



Executive Council Office

ANNUAL REPORT

2024-2025

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Province of New Brunswick
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TRANSMITTAL LETTERS

From the Premier to the Lieutenant-Governor

Her Honour The Honourable Louise Imbeault

Lieutenant-Governor of New Brunswick

May it please your Honour:

It is my privilege to submit the annual report of the Executive Council Office, Province of New Brunswick, for the fiscal year April 1, 2024, to March 31, 2025.

Respectfully submitted,



Honourable Susan Holt
Premier of New Brunswick and the President of the Executive Council

From the Clerk to the Premier

Honourable Susan Holt

Premier of New Brunswick and the President of the Executive Council

Madam:

I am pleased to be able to present the annual report describing operations of the Executive Council Office for the fiscal year April 1, 2024, to March 31, 2025.

Respectfully submitted,



Joel Dickinson
Clerk of the Executive Council and Head of the Public Service

From the Deputy Minister to the Premier

Honourable Susan Holt

Premier of New Brunswick and the President of the Executive Council

Madam:

I am pleased to be able to present the annual report describing operations of the Executive Council Office for the fiscal year April 1, 2024, to March 31, 2025.

Respectfully submitted,



Judy Wagner

Deputy Minister of ECO and Women's Equality, Secretary to Cabinet

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PREMIER'S MESSAGE

In the past year, we've made significant progress towards our goals and have been working continuously to follow through on our commitments and figure out how to best help New Brunswickers.

However, this would not be possible without the hard work of New Brunswick's public servants.

Their work is invaluable and cannot be overstated. I want to acknowledge and thank everyone who has worked so hard on our team – and I would also like to say a specific thank you to those working within the Executive Council Office.

Important work is done within all departments, but those departments are able to thrive thanks to the consistent support and organization of the employees in the Executive Council Office. I know that they can be depended on to tackle whatever gets sent their way with both efficiency and integrity.

The team in the Executive Council Office continues to collaborate and adapt to step up to the tasks at hand. They take care and pride in what they do, and have the creativity, innovation and dedication to get the job done – while ensuring everything runs smoothly.

I'm very proud to be a part of this team of talented professionals. I hope you know that your work does not go unnoticed or unappreciated. It benefits not just those within government, but *all* New Brunswickers – and it will continue to for years to come.

I can't wait to see what we accomplish together next.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Holt', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Honourable Susan Holt
Premier of New Brunswick and the President of the Executive Council

CLERK'S MESSAGE

Every year, the team from the Executive Council Office contributes so much to the public service, and this year has been no different.

Supporting our fellow team members throughout government is one of our key and ongoing priorities. Each day, we take on this responsibility, working together to help each other succeed and achieve our goals.

Part of the reason this team is so exceptional is the continued commitment to learning and professional development. It is important that GNB employees feel supported throughout their careers to build their skills and expand their knowledge, so that they can then apply this to ensuring that New Brunswickers are able to benefit from the programs and supports they want and need.

As in past years, we have had various learning opportunities available for GNB employees. These include the *Building Future Ready Leaders* initiative, which has over 550 participants to date, through the *Emerging Executives*, *Evolving Leaders*, and *Aspiring Leaders* streams. Over the course of 2025, more than 300 *Evolving Leaders* and *Aspiring Leaders* will complete their journeys, in addition to the *Emerging Executives* cohort that launched this past spring.

As civil servants, you continually juggle your various and ever-changing responsibilities with ease, taking care to put New Brunswickers first and considering the impacts of your work.

I am proud of all that we have accomplished across our department, and of our team members whose commitment has made our successes possible, and I am honoured to be able to share these impressive accomplishments with you and to be part of such a remarkable group of employees.



Joel Dickinson
Clerk of the Executive Council and Head of the Public Service

DEPUTY MINISTER'S MESSAGE

As an organization, our mission is to provide support and assistance to those who need it, and to enable the success of everyone on our team. This is a core aspect of my role, and the role of all those working within our department.

During the 2024-2025 fiscal year, we have seen great strides taken toward achieving governmental goals. This is in part due to the continued hard work and commitment of the Executive Council Office team, which plays such an important role in government overall. The work that is done here benefits government employees and New Brunswickers alike.

During this time period, we were able to provide support for government's executive branch through assistance with the legislative assembly. We coordinated the passage of 27 bills, facilitated approximately 316 memoranda to Executive Council, and oversaw the appointments of 255 members to agencies, boards and commissions.

At GNB, we strive to keep New Brunswickers informed and engaged with government content. As of March 31, 2025, we had 486,250 followers across our social media platforms. Our Facebook audience remains the largest provincial government following in Canada.

I am extremely proud of our many accomplishments and all our team members across Executive Council Office, who, together, have made this possible through their hard work, dedication and commitment to our province. In all that we have completed, we have done so in the interest of improving the lives of New Brunswickers. By working to help others succeed, we also succeed – as a department and as individuals – and I am honoured to share in this success.



