



2025 Report of the Auditor General of New Brunswick

Volume I

AUDITOR GENERAL
OF NEW BRUNSWICK



VÉRIFICATEUR GÉNÉRAL
DU NOUVEAU-BRUNSWICK

Maintenance of Public Housing Units

New Brunswick Housing
Corporation

Introduction

- The Public Housing Program aims to provide safe and affordable housing to New Brunswickers
- Audit Objective: To determine whether the New Brunswick Housing Corporation has an adequate maintenance program and mechanisms for public housing units, to ensure properties are well maintained, safe and habitable for tenants

Background

- NB Housing owns 4630 units
- Housing waitlist: 13,129 households (21,712 individuals) at Dec 31, 2024

Vacancy Key Performance Indicator Not Met

- KPI: 30 days
- Actual Results:
 - Only 4% met 30-day target
 - Average: 140 days
 - 77% took between 91 and more than 365 days

Inspections

- Completion not being monitored
- Inspections not consistently done
 - Annual interior inspections: 4 regions not doing

Vacancy Inspections

- Vacancy inspections: 95% not meeting turnaround time
- Average time to complete was 70 days

Inspectors

- Inconsistent staffing levels based on historical practice
- Average inspections per inspector varies by region and ranges from 45 to 492
- Building inspections not always completed by building inspector

Work Order Targets Not Met

- Priority codes are assigned to work orders, with targeted times for completion
- Work Orders: 36% of all repair work did not achieve the target time for completion
- 17,877 work orders coded as urgent/requiring completion within 24 hours: target not met 71% of the time

Examples of Maintenance Issues

- **Electrical:** 4593 work orders
 - target not met in 35% of cases
 - 107 took between 366 and 1121 days
- **Plumbing:** 8788 work orders
 - target not met in 39% of cases
 - 584 took more than 90 days
 - 233 took between 366 and 1120 days

Maintenance Issues Con't

- **Pests/Bed Bugs:** 3045 work orders
 - target not met in 53% of cases
 - 53 took between 366 and 1068 days
- **Fire Safety:** 1068 work orders
 - target not met in 28% of cases
 - 33 took more than 90 days
 - 13 took between 366 and 1071 days

Maintenance Budget

- Repair budget: based on historical amounts
- Modernization and Improvement: \$9.3 Mil
 - No scoring mechanism

Overall Budget Not Allocated

- No financial plan
- Lack of monitoring and reporting
- Spending approved without budget
- Risks
 - Overspending
 - Underspending
 - Not knowing where gaps are

Recommendations

- We made 16 recommendations to NB Housing and they accepted all but one of our recommendations

Early Retirement Program

NB Power

Background and Importance

- 2022 early retirement program
- 148 employees offered financial incentives
- The operational performance of NB Power directly impacts New Brunswick residents and businesses
- Costly programs can increase electricity rates

Program Design and Implementation

- **Program Design:** The early retirement program was part of NB Power's 2022-2023 budgeting process to achieve significant savings
- **Eligibility Criteria:** Employees must be 55 or older and have more than two years of service
- **Incentives:** Included lump sum payments, additional years of service, waiver reductions, and health spending accounts

Key Issues Identified

- **Lack of Value for Money:** No evidence of adequate analysis to ensure the least costs incurred to meet program objectives
- **Overstated Savings:** Projected savings did not account for employees who would have retired without incentives and employees returned on contract

Governance and Approval Issues

- **HR Committee Approval:** Initial approval obtained without adequate analysis
- **Board of Directors:** Lack of documented decision-making policies and procedures
- **Program Changes:** Significant changes made without formal Board approval

Results not Achieved

- Plan of establishment increased
- Employees not required to retire by deadline
- Retirees returned on contract

Recommendations

- We made 5 recommendations to NB Power and they agreed with all of our recommendations

Service Delivery

New Brunswick Legal Aid
Services Commission

Introduction

- Audit Objective: To determine if the New Brunswick Legal Aid Services Commission has systems and practices in place to ensure the efficient and effective delivery of criminal and family legal aid to eligible recipients in New Brunswick.

Background and Importance

- **Background:** The New Brunswick Legal Aid Services Commission (NBLASC) was established in 2005 to provide criminal and family legal aid services to low-income individuals
- **Importance:** Legal aid ensures fair and equitable access to justice for low-income individuals
- 5,727 criminal and family cases

What is Working Well

- **Eligibility Criteria:** Established criteria are accurately applied
- **Timeliness:**
 - 84% of legal aid applications were processed within a week
 - 77% cases assigned a lawyer within a week

Areas for improvement

- Financial eligibility limits not reviewed
- Appeals process is informal and inconsistently applied
- Lack of financial analysis in the business case for the service delivery model
 - Staff vs. private counsel

Recommendations

- We made 6 recommendations to the New Brunswick Legal Aid Commission and they agreed with all of our recommendations

Questions?