

Ministry of
Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation

2008/09
Annual Service Plan Report



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Message from the Minister and Accountability Statement



I am pleased to present the *Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation 2008/09 Annual Service Plan Report*, outlining achievements for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2009.

The report reflects our progress on the New Relationship. It outlines the Ministry's ongoing efforts to help close the gaps in economic development, education, health care and housing that separate Aboriginal peoples from other British Columbians. Our focus on building respectful and constructive relationships with Aboriginal peoples is the foundation from which we can address these challenges together.

Over the past year the treaty process has been building momentum, from the signings of B.C.'s first ever incremental treaty agreements to the effective date of the Tsawwassen treaty. The Ministry is engaging with First Nations to achieve land and resource agreements. This year's milestones demonstrate our commitment to treaty negotiations as a full and formal expression of reconciliation.

In addition to our work at the treaty table, we continue to celebrate Aboriginal achievements and culture. Our support of events such as the inaugural Aboriginal Business Awards and the North American Indigenous Games are increasing awareness of Aboriginal values and diversity among British Columbians.

I am proud of the work each of my staff has contributed to the realization of our goals. We are moving forward in the treaty process and working with our First Nations and Métis partners to improve social and economic outcomes for Aboriginal peoples. The progress we are making proves the strength of the New Relationship.

The *Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation 2008/09 Annual Service Plan Report* compares the actual results to the expected results identified in the Ministry's *2008/09 – 2010/11 Service Plan*. I am accountable for those results as reported.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "George Abbott". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Honourable George Abbott
Minister of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation

June 22, 2009

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Highlights of the Year

The Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation is committed to closing the socio-economic gaps that exist between Aboriginal peoples and other British Columbians in economic opportunities, health, education and housing; to building respectful relationships with Aboriginal peoples; and to concluding treaties and other lasting agreements.

Closing the Socio-Economic Gap

The Province continues to make progress in fulfilling commitments made in the *Transformative Change Accord* and the *Métis Nation Relationship Accord*. The Ministry is responsible for reporting on progress under these important Accords. To this end, a number of reports were produced including *Transformative Change Accord: Meeting Our Commitments* (February 2009), *Measuring Outcomes* (March 2009) and *New Relationships with Aboriginal People and Communities in BC* (April 2008).

Building on strategic plans developed by partner ministries, notable progress has been made in the areas of health, education, economic development and housing such as: providing additional funding to increase the number of trained First Nations health care professionals; increasing the number of K – 12 Aboriginal Enhancement Agreements; inclusion of First Nations and Métis content in curriculum development; expansion of affordable and supportive Aboriginal housing units; and providing over \$30 million for broadband connectivity for First Nations communities.

January 2009 saw the successful launch of the annual BC Aboriginal Business Awards celebration event to honour and applaud the achievements of Aboriginal people in the field of business. The Ministry also assisted future entrepreneurs by expanding its Aboriginal Business and Entrepreneurship Training Program through funding provided under the BC–Canada Labour Market Agreement.



Minister de Jong with recipients of the Aboriginal Business Awards

Moreover, the Ministry conducted an engagement process with Aboriginal individuals and communities to gather insights and identify best practices which will assist in the design and development of future labour market initiatives for Aboriginal peoples.

In addition, important work has been accomplished with the Snuneymuxw First Nation, Wuikinuxv First Nation, and Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council in building community capacity, based on the communities' assets and strengths. Funding for a learning centre and for economic

and social projects are only a few of the ways the Ministry supported capacity development in Aboriginal communities.

Building Respectful Relationships with Aboriginal Peoples

The Throne Speech, delivered on February 16, 2009, at the legislature in Victoria, pledged to work with First Nations to establish recognition and reconciliation legislation. The proposed statute would build on commitments made in the New Relationship by acknowledging that Indigenous people have long lived throughout British Columbia; by recognizing constitutionally established Aboriginal rights and title; and by agreeing to establish new processes and institutions for shared decision making and revenue sharing. The proposed statutory framework would help foster positive relationships and provide greater predictability for economic development.

***Recognition and Reconciliation Act
(Speech from the Throne, 2009)***

“It will involve compromise, forbearance and accountability from all of us. It is a journey that is itself a search for new thinking, new approaches and mutual benefit. If we get it right, it will be a significant provincial accomplishment for our times.”

