

August 11, 2003

COMMON BRIEFING NOTE

F/P/T DEPUTY MINISTERS OF HEALTH TELECONFERENCE

August 13, 2003

AGENDA ITEM: Engagement of Aboriginal Organizations

LEAD: NOVA SCOTIA /HEALTH CANADA

PURPOSE: Decision Discussion Information

DECISION/DIRECTIONS REQUESTED:

- For review and consideration – item to go forward to F/P/T Ministers of Health

ISSUES:

- Discussions with Co-Chair Ministers of Health and officials in preparation for the FMM Accord 2003 and commitments in the Health Accord itself, have raised expectations among the national aboriginal organizations for their participation in the implementation of the FMM Accord 2003.
- The attached presentation (Appendix 1) provides an outline of a proposed approach which was endorsed by F/P/T Deputy Ministers of Health at their teleconference on July 22, 2003. As outlined in the presentation, the objectives of the proposed approach are:
 - to integrate Aboriginal health issues into F/P/T discussions;
 - to generate practical discussion on policy issues;
 - to propose a streamlined process; and
 - to include all Aboriginal groups.
- To achieve these objectives, a two-pronged approach is suggested:
 - that co-chair Ministers of Health should hold meetings with National Aboriginal Organizations once every 12 months, and that all jurisdictions would be invited to participate; and
 - that F/P/T Advisory Committees should build into their existing work plans opportunities to engage an aboriginal perspective where appropriate. Progress in this area will be monitored by the Health Support Committee and communicated to the Conference of Deputy Ministers.

August 11, 2003

BACKGROUND:

- On January 9, 2003, National Aboriginal Organizations (NAOs) met with Ministers McLellan and Purves in recognition of the need to involve Aboriginal groups in F/P/T discussions on health. At this meeting, Minister Purves and Minister McLellan proposed to explore avenues of engagement with the five National Aboriginal Organizations. The following organizations participated in the meeting: the Assembly of First Nations (AFN); the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK); the Métis National Council (MNC); the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples (CAP); and the Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC).
- The FMM Accord, on February 5, 2003, confirmed governments' intention to work with and engage Aboriginal people in future F/P/T discussions on health.

ANNEX/APPENDICES:

Appendix 1—FPT Strategy to Address Aboriginal Issues and Participation

Prepared by: Health Canada/Nova Scotia
Date: August 11, 2003

F/P/T Strategy to Address Aboriginal
Issues and Participation

F/P/T STRATEGY IN ABORIGINAL HEALTH

Purpose

- The purpose of this presentation is to seek your views on a potential strategy to:
 - include an aboriginal perspective in the F/P/T implementation process of the Accord; and
 - engage discussion with Aboriginal representatives in order to involve them in F/P/T process in health.

F/P/T STRATEGY IN ABORIGINAL HEALTH

Context

- In the FMM Accord, governments affirmed their intention:
 - to work collaboratively on Aboriginal health; and
 - to engage Aboriginal people in their efforts.
- The Health Accord 2003 contained a number of significant statements on Aboriginal health:
 - recognition of serious challenges in Aboriginal health;
 - signal of federal commitment to enhance funding and collaboration with P/Ts and Aboriginal people to meet objectives of the Accord;
 - commitment to address the gap in health status through better integration of services; and
 - development of an Aboriginal Health Reporting Framework comparable to other reporting called for in the Accord.

F/P/T STRATEGY IN ABORIGINAL HEALTH

Context

- National Aboriginal Organizations (NAOs) have significant expectations regarding their participation in the implementation of the Health Accord 2003:
 - The Romanow report dedicated one chapter to Aboriginal health and insisted on the need for better F/P/T/A collaboration.
 - On January 9, NAOs met with Ministers McLellan and Purves who recognized the need to better involve Aboriginal groups in F/P/T discussions on health.
 - After the FMM, The PM wrote to NAOs that Minister McLellan will be following-up with Minister Purves to explore opportunities for active involvement.

F/P/T STRATEGY IN ABORIGINAL HEALTH

Context

- On March 5, 2003, Deputies agreed that Co-Chairs meet with the NAOs, with an open invitation to other Deputies to attend, to discuss :
 - FMM Accord implementation, and
 - development of an Aboriginal Health framework.
- Next sections of the deck explore different elements of a potential F/P/T strategy to address Aboriginal issues and participation in the implementation process of the Health Accord.

