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## INNU BRIEFING NOTE

DATE: November 8, 2001

E6585-10/L1-10

TO: Chantal Bernier

SUBJECT: INNU STRATEGY (November 9<sup>th</sup> Departmental Steering Committee)**SUMMARY**

- At SPC on October 30<sup>th</sup>, the reimbursement of \$1 million in "social" costs to Health Canada was not approved.
- Innu are pushing for control of all programs and services but both levels of government agree that they currently have limited capacity to deliver.
- SEPP officials are providing significant support to the region in negotiations with the Innu and the Province.
- Additional meetings are scheduled on CFS and Education in St. John's on November 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>.

**OVERVIEW / BACKGROUND**

The Innu Strategy was approved by Cabinet in June, 2001, including the Davis Inlet community relocation, registration and reserve creation, Education Task Force, Child and Family Services (CFS) and the Innu Healing Strategy. DIAND funds were initially assigned to the relocation costs for Davis Inlet but have since been reallocated by Finance and the region to cover various program priorities. SEPP officials are providing advice and support to the region on education and social care. There is a high level of foetal alcohol syndrome (FAS) among all ages in both communities and Health Canada has the lead on the healing strategy.

The Province's agent for delivery of health and social services to the Innu is Labrador Health Corporation (LHC). LHC officials are concerned that none of the children taken into care since the gas-sniffing crisis last fall have been reunited with their families and foster care homes are scarce. Funding agreement for CFS are currently being negotiated with LHC and the Province.

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Terri Harrison and Jerry Lyons travelled to Goose Bay in June, 2001, to attend several meetings with the Innu and other government officials to explain DIAND's role with respect to the delivery of child and family services. The funding agreements have now gone through several drafts and were reviewed in detail with the Province and LHC at a meeting in St. John's Nfld. on September 26<sup>th</sup> (attended by Kathleen Campbell, Terri Harrison and Jerry Lyons). The next meeting is scheduled for November 20<sup>th</sup> and will be attended by Jerry Lyons and Bruno Steinke. Terri Harrison and Bruno Steinke also had a conference call with Ian Gray and provincial officials on November 8<sup>th</sup> to discuss options for involving the Innu in discussions about the development of programs and services which would address their specific needs. These may begin after the funding agreements are implemented. Discussions on Social Assistance may also begin after the CFS issues are resolved, in preparation for reserve creation next fall.

With regard to CFS funding, SEPP officials have conveyed the following messages:

- (a) that funding for this fiscal year will not be retroactive;
- (b) that CFS funding has two components: one is formula-driven (operations) and the other is a reimbursement of actual costs for children in care with LHC (maintenance);
- (c) that even after reserve creation and registration of the Innu, the Province will continue to be responsible for direct service delivery.

N.B. One contentious point for the Province is that DIAND will not reimburse actual costs for children who are not taken into care. LHC prefers, whenever possible, to case manage children in their own homes, with the appropriate supports, rather than take them into care. We have explained under our current authorities, we cannot reimburse actual costs for services to children in their homes. However, LHC could use the operations component of the CFS funding to cover these costs, which would total approximately \$900k based on a start date of November, 2001.

Health Canada (HC) has approached DIAND for reimbursement of "social" costs incurred since April 1, 2001 (approximately \$1 million), to cover the Alternative/Interim Living Arrangements (ALA's/ILA's) established in Goose Bay last winter as shelters for children and youth awaiting or returning from addictions treatment. HC would like either DIAND or the Province to take over the operation of these facilities, since the residents receive social and education services only. HC has been advised that DIAND cannot assume responsibility for direct service delivery and the Province as a policy does not support group homes. SEPP officials and Finance have advised HC that social costs since April 1<sup>st</sup> cannot be reimbursed from the CFS budget. At the October 30<sup>th</sup> SPC meeting, there was also no support for reimbursement of these costs. The Deputy Minister announced at that time that Marie Fortier will take over as Chair of the DIAND (federal) steering committee.

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**GOVERNMENT OF CANADA COMMITMENTS**

In November, 2001, there were very public commitments made by provincial and federal Ministers regarding the Innu. These commitments must be periodically reviewed with the Province to ensure that each government is doing its part in the strategy. The Province and DIAND have agreed to have regular conference calls to review progress on the file. The last one was on October 30<sup>th</sup> (ref: attached report by e-mail from Terri Harrison to ADM).

**CONSIDERATIONS**

The Innu are pressuring both governments for control of all programs and services. They want to establish an Innu-controlled CFS agency and have now applied to the region for funds to support a demonstration project under Income Security Reform. They have not been involved in DIAND's negotiations with the Province and LHC regarding CFS funding, since they are not signatories to the agreements. However, both governments agree that they should be involved in any discussions regarding adaptation of programs and services to their needs. DIAND has both communities under third party management; Davis Inlet is under third party management with HC. Issues regarding expanded police services to increase community security and support other programs and services are still unresolved.

The Province and DIAND are both supportive of Innu control, however, all officials agree that the Innu need to develop more capacity before assuming more control.

The Province and the Innu are considering the Conne River CFS Agency as a possible model for a future CFS agency controlled by the Innu. The Province feels that Sheshatshiu presently has more capacity and may be ready to implement this sooner.

LHC is concerned that the DIAND funding for CFS will not replace other funding that it currently receives from the Province. They are also concerned about the public's perception that the Innu are receiving more services than other residents of Labrador. Since they are unable to attract social workers and other professionals to the region, they are concerned that an injection of CFS funding from DIAND will result in more pressure from the Innu to provide "enhanced" services.

SEPP officials advised the Province in September that discussions would be required on social assistance and income security reform before reserve creation in 2002, however, these discussions will not commence until the CFS funding agreements have been negotiated and signed off.

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**NEXT STEPS/DECISION REQUIRED**

The federal negotiator is pressuring DIAND to implement the Innu Education Task Force, citing that little progress has been made to date. Bob Coulter addressed education issues with the Province at a meeting in St. John's in September. A second meeting, which will be attended by Gilles Rochon and Guy Delorme, will take place on November 21<sup>st</sup> to follow up on this initiative.

At the St. John's meeting in September on CFS, Kathleen Campbell described our work on the social policy framework and the respective roles of DIAND and HC in the family treatment/after care component of the Innu Healing Strategy. At the November 20<sup>th</sup>, we hope to reach agreement on a final draft CFS funding arrangement.

**RECOMMENDATION**

That the ADM continue to clarify SEPP policies and our role in the Innu Strategy with respect to CFS and Education.

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I concur

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I do not concur

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Date

**ORIGINATOR:**

Terri Harrison

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