— The Honourable Steven L. Point, OBC
Xwě lī qwěł tēł
Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia

On July 18, 2008, the Treaty Common Table process, which included the Province, Canada, and the First Nations Task Force, completed four months of intensive exploratory discussions on matters identified by First Nations as barriers to concluding treaties: recognition of Aboriginal rights including title and certainty models; governance systems and law-making powers; constitutional status of treaty settlement lands; shared decision making outside of treaty settlement lands; fisheries; and taxation and fiscal relations arrangements. The parties reached consensus on some common ground principles and generated a list of areas to explore further to help expedite treaty negotiations.

Concluding Treaties and Other Lasting Agreements

The conclusion of treaties and other lasting agreements is possible because of the respectful relationships forged between the Province and First Nations. During the past year, the Ministry successfully sustained momentum from previous years, and achieved milestones that signify progress towards our objective of reconciliation.

The Province made solid progress in advancing the treaty process with In-SHUCK-ch Nation and Yale First Nation. Bilateral understandings signed with the two First Nations formally concluded treaty negotiations between the Province and those First Nations, moving them a step closer to completing a final agreement under the BC treaty process.

Honouring a commitment the Province made in the 2008 Throne Speech, the Ministry continued to pursue flexible and creative solutions at the negotiating table. British Columbia signed incremental treaty agreements with the Tla-o-qui-aht and Klahoose First Nations that provide benefits in advance of treaty. These agreements expand economic development opportunities while at the same time furthering treaty negotiations.

Crowning these achievements within the treaty process, the *Tsawwassen First Nation Final Agreement Act* was given Royal Assent by Parliament on June 26, 2008 and came into effect on April 3, 2009. The Tsawwassen First Nation Final Agreement is the first treaty under the BC Treaty Commission and the first urban treaty in Canada.

Effective Date of the Tsawwassen First Nation Final Agreement Act

“Today, the Indian Act no longer exists in our community. Today, we have taken a huge leap forward in our journey of rebuilding our community to overcome the negative consequences of our past. We now are taking back our rightful place as a self-governing First Nation and will soon pass our first laws governing our new lands, resources, and funds.”

— Chief Kim Baird

British Columbia has also made noteworthy progress in achieving reconciliation agreements with First Nations outside of the treaty process. For example, the Province and Blueberry River First Nations finalized an agreement that provides the First Nations with a share of resource development revenues and a voice in land and resource decision making within its treaty territory. Also, the Province and BC Hydro finalized an agreement with the Kwadacha First Nation to address longstanding grievances from the creation and operation of the W.A.C. Bennett Dam and Williston Reservoir in the Peace River region. A similar agreement with the Tsay Keh Dene Band was initialled on March 30, 2009, and is expected to be finalized in the summer of 2009.

Other Achievements

The Ministry led several initiatives in partnership with other ministries, First Nations organizations, and the federal government in support of the Province’s commitment to carbon neutrality by 2010. For example, the Ministry is coordinating the development of carbon offset protocols that will enable First Nations to benefit from forestry and fuel switching carbon offset projects eligible for purchase by the Pacific Carbon Trust.

Purpose of Ministry

The Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation is the centre of excellence for innovative approaches to Aboriginal policy and the Province's representative for all treaty negotiations. By providing strategic leadership and expert advice across government, the Ministry helps identify opportunities to stimulate positive outcomes for Aboriginal peoples and supports efforts to create strong, healthy, prosperous and sustainable Aboriginal communities.

The Ministry plays a vital role in leading the way forward in government's New Relationship with First Nations and Aboriginal peoples. The New Relationship is a government priority and, as the government's lead on the New Relationship, the Ministry is focusing its efforts in three key strategic areas:

- closing the socio-economic gaps between Aboriginal peoples and other British Columbians;
- building respectful relationships with Aboriginal peoples; and
- reconciliation of Aboriginal rights and title through treaties and other lasting agreements.