F/P/T STRATEGY IN ABORIGINAL HEALTH

Objectives

- For governments, the long-term goal should be to:
 - close the gap in health status, and in access and quality of services, between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians through better integration of health services.
- This will take significant effort and time:
 - no one-size-fits-all approach is possible; and
 - discussions and negotiations will have to take place at different levels (national, regional and local levels).

F/P/T STRATEGY IN ABORIGINAL HEALTH

Potential elements for a Strategy

- For an Accord implementation process that would fully take into account Aboriginal health, each Advisory Committee would:
 - develop and implement a plan to address key Aboriginal health issues in their own area; and
 - include Aboriginal experts in their work (external membership in the Advisory Committee and/or in relevant F/P/T Task Groups).
- These measures are essential from a policy perspective, but will not fully meet NAOs expectation to participate in the F/P/T process on health.

F/P/T STRATEGY IN ABORIGINAL HEALTH

Potential elements for a Strategy

- In order to address NAOs request to be fairly engaged in the process, it is suggested to proceed with a:
 - Regular (12 to 24 months) F/P/T Ministers' Meeting, or just the Co-Chairs (alternatively, FPT Deputy Ministers of Health or Co-Chairs), with the NAOs. Agenda or themes of discussion would be determined in advance, and NAOs would be invited to submit proposals in preparation for the meeting.
- This meeting would be an opportunity for:
 - F/P/T governments to inform NAOs on actions taken;
 - NAOs to provide input on key Aboriginal health priorities.
- Officials meeting with the NAOs would have to take place in preparation and in follow-up of this meeting.

BRIEFING NOTE

TITLE: National Aboriginal Organization (NAO) Leaders meeting with Federal/Provincial/Territorial (F/P/T) Ministers Responsible for Social Services, August 25, 2003, Yellowknife, NWT

ISSUES:

- NAO's want full participation in the Social Union Framework Agreement (SUFA)
- NAO's agenda items with Social Services Ministers:
 - Aboriginal Persons with Disabilities;
 - Children: Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder;
 - Child Welfare.

BACKGROUND:

- On May 12, 2003, the five NAO's met with the co-chairs of the F/P/T Ministerial Council on Social Policy Renewal regarding aboriginal participation in SUFA and the SUFA three year review. At that meeting, the Honourable Jane Stewart, without consulting provincial counterparts, suggested the five NAO's meet with the Social Services Ministers at Yellowknife. Ministers, in a conference call on July 3, 2003, agreed to meet with the NAO's on August 25, 2003, prior to their F/P/T meeting;
- The NAO's are the Assembly of First Nations (AFN); the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK); the Métis National Council (MNC); the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples (CAP); and the Native Womens Association of Canada (NWAC). (A list of NAO's with their provincial affiliates is attached)

PROVINCIAL POSITION:

- Meetings with NAO's are a federal responsibility.
- The Province:
 - has little contact with NAO's. As with the proposal to the F/P/T Health Ministers the Province supports NAO's meeting with the co-chairs of Ministerial Councils;
 - addresses aboriginal health and services issues with local aboriginal groups, for example,
 - Child Youth and Family Services (CYFS) and income support initiatives with the Innu;
 - Self-government negotiations and devolution of provincial programs and services to the Innu and Inuit; and
 - consulting with ^{local} aboriginal groups on new programs and legislation;

- has concerns with federal offloading of responsibility for aboriginals
 - since the federal government expanded Non-Insured Health Benefits in Labrador, the Province has seen a significant increase in its costs for medical transportation from the northern Labrador communities; and
 - the federal government has refused to cover the costs of the nursing station in Natuashish, a cost it has assumed on other isolated reserves in Canada;
- has urged the federal government to provide the same services to aboriginals in this province as in other provinces. Recently, the Royal Commission on Renewing and Strengthening Our Place in Canada recommended the federal government provide access to federal programs to all Mi'kmaq living on the Island and Labrador Métis;
- supports the integration of federal services for aboriginals with the provincial programs and services to improve efficiencies and reduce duplication; and
- supports the NAO's efforts to access increased funding in the area of CYFS for prevention and early intervention. Neither of these is currently covered by the federal funding formula.

Labrador & Aboriginal Affairs

Prepared by: Brian Walsh

Approved: David J. Hughes

August 19, 2003

C:\Temp\gwprint\bn-fpt NAOs to meet fpt health & social services.wpd

DRAFT

Title: National Aboriginal Organization (NAO) Leaders meeting with F/P/T Ministers Responsible for Social Services, August 25, 2003, Yellowknife, NWT

Issue: The parameters for NL's attendance at the Aug 25/03 meeting with the NAOs.