Judy Wagner
Deputy Minister of ECO and Women's Equality, Secretary to Cabinet

GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES

Delivering for New Brunswickers

The priorities the Government of New Brunswick (GNB) has focused on represent the stories and solutions we hear from residents across the province. Our goal is to make a difference and enhance the quality of life for everyone in the province we proudly call home. Together, we are learning, growing, adapting and discovering new and transformative ways of doing business. GNB is focused on taking the necessary steps to move our priorities forward, and work is being done more efficiently and effectively every day. New Brunswickers are resilient, creative and compassionate people, and by working collaboratively, we can create the brighter future we all deserve. GNB is prioritizing partnerships and trusting and empowering the people and organizations on the ground working most closely with New Brunswickers to achieve results.

Priorities

GNB is focused on creating a brighter future for all New Brunswickers. To make progress towards this vision, several priorities have been identified within the following areas:

- Health care
- Affordability and housing
- Education
- The economy
- Environment
- Trusted leadership

We invite you to explore the commitments we have made within each priority area, as well as updates on our achievements and the metrics we use to measure success. For more information, visit: gnb.ca/accountability.

HIGHLIGHTS

During the 2024-2025 fiscal year, Executive Council Office focused on government's priorities through:

Leadership Development - The Organizational Performance team leads the *Building Future Ready Leaders* initiative, with over 550 participants to date: 42 *Emerging Executives*, 323 *Evolving Leaders*, and 188 *Aspiring Leaders* either completed a program or are currently in development. Looking ahead, a new *Emerging Executives* cohort will launch in spring 2026 along with over 120 *Evolving Leaders* and 200 *Aspiring Leaders* across spring and fall 2026.

Policy, Governance and Legislative Affairs - Over the course of the 2024-2025 fiscal year, the Policy, Governance and Legislative Affairs team analyzed and provided strategic guidance on approximately 316 proposals to government, including leading one legislative proposal. The team also partnered with the Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour in developing and introducing ground-breaking legislation on accessibility requirements for the Province of New Brunswick. In addition, they coordinated the business of the house, which included passing 27 bills in the spring and fall 2024. This work involved providing advice, resources, guidance, and training to departments in achieving their priorities. The team also coordinated the process for 255 appointments, including 135 that required cabinet approval, and continued to deliver training on policy, governance and legislative process, government decision making and briefing senior leaders.

Corporate Strategic Planning and Accountability - During the 2024-2025 fiscal year, the Corporate Strategic Planning and Accountability branch achieved significant milestones in advancing government priorities and ensuring accountability. The team actively supported government transition and successfully established the Government Priorities website to enhance transparency and communication. Collaborating with all departments, the branch facilitated the development of 15 strategic measures as well as leading the planning and scoping of all government commitments. The branch also oversaw the annual report submission process for all Part 1 departments, ensuring timely and accurate reporting to the Legislative Assembly.

Office of the Lieutenant-Governor - As the representative of the Crown and head of state for the Province of New Brunswick, Lt.-Gov. Brenda L. Murphy, in her final year in office, delivered the speech from the throne, signed 240 orders-in-council and provided royal assent to 27 bills. She presided over numerous recognition ceremonies, including the Order of New Brunswick and Order of St. John investitures, honouring exceptional New Brunswickers for their service and contributions. Lt.-Gov. Murphy hosted the Governor General, Her Excellency the Right Honourable Mary Simon and His Excellency Whit Grant Fraser, during their first official visit to the province. The Lieutenant-Governor hosted or attended approximately 230 engagements across the province. These included diplomatic visits, cultural and multicultural events, and official ceremonies such as the unveiling of the official portrait of her predecessor, the late Hon. Jocelyne Roy Vienneau. Lt.-Gov. Murphy administered the oath of office to New Brunswick's first female premier and her cabinet. January 22, 2025 saw the Honourable Brenda Murphy's last day of her term. On the same day, the Honourable Louise Imbeault was installed as NB's 33rd Lieutenant-Governor. Lt.-Gov. Imbeault identified a few

key areas of focus for her five-year term, notably the recognition of the Acadian people; the importance of bilingualism and official languages; gender equality; access to truthful, verified, and accurate information; the integration of the arts in all aspects of society; interactions between various cultural communities; and relations with First Nations. In her first two-and-half months in office, the Lieutenant-Governor has signed 37 orders-in-council.

Cabinet Operations – Over the 2024-2025 fiscal year, Cabinet Operations coordinated 39 cabinet meetings, ratified 429 memorandums to the Executive Council and issued 278 orders in council. As this team plays a crucial role in planning and supporting a government transition, they were instrumental in planning and supporting the 2024 transition of government (caretaker period); providing information related to roles and responsibilities for ministers, deputy ministers and the public service; and the uninterrupted delivery of programs and services.