Chief Kim Baird of the Tsawwassen First Nation with baby Sofia and Premier Gordon Campbell

The Ministry supports achievement of these goals by researching, developing and recommending meaningful policy approaches and initiatives to government. Using well-established relationships and an understanding of issues of shared interest, the Ministry promotes creative and integrated cross government work that brings together Aboriginal partners with representatives from other ministries and Crown agencies, federal and local governments, and other sectors around Aboriginal initiatives.

The Ministry has collaboratively achieved a number of milestones toward closing the socio-economic gaps and building respectful relationships with Aboriginal partners. Negotiations are ongoing throughout the province to conclude treaties and other lasting agreements.

The Ministry makes appointments to:

BC Treaty Commission

The BC Treaty Commission is the independent and neutral body responsible for facilitating treaty negotiations among the governments of Canada, British Columbia and First Nations in BC. The Treaty Commission's primary role is to oversee the negotiation process to make sure the parties are being effective and making progress in negotiations. In carrying out the

Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation

recommendations of the BC Claims Task Force, the Treaty Commission has three roles: facilitation, funding and public information and education.

First Peoples' Advisory Committee

The First Peoples' Council Advisory Committee is comprised of elected representatives from each of the 24 Tribal Councils in BC. Acting as liaisons, the Advisory Committee members relay up-to-date information on current First Peoples' Heritage, Language and Culture Council programs and initiatives to their communities.

First Peoples' Heritage, Language and Culture Council

The First Peoples' Heritage, Language and Culture Council is a provincial Crown Corporation formed by the government of British Columbia in 1990 to administer the First Peoples' Heritage, Language and Culture Program. The mandate of the First Peoples' Heritage Language and Culture Council is to assist BC First Nations in their efforts to revitalize their languages, arts and cultures.

Native Economic Development Advisory Board

The Native Economic Development Advisory Board supports sustainable Aboriginal economic development throughout British Columbia by providing policy, program and service advice to government on appropriate strategies to support Aboriginal economic development. The board also works with the provincial government to protect the purpose and integrity of the First Citizens Fund, a special account established to enhance economic development, social and cultural opportunities for Aboriginal people in BC.

New Relationship Trust Board

Created in 2006, the New Relationship Trust is an independent non-profit organization dedicated to strengthening First Nations in BC through capacity building. The New Relationship Trust supports nation building by assisting First Nations and their communities in five key areas: education, capacity, language and culture, youth and elders, and economic development.

A list of statutes that fall under the responsibility of the Ministry can be found at:

www.leg.bc.ca/procs/allacts/arr.htm

Strategic Context

British Columbia is home to approximately one-third of the more than 600 First Nations communities in Canada, comprising the most culturally and linguistically diverse groups of Aboriginal peoples in the country. Between 2001 and 2006, the Aboriginal population in the province grew by 15 percent. This is more than three times the rate of the non-Aboriginal population. According to the 2006 census, there are nearly 200,000 people in BC who identify themselves as First Nation, Métis, or Inuit.

Likewise, the fastest growing population demographic province-wide is Aboriginal youth and these youth have a hopeful vision of their future prospects. A recent national survey¹ indicates that 89 percent of Aboriginal teenagers living on reserve are confident their success is attainable with hard work and 84 percent of on reserve youth anticipate they will be able to secure the job they want.

These unique demographic characteristics create an intricate and multifaceted operational context for the Ministry.

The economic forecast for British Columbia is further impacting the Ministry's administrative climate. The private sector now expects BC will experience slower economic growth in 2009 and 2010 than it has in previous years. Recent estimates from the BC Economic Forecast Council project BC's annual real GDP growth to be 0.6 percent in 2009 and 2.7 percent in 2010. Risks to BC's economy include a prolonged US recession, continued turmoil in global financial markets, slower global demand for BC products, volatile commodity prices and further moderation of domestic demand in BC.

The National Apology, made June 11, 2008 by the federal government to all those negatively affected by the misguided policies of the residential school system, was an historic step towards reconciliation. The issuance of the apology further solidified the Province's resolve to work with Aboriginal leaders and Canada to support Aboriginal people on their journey toward healing.

Statement on the Residential Schools Apology

“Today's apology ... provides an opportunity to begin the act of healing. We sincerely hope that healing will evolve from this apology, and that it will be a significant step toward closing a tragic chapter in Canada's history.”