Background:

- F/P/T Ministers have scheduled their next meeting for Yellowknife, NWT, August 25-26, 2003. The F/P/T forum is co-chaired by Hon Jane Stewart (HRDC) and Hon Michael Miltenberger (NWT Health and Social Services);
- At a meeting, May 12, 2003, of the five NAO's with the SUFA co-chairs, on matters related to SUFA participation of NAOs, Minister Stewart, without first consulting provincial counterparts, suggested that the NAOs meet with the Social Services Ministers in NWT;
- Ministers (Social Services and Health) at a July 3, 2003, conference call, agreed to meet separately and outside the FPT forum, with the NAO's prior to their own Yellowknife meeting on health and social issues dear to the NAOs;
- DLAA advises that NL has no jurisdictional interests with the five aboriginal NAOs. The NAO issues are the fiduciary responsibility of the federal government as per the Constitution and Charter. It is the responsibility of the federal government to negotiate with the aboriginal peoples on programs and services specific to them. Where those negotiations may have an impact on provincial programs and services the Province would be prepared to discuss that impact, without prejudice to aboriginal rights and title.
- Where the Province acknowledges aboriginal rights and title, e.g., LIA and Innu claims, it has embraced a policy of land claim and self-government negotiation, and negotiates directly with the aboriginal party and where necessary, the federal government.
- The Province has long recognized the apparent economic and social disparities between the aboriginal peoples of the Province and the non-aboriginal population in general. The Province manages its programs and services under 'rules of general application.' Since Confederation (1949) numerous successive aboriginal agreements have been signed between Canada and NL. NL contribution was based on average per capita funds normally available whereas Canada funds were aboriginal specific.
- All successive NL government administrations, since 1949, have consistently lobbied the Federal government to undertake its constitutional and fiduciary responsibility to the aboriginal peoples living in NL;
- Only the Innu, the LIA and the Conne River Band (Mimac) have been recognized as eligible for the full range of federal aboriginal programs and services within NL. The membership of the Labrador Metis Nation and the Federation of Newfoundland Indians (FNI represents most Micmac bands on the Island) are unable to access the same programs and services as LIA and Innu. The federal position is that those other organizations are not rights and title aboriginals as

per the Constitution/Charter;

- The former Minister for DLAA, Hon Ernie McLean, was successful in arranging a meeting with Minister Nault (Jan 2002) and the FNI, and subsequently with the LMN, to explore with the FNI and the federal government whether or not there is a basis for the FNI membership to access the full range of aboriginal programs and services. The Hon Marc LaLonde has concluded his report on the issue for Minister Nault and we are awaiting the minister's response to the confidential report. The Province was an observer to the 'LaLonde' exploratory process and is willing to discuss delivery of any programs and services which may be negotiated between the FNI and Canada, as we are with the LIA and Innu, and would do for LMN, without prejudice to Province's position on aboriginal rights and title within the Province;
- On December 16, 1999, the FPT Ministerial Council on Social Policy Renewal met with the five NAOs and the FPT Ministers Responsible for Aboriginal Affairs to discuss the role of the national aboriginal organizations in the implementation of the Social Union Framework Agreement. The NAOs are now entrenched in the FPTA Ministers and Leaders Forum, where the engagement of each province and territory is dependent upon respective jurisdictional interests. The FPTA forum is the only IGA Ministerial forum with NAO standing (again, without prejudice to rights and title) and is the gateway to other FPT Ministerial forums, however, it has not been advised nor counseled on the NAOs meeting in Yellowknife;
- NL advised, as did other jurisdictions, that Hon Nault (INAC) and Hon Goodale (Interlocuteur for Metis and non-status aboriginals), and the provincial co-chair for FPTA, be advised of and invited to the meeting. HRDC declined to notify the latter two.
- The August meeting of NAOs and Ministers is being held outside the formal Ministers meeting and is not part of the FPT Ministers agenda.

Recommendation:

- While it is outside the jurisdictional purview of the government of NL it may prove beneficial to attend the meeting (without prejudice) with Ministers and the NAOs:
 - to underscore the Province's position that the federal government is not undertaking its fiduciary responsibility towards NL aboriginals (Micmac, Metis, and non-registered Indians); and
 - to call on the federal government to negotiate with the preceding NL aboriginal groups their access to the full range of federal programs and services (eg., post-secondary, housing, health, etc); and
 - to underscore that the FPTA forum is the considered gateway for NAOs' interaction with other FPT Ministerial forums..