Communications & Marketing – On February 15, 2025, the Communications & Marketing division launched the updated GNB.ca, delivering a modernized and accessible platform for all users. Prioritizing clear navigation, improved accessibility and user-friendly content, the modernized website ensures accurate and up-to-date information on government for New Brunswickers. This ongoing work enhances our division's communications and marketing efforts across all channels, including marketing, social media as well as in communicating government programs and initiatives, enhancing the public's trust in government.

As of March 31, 2025, more than 1,100 webpages have been rebuilt with a focus on plain language and improved user navigation, and more than 700 pages of redundant, outdated or trivial content have been removed. This change has caused a significant shift in both the average accessibility score of the website (up 12 per cent to 92 per cent) and the average performance score (up 22 per cent to 90 per cent).

PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES

The information below outlines some of the department's priorities and how we measured our performance.

Outcome # 1 – BUILD A CUSTOMIZED AND SUSTAINABLE ACCELERATED LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

The objective is to build a sustainable system to prepare future GNB leaders to lead teams in delivery of dependable, responsive and efficient programs and services to drive organizational improvement for New Brunswick taxpayers and customers.

The Organizational Performance team has developed customized leadership streams in partnership with departments to address the readiness needs of future GNB leaders.



Why is it important?

Strong, future-ready leaders build strong teams who, in turn, deliver on commitments to New Brunswickers. Attracting, developing and retaining top leadership and executive talent is key to making GNB's vision a reality. A business and customer-driven, sustainable leadership development pathway is foundational to creating a vibrant and sustainable New Brunswick.

Overall performance:

As of March 2025, the leadership development portfolio shows strong progress and impact:

- **Emerging Executives:** Two of the three cohorts have completed their 18-month journeys. The third cohort will conclude in June 2025, and a fourth is set to launch in April 2025.
- **Evolving Leaders:** Cohorts 1–7, totaling 249 participants, completed their journeys between 2024 and 2025. Cohorts 8 and 9 (74 participants) are currently in progress, with over 120 additional participants scheduled for the remainder of 2025.
- **Aspiring Leaders:** The inaugural cohort launched in September 2024 with 188 participants. A second cohort of 200 will begin in fall 2025.

Delivery is on time and on budget, with strong foundational structures in place. Feedback from applicants, participants, leaders, and executive teams is consistently positive. Key performance indicators (KPIs) show meaningful progress toward desired outcomes in areas such as business and customer impact, retention, and career progression.

Initiatives or projects undertaken to achieve the outcome

- Launched nine Evolving Leaders stream cohorts, engaging with departments to support identification of future leaders, applying proven assessment tools and development approaches.
- Cohorts one to seven of Evolving Leaders completed their 12-month formal learning journey.
- Emerging Executives third cohort is in progress with a focus on customized learning, with significant GNB experiential learnings coupled with leadership competencies development.
- Collaborated with Francophone and Anglophone School Districts to include them in future cohorts (Evolving Leaders Spring 2025).
- Launched the inaugural 18-month Aspiring Leaders journey.
- Included College Communautaire du NB participants to the Evolving Leaders French cohort and collaborating for future cohorts.

Outcome # 2 - PERFORMANCE AGREEMENTS

The preparation of employee performance agreements is an important organizational function. Annual performance agreements encourage regular communication between employees and their managers, and provide dedicated time to discuss achievements, challenges and areas for improvement. This dialogue is crucial for personal and professional growth. Additionally, performance agreements provide an opportunity to help identify training and development needs, enabling employees to gain the skills they require to advance in their careers, creating a culture of continuous learning and improvement.

Performance agreements align individual performance with the organization's strategic goals and ensure that everyone's efforts contribute to the overall success of the organization.

The Executive Council Office was successful in completing 73% of our employee performance agreements.

Outcome #3 – INCREASE IN SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS AND ENGAGEMENT

Social media is a key component of GNB's strategic communications plan to ensure communications across GNB are well coordinated, effectively managed and responsive to the diverse information needs of the public. It is a key priority under government's digital-first approach to public communications.

The objective is to broaden the audience for GNB corporate social media accounts to better inform and engage New Brunswickers who frequently read, watch and interact with the most popular social media platforms. The lower growth rate of our audience on social media this year, compared to last, could possibly be attributed to several factors beyond our control. During the fall election period, our social media activity was limited to urgent or timely content only, which naturally constrained our engagement efforts. Additionally, a change in government may have influenced audience dynamics. While we are committed to posting only non-partisan content, shifts in audience preferences may occur due to evolving opinions among our followers.

Why is it important?