— Premier Gordon Campbell

¹ Project Teen Canada

Increased positive awareness of the diversity and value of Aboriginal cultures among British Columbians

Positive awareness of the diversity and value of Aboriginal cultures increased this year among British Columbians, above what the Ministry had expected to achieve going into the year. Part of this was due to the indirect impact of successful partnerships with Aboriginal organizations and other ministries, which celebrated Aboriginal language, culture, sports, art and employment.

In addition, the upcoming Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games in 2010 has enhanced awareness of the Squamish, Musqueam, Lil'wat and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations (referred to collectively as the Four Host First Nations), highlighting the importance of their support and participation to the success of the Games.

Reconciliation of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights

British Columbia remains committed to negotiating treaties as a full and formal expression of reconciliation. The treaty momentum from the previous year enabled the Province and Canada to table new treaty settlement offers to a number of First Nations in 2008/09.

Recent successes in treaty negotiations is building positive momentum in the treaty process, allowing the Ministry to work with First Nations and Canada on a range of options to revitalize the treaty process and develop creative mechanisms for negotiations. Treaty revitalization was one of the tripartite processes agreed to by the Principals (BC, Canada and the First Nations Summit) of the British Columbia treaty process. Another vehicle for moving forward on treaties was the Common Table. Consisting of 64 First Nations, Canada and BC, the Common Table yielded positive results through the collaborative identification of effective ways to advance treaty negotiations.

Nevertheless, the Province recognizes that the treaty process can be long and arduous. Incremental treaty agreements provide an alternative for the ministry and First Nations to realize substantive and tangible benefits for all parties in advance of a final treaty, or in situations where a final agreement is not yet possible.

Development of Culturally Appropriate Policies, Programs and Services

The Ministry continues its commitment to the *Transformative Change Accord* and the *Métis Nation Relationship Accord*. These accords have served as the Ministry's guiding principles to achieving progress in the areas of improved Crown-Aboriginal relationships, education, housing and infrastructure, health and economic opportunities, thereby helping to improve social and economic outcomes for Aboriginal peoples.

Across the provincial government, the New Relationship approach has become the acknowledged standard for working together with First Nations, Métis, and urban Aboriginal peoples and organizations. This has facilitated impressive achievements made by the Ministry in partnership with other line ministries, Aboriginal organizations and Canada.

Report on Performance

Performance Plan Summary Table

Goal 1: Improved social and economic outcomes for Aboriginal peoples	2008/09 Target	2008/09 Actual
1.1 Monitor and report progress on key performance indicators associated with closing the socio-economic gaps Monitor and report progress on closing the social and economic gaps.	Annual Progress Report	ACHIEVED
1.2 Development of culturally appropriate policies, programs and services Number of new provincial policies and initiatives that have been developed collaboratively with Aboriginal peoples and First Nations.	15	18 EXCEEDED
Goal 2: Respectful and constructive relationships with Aboriginal peoples	2008/09 Target	2008/09 Actual
2.1 Aboriginal peoples possess the capacity necessary to enable meaningful engagement with government Number of new initiatives that build the capacity of First Nations and Aboriginal organizations to participate in government engagements.	Baseline under development	10
2.2 Increase awareness of Aboriginal values and diversity among British Columbians Percentage of people expressing positive awareness of diversity and value of Aboriginal cultures.	+1.5%	+4% EXCEEDED
Goal 3: Reconciliation of Aboriginal and treaty rights	2008/09 Target	2008/09 Actual
3.1 Conclude agreements that lead to the reconciliation of Aboriginal and treaty rights Number of treaties and agreements that build incremental progress towards reconciliation.	10	14 EXCEEDED
3.2 Increase Aboriginal peoples' access to economic opportunities Agreements and initiatives that provide economic opportunities to Aboriginal peoples.	5	6 EXCEEDED

Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Performance Results

Goal 1: Improved social and economic outcomes for Aboriginal peoples

Objective 1.1: Monitor and report progress on key performance indicators associated with closing the social and economic gaps

While other ministries and Crown agencies are directly responsible for programs and services associated with key performance indicators, the Ministry plays a central role supporting implementation plans and providing critical information about progress on closing the gaps not only to the parties involved, but also to the public and legislators.