Prepared by: Brian Walsh, July 28/03

Approved:

Kathy Babstock - Re: Downloading of Services/Costs

Page 1

From: Wanda Legge
To: Walsh, Brian
Date: 8/15/03 11:58AM
Subject: Re: Downloading of Services/Costs

I think the problem for other jurisdictions is that the feds download services, but do not transfer the accompanying budget to cover the additional cost in full. I assume NL has encountered that as well. I understand your point about integration of services. That is consistent with your position to date.

I will probably be in touch again.

Thank-you
Wanda

>>> Brian Walsh 08/15/03 10:22AM >>>

Hi Wanda,
The short answer is yes! The province generally supports the integration of federal services for aboriginals with those of the province to avoid duplication and realize cost-savings...where full financial costs for the aboriginal delivery is borne by the feds (eg., LIA/Health Canada/Health Labrador). In some respects the province's big issue is getting the feds to 'take-up.' I'm at 1750 should you wish to discuss further.

regards
Brian
Regards
Brian

>>> Wanda Legge 08/14/03 02:51PM >>>

Brian,

On PT and FPT DMs' calls yesterday, SK advised they would be raising an issue at the Ministers of Health meetings in September, which is the downloading of services for aboriginal peoples, by the federal government onto provinces. Is this also an issue for NL? I don't know if I have worded that very well. Please call me if you wish to discuss.

Thank-you
Wanda
729-5249

CC: Babstock, Kathy; Hughes, David; Reddick, Vanessa

From: Brian Walsh
To: Babstock, Kathy; Reddick, Vanessa
Date: 8/13/03 4:12PM
Subject: Re: Material for NAO meeting

hi Vanessa,
Thanks for the corrections.
My comments on each point **Parenthesis/bold**:

- 1st bullet under background: the correct name of the forum is "F/P/T Ministers Responsible for Social Services...". **(thank-you)**;

- 2nd bullet: to more accurate it should probably read "At a meeting....., Minister Stewart, committed to raising with her colleagues the possibility of NAOs meeting with Ministers at their August meeting". **(Why soften the fact? I contend that Stewart was fully aware that it would be difficult for the p/t ministers to decline a meeting with the NAOs after she had made the suggestion to the NAOs firstly. Stewart's office is quite aware of the intergovernmental aboriginal issues and implications and appears to playing some politics with the Provinces, Territories and NAOs).**

- 3rd bullet: "Ministers of Social Services (not health)... with the NAOs prior to their own Yellowknife meeting on social service issues of interest to the NAOs". **(Health Minister Smith was on the call?)**

- 6th bullet: Myself and Kathy are not totally clear as to the meaning of the last sentence "NL contribution ...wheras Canada funds were Aboriginal specific". **(It is unclear, thanks! How about? "NL's contribution to those agreements have been calculated on the basis of normal costs of providing services to communities/residents of similar size in the Province, ie., under rules of general application; Canada's contributions were aboriginal specific, exceeding both the fiscal and program capacity of the Province).**

9th bullet: Could you give us a few more details around the LaLonde report for example, did Minister Nault commission the report? **(Report was commissioned by Nault, its in his hands, not sure when or if he will release...my main point here is that the Province has been lobbying INAC/Canada on behalf of non-status Indians/aboriginals, and here is a material example).**

- 11th bullet: Given HRDC's response that Minister Nault is being invited to the meeting as per Ministers discussion but as for extending ccs, Ministers did not discuss and in fact Minister Stewart was pretty clear that she saw this outside the FTPA process. We thought it might be best to instead of saying "HRDC declined" simply say "However, this did not occur". **(Again, Why soften the fact? See second bullet response).**

Meanwhile, will take under advisement and get back to you accordingly.
regards
Brian

>>> Vanessa Reddick 08/13/03 02:32PM >>>
Hi Brian,

Myself and Kathy met and I am now putting a package together to send over to you. The package will include the material we have recieved thus far for the NAO portion of the Social Services Ministers meeting.

As well, myself and Kathy reviewed your note and we just have a few factual comments and have identified a few areas which we were not clear.

- 1st bullet under background: the correct name of the forum is "F/P/T Ministers Responsible for Social

Services...".

- 2nd bullet: to more accurate it should probably read "At a meeting....., Minister Stewart, committed to raising with her colleagues the possibility of NAOs meeting with Ministers at their August meeting".