Social media allows government to provide New Brunswickers with timely information, important resources and responses to questions. Increasing social media followers (the number of people who follow one or more of GNB's corporate social media accounts) and engagement (the number of people who interact with content by liking, commenting on or sharing a post) expands the overall audience and therefore government's ability to share its message with members of the public.

Overall Performance

As of March 31, 2025, GNB's overall social media audience was 487,341 followers, which represents a 5.4 per cent overall increase over fiscal 2023-2024. The GNB Facebook following is more than 271,095 followers between English and French corporate accounts, making it the most followed of any provincial government in Canada.

Between April 1, 2024, and March 31, 2025, the social media team assisted in creating 5,540 posts on GNB corporate accounts. GNB social media content had 40,336,147 impressions, and engagements on these posts increased 30 per cent over last fiscal, with an average engagement rate of 7.6 per cent. Industry standard for a good engagement rate for government social media is 3.5 per cent.

Initiatives or projects undertaken to achieve the outcome

In the last quarter of 2024, we launched a social media strategy with a focus on increasing engagement with our audience. As part of that strategy, we have started using each social media platforms' unique features to engage with the right audience. One important element of this is using varied content including short-form video, graphics and more. Using engaging on-brand visuals, showing New Brunswickers in realistic situations wherever possible helps us engage strategically with our audience and break through the increasingly noisy landscape on social media.

OVERVIEW OF DEPARTMENTAL OPERATIONS

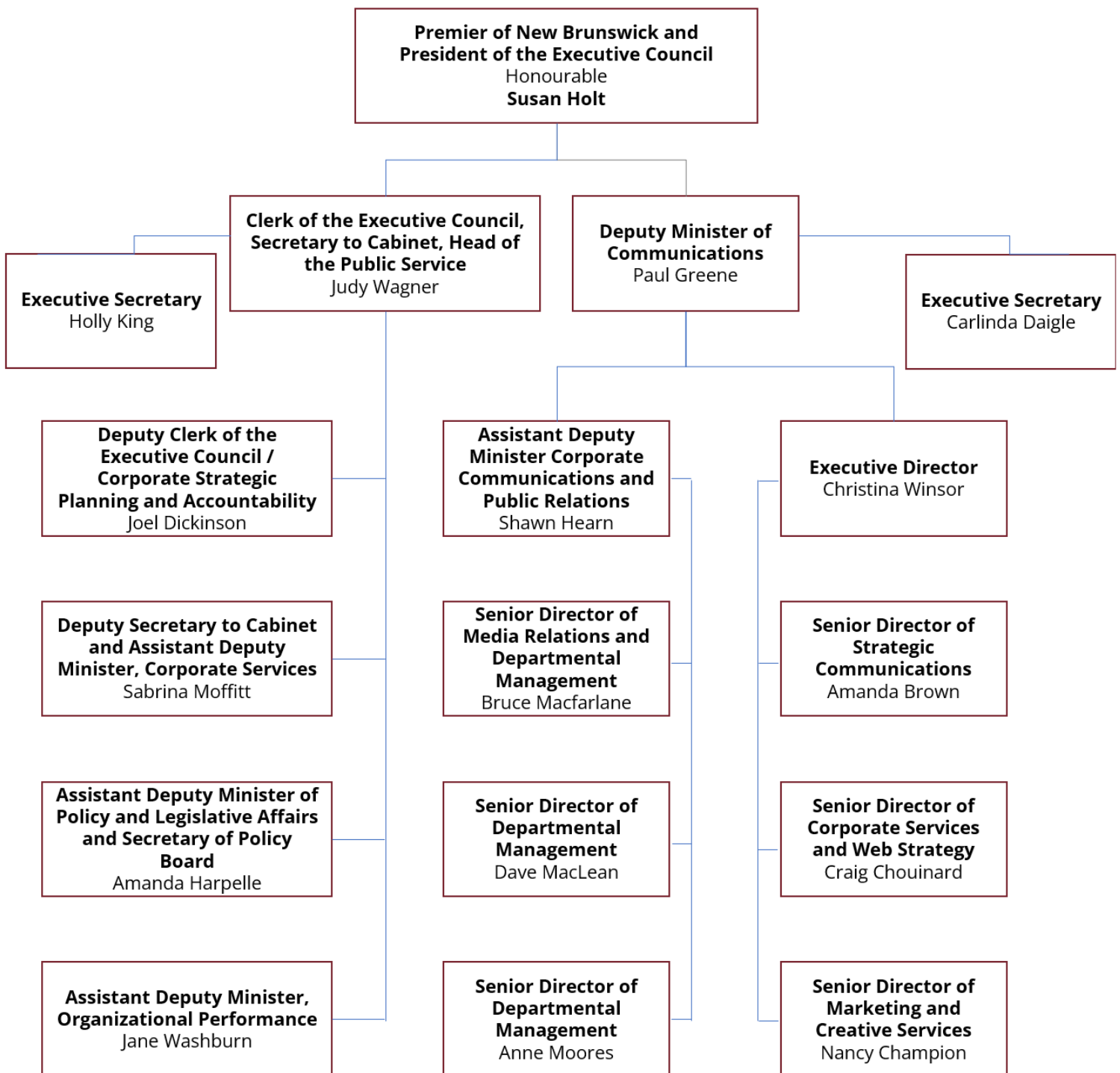
The Office of the Clerk provides professional non-partisan advice and support on the structure and operations of government. The Clerk also acts as the head of the public service, ensuring effective and efficient management and that the public service is delivering high-quality programs and support on priority files and services, based on evidence-based evaluations.

