial Government efforts on reducing interprovincial trade barriers within Canada and bolstering trade relationships between provinces and territories.

Activity Plan 2020-23

Objective 2020-2021

By March 31, 2021, the Secretariat will have supported the advancement and defence of the Province's domestic and international trade priorities.

Indicator

- Coordinated Provincial input on the negotiation of free trade agreements, and provided strategic advice and analysis on the implementation of existing agreements, including responses to protectionist policies in other jurisdictions.
- Contributed to work to advance the implementation of the Canadian Free Trade Agreement, including the Province chairing the Committee on Internal Trade and the Regulatory Reconciliation and Cooperation Table for 2020.

Objective 2021-2022

By March 31, 2022, the Secretariat will have further supported the advancement and defence of the Province's domestic and international trade priorities.

Objective 2022-2023

By March 31, 2023, the Secretariat will have continued to support the advancement and defence of the Province's domestic and international trade priorities.

Annex A: Strategic Directions

Strategic Direction: A Better Economy

Outcome: Engagement with federal, provincial, territorial, and other sovereign governments on economic development and trade-related initiatives and opportunities.

This outcome requires focus in the following areas:

- Supporting collaborative federal-provincial-territorial efforts focused on safely restarting the economy in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, and leading negotiations to secure federal funding through a federal-provincial Safe Restart Agreement and a Safe Return to Class Fund;
- Collaborating with other jurisdictions through intergovernmental forums/conferences and related working groups;
- Engaging with the Federal Government on projects, programs, and other initiatives that will deliver economic benefits for Newfoundland and Labrador; and
- Negotiating and implementing national and international trade agreements, as well as provincial positioning on ongoing and potential trade disputes.

Strategic Direction: Healthier People

Outcome: Collaboration with federal, provincial, territorial governments on ways to improve health outcomes for residents in Newfoundland and Labrador.

This outcome requires focus in the following areas:

- Monitoring federal, provincial, and territorial public health responses to the COVID-19 pandemic within Canada, and representing the Province in pandemic-related discussions at various intergovernmental forums, meetings, and initiatives;

- Providing strategic advice on Canada-U.S. and global trade policy, including initiatives to maintain and enhance procurement and supply chains for critical personal protective equipment and testing supplies to manage COVID-19;
- Supporting departments in advocating for provincial health priorities to the Federal Government, including funding mechanisms that respect provincial jurisdiction and are responsive to Newfoundland and Labrador's unique needs;
- Participating in ongoing intergovernmental discussions on key health care-related issues, including pharmacare and long-term care.