Strategies

- Monitor and report on activities and progress towards meeting the goals of the *Transformative Change Accord* and *Métis Nation Relationship Accord*.
- Promote discussions on and evaluation of key performance indicators such as: high school completion rates by Aboriginal students; off-reserve Aboriginal household in core housing needs; life expectancy at birth; and unemployment rates.
- Support work by other ministries on closing the socio-economic gaps in the areas of economic development, education, health and housing.
- Facilitate and support collaboration on socio-economic gap initiatives among Aboriginal and First Nation organizations, all levels of government and the private sector.

“We are challenged and compelled to close that gap, fulfilling our nation's potential and promise by ensuring that Aboriginal peoples have the same entitlement to success and opportunity as anyone else.”

— Premier Gordon Campbell

Performance Results

Performance Measure	2006/07 Actual	2007/08 Actual	2008/09 Target	2008/09 Actual
Monitor and report progress on closing the social and economic gaps.	N/A	N/A	Annual Progress Report	ACHIEVED

Data Source: Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation gathers performance indicator data from a variety of sources in its annual progress report.

Discussion of Results

Consistent with the strategies identified to meet this objective, the Ministry published reports tracking the Province's progress on closing the social and economic gaps. Among these are: *Transformative Change Accord: Meeting our Commitments*; *New Relationships with Aboriginal Peoples and Communities*; and the first annual quantitative report, *Measuring Outcomes*.

In addition to reporting, the Ministry was instrumental in advocating and leveraging opportunities with federal and provincial partners at intergovernmental events for closing the socio-economic gaps. Funding was also provided to various events to develop best practices on measuring data, and to promote community renewal.

Objective 1.2: Development of culturally appropriate policies, programs and services

Including Aboriginal partners in the development and implementation of policies, programs and services results in culturally appropriate responses and meaningful solutions that can facilitate outcomes to help close socio-economic gaps. The Ministry works with other ministries, Crown agencies and the federal government to support the development of initiatives in collaboration with Aboriginal peoples and organizations.

Strategies

Key strategies for this objective include:

- Lead and/or support the negotiation and implementation of agreements that contribute to addressing socio-economic disparities.
- Support development of policies and initiatives in partnership with Aboriginal peoples.
- Support delivery of programs and services in partnership with Aboriginal peoples.

Performance Results

Performance Measure	2006/07 Actual	2007/08 Actual	2008/09 Target	2008/09 Actual
Number of new provincial policies and initiatives that have been developed collaboratively with Aboriginal peoples and First Nations.	8	5	15	18 EXCEEDED

Data Source: Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation and ministries participating in the implementation of Transformative Change Accord and the Métis Nation Relationship Accord.

Discussion of Results

The Province recognizes that full partnership with Aboriginal peoples is critical to closing the gaps by 2015. A key effort in 2008/09 had the Province and the First Nations Leadership Council working to jointly establish recognition and reconciliation legislation. Furthermore, the Ministry and the Blueberry First Nations reached milestone agreements in Wildlife, Parks, Crown Land Consultation and other Collaborative Management Agreements.

Apart from direct engagement with Aboriginal peoples, the Ministry also facilitated relationships between ministries and Aboriginal organizations and was instrumental in supporting and encouraging initiatives in the areas of housing, cultural awareness, education and health. For example, the Ministry worked closely with the Ministry of Housing and Social Development to achieve an historical First Nations Housing Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which was signed in May 2008, between Canada, British Columbia and the First Nations Leadership Council. The MOU commits the parties to work together to develop a comprehensive approach to improve housing for First Nations both on and off reserve. More specifically, it acknowledges that working in partnership is necessary to overcome barriers and to address the housing gap between First Nations people and other British Columbians; it commits to exploring innovative approaches to improve housing and infrastructure for First Nations; and it sets out an initial framework to develop on and off reserve housing strategies collaboratively.

Goal 2: Respectful and constructive relationships with Aboriginal peoples

Objective 2.1: Aboriginal peoples possess the capacity necessary to enable meaningful engagement with government

Aboriginal peoples require tools and appropriate resources to participate in engagements such as negotiations, consultation frameworks and program and service delivery.