It also provides secretariat and administrative services for Cabinet and committees of Cabinet. It reviews proposals for the development or amendment of government policy and reviews all regulatory and legislative proposals. It provides central support on appointments and governance of agencies, boards and commissions. The office also provides support to the government house leader in planning, establishing and managing the government's agenda for the legislative assembly; and in overseeing policy issues related to democracy and the legislature. It also liaises with the Office of the Lieutenant-Governor.

Communications & Marketing is a full-service communications and marketing division serving all other provincial government departments, agencies and boards. Its mandate is to provide strategic communications and marketing planning to the Executive Council Office and coordinate communications and marketing across government. Key functions include coordinating strategic horizontal projects and digital strategies; establishing and enforcing marketing standards and guidelines; developing communication plans; and developing, implementing and evaluating strategies.

The Lieutenant-Governor of New Brunswick represents the King within the Province of New Brunswick and is the province's legal head of state. As His Majesty's direct representative in the province, the lieutenant-governor is first in the provincial order of precedence. The lieutenant-governor upholds the province's constitutional framework and serves as both the apex and the unifying link in the constitutional and political structure of the province – executive, legislative and judicial. To uphold the constitutional framework, the lieutenant-governor ensures the continued existence of government in the Province of New Brunswick; selects a first minister as premier of the province; appoints and administers the oaths of office, allegiance and confidentiality to the premier and members of the executive council; summons, prorogues and dissolves the legislature; delivers the speech from the throne; provides royal assent to provincial legislation; and signs orders-in-council, proclamations and other official documents before they have the force of law. In celebratory and promotional roles, the lieutenant-governor celebrates, inspires and connects New Brunswickers, while promoting the history, culture and achievements of the province. The Lieutenant-Governor is the patron of many community-based organizations and presides over award ceremonies for the Order of New Brunswick and other prominent provincial awards of excellence.

High-Level Organizational Chart



As of March 31, 2025

DIVISION OVERVIEW

OFFICE OF THE CLERK

Overview

The Office of the Clerk of the Executive Council provides professional non-partisan advice and support on the structure and operations of government. The Clerk also acts as the head of the public service, ensuring effective and efficient management and that the public service delivers high-quality programs and services through evidence-based evaluations. The Office of the Clerk of the Executive Council has several units supporting the division.

The **Cabinet Operations** unit serves the Clerk of the Executive Council and Secretary to Cabinet, and members of cabinet and cabinet committees by ensuring that the business of cabinet and its committees is conducted in a timely and efficient manner and that proper collective information is provided. There are three main areas of responsibility within the cabinet operations unit: development and implementation of the processes associated with cabinet decision-making; support for the Office of the Lieutenant-Governor in fulfilling ceremonial functions related to the installation of a new Lieutenant-Governor and the swearing-in of cabinet ministers, as well as the issuance of a formal record for matters requiring approval of the Lieutenant-Governor; and support in preparation and planning related to government transitions.

The **Corporate Strategic Planning and Accountability** unit works directly with deputy ministers and their senior teams to align departmental strategic plans with government priorities and commitments. The team is responsible for designing, implementing and monitoring the accountability process to achieve priority outcomes and the management of government platform commitments. The unit leads and co-ordinates the annual report process for Part 1 departments.

The **Organizational Performance** unit is responsible for building and executing a customized and sustainable executive and leadership development system. This functions to prepare future GNB leaders to lead teams in the delivery of dependable, responsive and efficient programs and services while driving organizational improvement for New Brunswick taxpayers and customers. This is in partnership with deputy ministers, their executive teams, human resources teams and the Office of the Chief Human Resources Officer (OCHRO).

The **Corporate Services** unit provides corporate services (human resources and financial) to all employees of ECO Central and works with Finance and Treasury Board's Director of Finance to produce the annual budget for the Executive Council Office.