- 3rd bullet: "Ministers of Social Services (not health)..., with the NAOs prior to their own Yellowknife meeting on social service issues of interest to the NAOs".

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We look forward to getting the note once it has been vetted through your senior management.

I will get the package of information over to you this afternoon.

Thanks,
Vanessa

Vanessa

Vanessa Reddick
Program & Policy Development Specialist
Policy, Planning & Evaluation Division
Department of Human Resources & Employment
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St. John's, NF A1B 4J6
Tel: 709-729-7920
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email: vanessareddick@gov.nf.ca

CC: Hughes, David

From: Brian Walsh
To: Babstock, Kathy; Reddick, Vanessa; Vivian-Book, Lynn
Date: 7/4/03 10:33AM
Subject: NAO's at FPT Forums

Hi folks,

Attached is a letter our Minister wrote to the co-chair of the FPTA (Federal/Provincial/Territorial/Aboriginal leadersforum which speaks, somewhat, to the issue at yesterday's Ministerial conference call. The key phrase from a policy perspective is "...Newfoundland and Labrador does not share aboriginal jurisdictional responsibilities with the federal government. The federal government has clear constitutional responsibility for aboriginals and we will continue to hold them accountable." We have and do, however, strongly and consistently lobby the federal government to undertake its fiduciary responsibility to the aboriginal constituencies and communities of Newfoundland and Labrador. Aboriginal residents of NL have the same rights and eligibility for provincial programs and services as all other residents of NL. Please advise on the decisions of the Ministerial conference call, yesterday. Thanks for the opportunity to sit in on the conference call. touch base should you require more clarification.

Regards
Brian

CC: Burke, Nellie; Hughes, David

From: Kathy Babstock
To: Gerald White; Lynn Vivian-Book; Wanda Legge
Date: 7/3/03 3:18PM
Subject: RE: Ministers of Social Services Conference call

Here is a quick update on the decisions reached on the Ministers of Social Services Conference call. Ministers Smith and Wiseman, V. Randell, W. Penney, V. Reddick, L. Vivian-Book, Brian Walsh (LAA) and I attended the call.

The discussion touched on a number of the issues, as outlined in the briefing note for the call (copy of final attached). Based on the discussion, it was agreed that Ministers would meet with the NAO's prior to the formal August Ministers Meeting in NWT. Specific issues and process would be worked out by officials. It was agreed that the agenda be focused on areas within the SS sector. Three issues may be discussed:

- (1) Aboriginal Disabilities
- (2) FAS/FAE
- (3) Child Welfare on Reserve - only if Minister Nault was available.

It was also noted that 8 of the 13 jurisdictions indicated that they plan to attend the August Ministers' Meeting. (Quebec, BC and ON Ministers were not available).

Officials were asked to begin preparations for the meeting. A conference call of Support Officials is scheduled for tomorrow afternoon.

Thank you all for your assistance in preparing for this call.

Kathy Babstock

CC: Brian Walsh; Keith Dyer; Vanessa Reddick

**Conference Call: Ministers Responsible for Social Services
July 3, 2003**

Health & Community Services Executive Boardroom

Pre-briefing: 1:00 pm.

Conference call: 1:30 - 2:30 pm.

Dial in: 1-867-920-7209

Passcode: 4444#

Attending:	<u>Health & Community Services</u>	<u>Human Resources & Employment</u>
	Minister Smith	Minister Wiseman
	Lynn Vivian-Book	Vivian Randell
	Kathy Babstock	Wayne Penney
		Vanessa Reddick

Purpose of the Call: To discuss options for engaging National Aboriginal Leaders around the August meeting of Ministers Responsible for Social Services.