Strategies

Key strategies for this objective include:

- Support and coordinate action by ministries and Crown agencies towards a New Relationship.
- Support capacity development and governance enhancement for Aboriginal governments and organizations.
- Support First Nations language, culture and heritage initiatives.
- Support Aboriginal community and economic development.

Performance Results

Performance Measure	2006/07 Actual	2007/08 Actual	2008/09 Target	2008/09 Actual
Number of new initiatives that build the capacity of First Nations and Aboriginal organizations to participate in government engagements.	N/A	N/A	Develop baseline	10

Data Source: Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation

Discussion of Results

First Nations and Aboriginal capacity is critical for meaningful engagement with government. The Ministry's performance measure for capacity is a way to keep capacity building at the forefront. In a departure from previous approaches, the Ministry is spearheading a unique way of working with Aboriginal communities. By identifying existing strengths and resources, the Community Development Initiative was able to work with the Snuneymuxw and Wuikinuxv First Nations to build and strengthen their governance skills. A multi-sectoral community development initiative with projects in three Nuu-chah-nulth communities has also achieved notable results.

Funding was provided to the Union of British Columbia Municipalities to support First Nations to build strong governments and foster mutually beneficial collaboration with municipalities. Additional funding to the B.C. First Nations Public Service Initiative, and a number of Aboriginal organizations, also aimed to strengthen internal capacity of Aboriginal peoples and organizations.

Objective 2.2: Increase positive awareness among British Columbians of the diversity and value of Aboriginal cultures

An essential part of forging respectful relationships with Aboriginal peoples includes an increased awareness by British Columbians of Aboriginal peoples' history, culture and heritage.

Strategies

Key strategies for this objective include:

- Build and facilitate partnerships with Aboriginal peoples.
- Support recognition of Aboriginal language, culture and heritage.
- Lead and support Aboriginal awareness initiatives within the public sector and British Columbia.

Performance Results

Performance Measure	2006/07 Actual	2007/08 Actual	2008/09 Target	2008/09 Actual
Percentage of people expressing positive awareness of diversity and value of Aboriginal cultures.	Baseline developed	26%	+1.5%	+4%

Data Source: Survey conducted by BC Stats with participation by the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation.

Discussion of Results

In a BC Stats Survey conducted across the province, 30 per cent of respondents expressed a positive awareness of the diversity and value of Aboriginal cultures. Positive awareness helps strengthen the foundation for building respectful relationships and creates wider support for the reconciliation of Aboriginal rights and title.

A number of activities and initiatives were funded in 2008/09 to heighten awareness of Aboriginal cultures including funding to support the celebration of Aboriginal art and culture during National Aboriginal Day and at venues like Gathering our Voices, Unity in Action, First Voices, and a First Nations Elders Gathering. In addition, the Ministry supported information and visioning sessions to improve relationships between provincial public employees and Aboriginal peoples.

Goal 3: Reconciliation of Aboriginal and treaty rights

Objective 3.1: Conclude agreements that lead to the reconciliation of Aboriginal and treaty rights

While final treaty agreements are the Province's primary means of reconciling Aboriginal rights and title with those of the Crown, other types of agreements can also contribute to substantive reconciliation. For instance, a number of First Nations signed or are in discussions around incremental agreements which will yield beneficial results in the short term, and can lead over time to final treaties. In addition, the Province has entered into consultation protocols with First Nations that already have treaties.

Strategies

Key strategies for this objective include:

- Support agreements among First Nations, government and local governments.
- Lead and support the negotiation of agreements that contribute to reconciliation of Aboriginal and treaty rights.

- Negotiate treaties and incremental agreements that lead to treaty.
- Lead and support the implementation of treaties and other agreements.

Performance Results

Performance Measure	2006/07 Actual	2007/08 Actual	2008/09 Target	2008/09 Actual
Number of treaties and agreements that build incremental progress towards reconciliation.	8	9	10	14 EXCEEDED

Data Source: Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation and other ministries and Crown agencies as appropriate (i.e., includes treaty process agreements and non-treaty process agreements).