The **Policy, Governance and Legislative Affairs** unit provides secretariat and administrative services for Cabinet and its standing and ad hoc committees. The unit analyzes proposals for the development or amendment of government policy and oversees all aspects of regulatory and legislative proposals, from policy development through the stages of the legislative assembly. This unit provides central leadership on appointment to, and governance of, provincial agencies, boards and commissions, as well as oversight of accountability requirements for Crown bodies under the *Accountability and Continuous Improvement Act*. The unit provides training on the machinery of government. It also supports the government house leader in planning, establishing and managing

the government's agenda for the legislative assembly, overseeing policy issues related to democracy and the legislature. Policy, Governance and Legislative Affairs works directly with departments to ensure Executive Council Office receives well-thought-out, strategic proposals for consideration as it relates to governance and public policy, including legislation.

COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING

Communications & Marketing is a full-service communications and marketing division serving all provincial government departments, agencies and boards. Its mission is to help New Brunswickers understand – in both official languages – what government is doing and why. Its mandate is to provide strategic communications and marketing planning to the Executive Council Office and coordinate communications and marketing across government. Key functions include coordinating strategic projects and digital strategies; establishing and enforcing marketing standards and guidelines; developing communication and marketing plans; and developing, implementing and evaluating strategies.

Communications & Marketing is comprised of six units: Corporate Services; Web Strategy and Development; Strategic Communications; Departmental Management; Media Relations; and Marketing & Creative Services.

Corporate Services is responsible for managing the organization's operational budget, human resource development, staff recruitment and training and communication and marketing contracts.

The unit is also responsible for administering and publishing the Royal Gazette, the official publication of the Province of New Brunswick.

In partnership with departments, the **Web Strategy and Development** unit assists in all stages of website development, including research and analytics, content analysis, writing and editing and information architecture development. This assistance is followed by site development, launch and maintenance. The unit also updates and maintains all corporate and departmental pages on gnb.ca and snb.ca as well as for some other government organizations. It approves any external website development and partners with departments to ensure these sites meet standards and appropriately represent government.

The **Strategic Communications** unit works with departments to help them identify goals for communicating their policies and initiatives. It helps generate ideas and gain insights through research and bring together the means necessary to implement their plans. The unit is responsible for the management of the GNB communications and marketing calendar, providing writing and editing support for the Office of the Premier and the Executive Council Office as well as acting as a liaison between departments and the Office of the Premier. It also coordinates and develops integrated marketing and communications plans, reviews communications plans that are attached to memorandums to Executive Council and works on enhancing analytics within communications and marketing. It is also responsible for the provincial newswire.

The **Departmental Management** unit is responsible for departmental communications and houses all communications directors and officers. All communications staff are assigned centrally by Communications & Marketing but respond to the communications needs of their respective departments.

The **Media Relations** unit strategically assesses and addresses media requests, working with departmental communications staff on strategies to communicate with the media. It also provides media training for ministers and departmental staff and spokespeople, assists with event management, and manages all media scrums when the Legislative Assembly is in session.

The **Marketing & Creative Services** unit develops, executes and evaluates all marketing initiatives and campaigns across government. It provides creative services and visual communications expertise including graphic design, content creation, advertising and media planning and buying. The unit also leads market research and public opinion polling to support government communications and marketing initiatives. Marketing & Creative Services manages the GNB brand and its sub-brands and upholds its guidelines.

Marketing & Creative Services includes the Social Media, Photography, and Videography Services team, which is responsible for the day-to-day management and monitoring of government social media channels. It explains the actions of government by answering user comments and questions, and ensure the public gets accurate and timely information. It also provides advice to departments on how to reach various audiences and works with the graphic design team to create engaging content, including videos and graphics.

The team records hundreds of videos and captures still images supporting government communications and marketing activities each year. In addition, the videography team manages, facilitates and produces all live-streamed media events.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Fiscal year ending March 31, 2025

EXPENDITURES	TOTAL BUDGET	2024-2025 ACTUALS	VARIANCE	% OF BUDGET
Office of the Clerk, Head of the Public Service and Executive Council Secretariat	3,806,873	3,557,961	248,912	93%
Communications and Marketing	7,653,691	7,573,066	80,625	99%
Office of the Lieutenant- Governor	579,565	503,946	75,619	87%
Executive Council Office	12,040,129	11,634,973	405,156	97%

SUMMARY OF STAFFING ACTIVITY

Pursuant to section 4 of the *Civil Service Act*, the Secretary to Treasury Board delegates staffing to each Deputy Head for his or her respective department(s). Please find below a summary of the staffing activity for 2023-2024 for the Executive Council Office.

NUMBER OF PERMANENT AND TEMPORARY EMPLOYEES AS OF DEC. 31 OF EACH YEAR		
EMPLOYEE TYPE	2024	2023
Permanent	110	113
Temporary	32	28
TOTAL	142	141

The department advertised 6 competitions, including 3 open (public) competitions and 3 closed (internal) competitions.