- On May 12, 2003, Minister Stewart (HRDC), Minister Morse (NS Community Services), and Minister Dion (IGA) met with National Aboriginal Organizations (NAO's) to formally receive a comprehensive assessment of the implementation of the Social Union Framework (SUFA) agreement, as part of the SUFA Three-Year Review. This meeting was held following direction from the full FPT Ministerial Council.
- In responding to the NAO's presentation on the pressing needs of aboriginal people relating to the social services sector, Ministers Stewart and Morse undertook to consult with their colleagues on how to best engage on relevant issues with NAOs. Both Ministers are members of Social Services and noted the upcoming meeting of Ministers in August.
- FPT Deputy Ministers discussed this issue at their meeting on June 26, 2003 in Yellowknife, NWT. During that meeting, the attached letter was circulated inviting Ministers to participate in a conference call on this issue.
- Deputy Ministers discussed the issue at some length, both during the formal business meeting as well as during the private Deputies dinner. The issue of the precedent that could be set by allowing NAO's to attend the formal meeting was raised, the fact that NAO's do not represent all aboriginal views, as well as the importance of including Minister McLellan (HC) and Minister Nault (DIAND).
- Deputies discussed several options including: (1) preparing details around engaging NAO's and having Ministers discuss during the formal agenda at their August meeting, (2) meeting with NAO's during the formal August meeting, (3) meeting with NAO's outside of the formal August meeting, and/or (4) having the Co-Chair Ministers (NWT/HRDC) meet with NAO's.
- Deputies did not support forwarding these specific options to Ministers for their call, but generally supported meeting with NAO's and the importance of having Minister Nault (DIAND) and Minister McLellan (HC) attend the meeting. Deputies felt that the meeting should occur outside of the formal Ministers agenda, that there must be sufficient lead time to prepare for the meeting and that the agenda be defined with expected outcomes determined in advance.

- It was agreed that each Deputy Minister would brief their respective Minister and that no common briefing material would be provided for this call.
- Within the health sector, the Health Accord, 2003 committed governments to engaging Aboriginal organizations. On January 9, 2003, Health Co-Chair Deputy Ministers met with the five NAO's. A letter is currently being drafted to Health Deputy Ministers outlining a potential approach to engaging NAO's. It is our understanding that Deputies will be asked to recommend to Ministers, that regular (12-24 months) FPT Ministers' meetings, or just Co-Chairs (alternatively FPT Deputy Ministers of Health or Co-Chairs) be held with NAO's. This would be preceded with meetings at the officials level. As well, it will likely be proposed that the health advisory committees each develop and implement plans to address the key issues and involve Aboriginal experts in their work.
- It is our understanding that when other sector councils engage NAO's, it is normally done outside of the formal agenda.

Newfoundland and Labrador Perspective:

- At the local level, aboriginal issues are addressed through consultations with aboriginal groups when new programs, services or legislation is introduced, as well as through self-government negotiations.
- Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs have advised that no meeting of this nature should occur without federal representation given federal responsibility for aboriginal issues.

Recommended Position:

- It is recommended that if we support PT Ministers responsible for Social Services meeting with NAO's, that:
 - (1) it occur outside of the Ministers' of Social Services formal agenda,
 - (2) a defined agenda and expected outcomes be developed,
 - (3) the timing, frequency and level of aboriginal engagement, participation at the national, regional and local levels, as well as process issues such as the provision of resources to NAO's to enable participation, the nature and consultation format, and advance preparations with Aboriginal groups, etc., be considered,
 - (4) Ministers Nault and McLellan (especially if the FAS/FAE issue is to be raised) should be invited to participate as well.
- Ministers may also wish to consider if there is sufficient lead time to prepare for such a meeting in August. Deputy and Ministerial approval should occur prior to final planning.
- Ministers may also discuss availability for the August 25/26, 2003 meeting to be held in Yellowknife, NWT. A letter of invitation dated June 27, 2003 from Ministers Stewart and Miltenberger is attached.

Prepared by: K. Babstock/V. Reddick (in consultation with LAA and IGA)

Date: July 3, 2003

April 9, 2003

Honourable Oscar Lathlin
Minister of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs
Room 344, Legislative Building
Winnipeg, MB
R3C 0V8

Dear Minister Lathlin:

I am writing in response to your correspondence of January 28, 2003, to my predecessor, the Honourable Ernie McLean, regarding the 'not-for-profit' incorporation of the Forum of Federal-Provincial-Territorial Ministers Responsible for Aboriginal Affairs and National Aboriginal Leaders (F/P/T/A). Thank-you for the time and interest you have given to this matter.

Newfoundland and Labrador is supportive of the current structure of the F/P/T/A Forum and its operational framework. Notwithstanding fiscal capacity issues to fund such an incorporated body, Newfoundland and Labrador does not share aboriginal jurisdictional responsibilities with the federal government. The federal government has clear constitutional responsibility for aboriginals and we will continue to hold them accountable.

I understand the F/P/T/A meetings have been informative, particularly regarding best practices in aboriginal economic development. I am also pleased that the F/P/T/A offers a valuable opportunity for an inclusive pan-national dialogue and consultation on aboriginal matters of mutual interest.

Sincerely,

WALLY ANDERSEN, M.H.A.
Torngat Mountains District
Minister