Discussion of Results

Agreements successfully reached by the Ministry with First Nations will continue to build on the current treaty momentum. This year, the Province and four Maa-nulth First Nations signed a bilateral understanding of final agreement. In addition, British Columbia and the In-SHUCK-ch Nation and Yale First Nation signed bilateral understandings that formally concluded treaty negotiations between the Province and those First Nations, moving them a step closer to completing a final agreement under the BC treaty process.

As part of the Province’s commitment to identify creative mechanisms for negotiations, the first ever incremental treaty agreements were signed with the Tla-o-qui-aht and Klahoose First Nations. Other lasting agreements achieved include: five land in severalty negotiations under the McLeod Lake Indian Band; initialled Tsay Keh Dene First Nation final agreement; Kwadacha First Nation Final Agreement with BC and BC Hydro; a final agreement with the Blueberry First Nation; and an economic benefits agreement with four other Treaty 8 First Nations.

“There’s no question in the government’s mind that ITAs provide a key tool in reconciliation opportunities for First Nations in the shorter term while laying the foundation for a treaty.”

— Honourable Michael de Jong
Minister of Aboriginal Relations
and Reconciliation

Objective 3.2: Increase Aboriginal peoples' access to economic opportunities

Providing more access to economic opportunities results in economic benefits for all British Columbians. Aboriginal participation in business ventures and resource development contributes to British Columbia's prosperity.

Strategies

Key strategies for this objective include:

- Champion access to business venture and economic development opportunities through resource development agreements, benefit agreements and other strategic agreements.
- Facilitate access to training and skills development as well as support systems associated with economic development.
- Support employment initiatives in the private and public sectors.
- Support Aboriginal and First Nations access to land and resource tenures.

Performance Results

Performance Measure	2006/07 Actual	2007/08 Actual	2008/09 Target	2008/09 Actual
Agreements and initiatives that provide economic opportunities to Aboriginal peoples.	6	5	5	6

Data Source: Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation and other ministries and Crown agencies as appropriate (i.e., includes agreements that provide revenues, economic benefits and jobs to Aboriginal people).

Discussion of Results

The Ministry partnered with First Nations and Aboriginal organizations, providing funding to create and stimulate economic opportunities. Some of the Ministry's partners included: Nisga'a Nation, the Haida Heritage Centre, Aboriginal Capital Corporations throughout British Columbia, and Aboriginal Business Development Centres. Furthermore, an engagement process designed to gather Aboriginal community insights was held to develop targeted Aboriginal labour market initiatives in the 2009/10 fiscal year.

In recognition of the entrepreneurial contributions made by the Aboriginal community, the Aboriginal Business Awards was launched this year, and funding for the Aboriginal Business Entrepreneurship Skills Training was increased.

Aboriginal Business Awards

“I applaud the vision, hard work and commitment of the recipients. They provide inspiration to a new generation of budding entrepreneurs across the province and demonstrate the essential contribution that B.C.’s Aboriginal business community is making to keep our economy strong for the future.”

— Premier Gordon Campbell

Report on Resources

2008/09 Resource Summary Table

Core Business Area	Estimated	Other Authorizations ¹	Total Estimated	Actual	Variance
Operating Expenses (\$000)					
Negotiations	41,908	2,388	44,296	45,125	829
Aboriginal Relations²	11,893		11,893	11,654	(239)
Executive Support Services	8,326		8,326	7,730	(596)
Total	62,127	2,388	64,515	64,509	(6)
Full-time Equivalents (FTEs)					
	103		103	97	(6)
Negotiations					
Aboriginal Relations	32		32	37	5
Executive Support Service	39		39	40	1
Total	174		174	174	0
Ministry Capital Expenditures (Consolidated Revenue Fund) (\$000)					
Total	32		32	28	(4)
Other Financing Transactions (\$000)					
Negotiations – Nisga’a cash payments – deferrals	1,761		1,761	2,126	365
Negotiations – Land purchases	2,700		2,700	0	(2,700)
Total Disbursements	4,461		4,461	2,126	(2,335)

¹Other Authorization includes contingency access of \$2,000,000 for the Recognition and Reconciliation Act Consultation and \$388,000 for Treaty 8 Economic Benefits Agreement

²Aboriginal Relations includes First Citizens Fund Special Account

Annual Service Plan Report Appendices

Appendix A: Ministry Contact Information

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