Pursuant to sections 15 and 16 of the *Civil Service Act*, the department made the following appointments using processes to establish merit other than the competitive process:

APPOINTMENT TYPE	APPOINTMENT DESCRIPTION	SECTION OF THE CIVIL SERVICE ACT	NUMBER
Specialized Professional, Scientific or Technical	An appointment may be made without competition when a position requires: - a high degree of expertise and training - a high degree of technical skill - recognized experts in their field	15(1)	0
Equal Employment Opportunity Program	Provides Aboriginals, persons with disabilities and members of a visible minority group with equal access to employment, training and advancement opportunities.	16(1)(a)	0
Department Talent Management Program	Permanent employees identified in corporate and departmental talent pools, who meet the four-point criteria for assessing talent, namely performance, readiness, willingness and criticalness.	16(1)(b)	9

APPOINTMENT TYPE	APPOINTMENT DESCRIPTION	SECTION OF THE CIVIL SERVICE ACT	NUMBER
Lateral transfer	The GNB transfer process facilitates the transfer of employees from within Part 1, 2 (school districts) and 3 (hospital authorities) of the Public Service.	16(1) or 16(1)(c)	5
Regular appointment of casual/temporary	An individual hired on a casual or temporary basis under section 17 may be appointed without competition to a regular properly classified position within the Civil Service.	16(1)(d)(i)	7
Regular appointment of students/apprentices	Summer students, university or community college co-op students or apprentices may be appointed without competition to an entry level position within the Civil Service.	16(1)(d)(ii)	0

Pursuant to section 33 of the *Civil Service Act*, no complaints alleging favouritism were made to the Deputy Head of the Executive Council Office and no complaints were submitted to the Ombud.

SUMMARY OF LEGISLATION AND LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITY

BILL #	NAME OF LEGISLATION	DATE OF ROYAL ASSENT	SUMMARY OF CHANGES
2	<i>An Act to Amend the Executive Council Act</i> Bill-29.pdf (legnb.ca)	December 13, 2024	The Bill made amendments to reflect the organization of government and included all necessary consequential amendments to ministerial titles and transfer of legislative authority across all impacted legislation.

The acts for which the department was responsible in 2024-2025 may be found at:
[Executive Council](#)

SUMMARY OF OFFICIAL LANGUAGES ACTIVITIES

Introduction

The Secretariat of Official Languages has developed an Implementation Plan to maintain and enhance bilingualism within the public service and co-ordinate, support and promote the provision of services and communications in both official languages within the government of New Brunswick and to New Brunswickers.

Strategic Objective 1

Ensure high quality, equal bilingual services to all New Brunswickers:

- Communications & Marketing is responsible for creating both internal and external communications materials that enable government to communicate important information and messages with all New Brunswickers. These materials include webpages, news releases, social media posts, communications plans, speeches and ministerial statements, among others.
- New Brunswick is the only officially bilingual province in Canada. New Brunswickers have the right to receive communications from GNB in either official language. All materials prepared and distributed by Communications & Marketing are provided in English and French, following the *Official Languages Act*, the *Official Languages Implementation Plan 2024 to 2031* and related GNB policies.

Strategic Objective 2

Provincial government employees are able to work and pursue a career in the official language of their choice:

- Communications & Marketing has an internal working group to better reflect the needs of francophone members of staff and ensure all official information is provided to staff in both official languages. This group is mandated to monitor and bring forward the challenges staff members face when it comes to working or expressing themselves in their preferred language, along with putting forward ways to help others feel more comfortable in doing so.
- Communications & Marketing provides bilingual information to all staff, through emails, memos, important documents, SharePoint pages and PowerPoint presentations.
- A number of Communications & Marketing staff members took French second-language training once again during the fiscal year as part of the division's efforts to increase and improve its capacity to work in and conduct all communications and marketing activities in both official languages.

Strategic Objective 3

New Brunswickers understand the socio-economic benefits of bilingualism through improved and effective communication and better support:

- Communications & Marketing coordinates market research for various government departments and agencies and occasionally contracts external market research firms to conduct such research. All market research work is conducted in both official languages; any in-person or online research activities are done bilingually or with separate English and French focus groups.

- The division, through the marketing and communications standing offer, procures support for external consultations efforts on behalf of government departments and agencies on various subjects of importance to New Brunswickers. These consultations are required to be conducted in English and French sessions both online and in person.

Strategic Objective 4

Positive measures are implemented to promote the development of both official linguistic communities:

- Executive Council Office has developed an onboarding program provided to all new employees, which includes information about the *Official Languages Act* and the policies and regulations governing their interactions with respect to official languages. It follows the principles of GNB's onboarding program where official languages is included in the orientation checklist for new employees. The department ensures that all new employees are provided these documents and understand their meaning and importance.
- Bilingual service is central to the work of ECO and its divisions. We endeavour to provide service and support in both official languages and ensure all employees are mindful of their responsibility to provide an active offer of service in both.

Conclusion

Supporting and promoting official languages within GNB and to all New Brunswickers continues to be a key priority of the Executive Council Office. We understand the importance and value of providing services and working in both official languages and strive to ensure we continue to improve on both each year.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE OFFICE OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL

Section 1 – Includes the current reporting year and the previous year.

NAME AND YEAR OF AUDIT AREA WITH LINK TO ONLINE DOCUMENT	RECOMMENDATIONS
	TOTAL
2023 V1 Chapter 2: COVID-19 Pandemic Response: Oversight – Executive Council Office	5

IMPLEMENTED RECOMMENDATIONS	ACTIONS TAKEN
N/A	N/A

RECOMMENDATIONS NOT IMPLEMENTED	CONSIDERATIONS
Recommendation 2.50 We recommend Executive Council Office ensure that the Province improve its emergency preparedness process by: - Preparing and keeping emergency response plans up to date for all hazards (including pandemics); and - Testing and updating plans on a regular basis according to a pre-defined schedule	Underway. A COVID-19 after-action review has been completed and recommendations to government will be brought forward. As part of the review of the response to COVID-19, Justice and Public Safety will coordinate recommendations for action to government. Work is underway to implement decisions by government for the 2024-2025 fiscal year to enhance emergency management training, exercises and 24/7 operations.
Recommendation 2.59 We recommend the Executive Council Office ensure: - the roles, responsibilities and expectations of all executive committees involved in provincial emergency responses are clearly defined and documented; and - records are maintained for all committee meetings during an emergency response.	Underway. A COVID-19 after-action review has been completed and recommendations to government will be brought forward. As part of the review of the response to COVID-19, Justice and Public Safety will coordinate recommendations for action to government. Work is

	underway to implement decisions by government for the 2024-2025 fiscal year to enhance emergency management training, exercises and 24/7 operations.
Recommendation 2.78 We recommend the Executive Council Office ensure recommendations and decision support be documented for any similar future emergencies, as emergency situations become more stable with the passage of time.	Underway. A COVID-19 after-action review has been completed and recommendations to government will be brought forward. As part of the review of the response to COVID-19, Justice and Public Safety will coordinate recommendations for action to government. Work is underway to implement decisions by government for the 2024-2025 fiscal year to enhance emergency management training, exercises and 24/7 operations.
Recommendation 2.94 We recommend Executive Council Office, in collaboration with the New Brunswick Emergency Measures Organization, undertake a post-operation review and incorporate communication lessons learned into an updated New Brunswick Emergency Public Information Plan.	Underway. A COVID-19 after-action review has been completed and recommendations to government will be brought forward. In the interim, current crisis communications training, processes, procedures were reviewed. Improvements include: development of deployable kits for staff, crisis communications training and exercises, creation of standardized messaging templates, and the establishment of a Crisis Communications Response Team.
Recommendation 2.100 We recommend that Executive Council Office ensure the Department of Justice and Public Safety, in collaboration with the Department of Health: • Undertake an After-Action Review to evaluate the provincial response to the COVID-19 pandemic; • Incorporate lessons learned into an updated provincial pandemic emergency plan; and	Underway. A COVID-19 after-action review has been completed and recommendations to government will be brought forward. As part of the review of the response to COVID-19, Justice and Public Safety will coordinate recommendations for action to government. Work is underway to implement decisions by

Create and implement a schedule to regularly test and update the provincial pandemic emergency plan	government for the 2024-2025 fiscal year to enhance emergency management training, exercises and 24/7 operations.
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Section 2 – Includes the reporting periods for years three, four and five.

NAME AND YEAR OF AUDIT AREA WITH LINK TO ONLINE DOCUMENT	RECOMMENDATIONS	
	TOTAL	IMPLEMENTED
2022 V2 Chapter 2: Contaminated Sites - Department of Environment and Local Government	2	2
2021 V1 Chapter 2: Regional Development Corporation and Opportunities New Brunswick – Funding for Rural Internet	3	3
2021 V2 Chapter 3: Crown Agency Salary and Benefits Practices	1	1
2021 V1 Chapter 3: Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour – Covid-19 Funding – New Brunswick Workers' Emergency Income Benefit	1	1
2021 V1 Chapter 4: Executive Council Office – Risks Exist in Government's Oversight of Crown Agencies	5	5
2020 V1 Chapter 3: Ambulance Services	1	0

REPORT ON THE *PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURE ACT*

As provided under section 18(1) of the *Public Interest Disclosure Act*, the chief executive shall prepare a report of any disclosures of wrongdoing that have been made to a supervisor or designated officer of the portion of the public service for which the chief executive officer is responsible. The Executive Council Office received no disclosure(s) of wrongdoing in the 2024-2025 fiscal year.