

Volunteer Insurance Protection Program Fact Sheet & Voluntary Sector Input

Introduction

The Government of Nova Scotia through the departments of Health Promotion and Protection (HPP) and Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal (TIR) is seeking your input for the development of an insurance program to support volunteers and the voluntary sector. The Government will work in partnership with the insurance industry to develop an insurance program that would ensure easy access, affordability and sustainability. Another component to the program would include an information outreach program to support the staff and volunteers within the voluntary sector understand insurance and how to conduct their own risk assessments. The information program will help organizations purchase their insurance coverage with more knowledge of their needs and their risk. As the Government moves forward with the development of these programs your input would be greatly appreciated.

Please fill out the questions on the second page of this document and forward, **before September 26**, to:

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Background

Over the past 20 years volunteer organizations have become increasingly aware of liability issues and risk management strategies. Communities and all levels of government have tasked volunteers with the responsibility of managing essential community facilities and delivering emergency, healthcare, economic development, educational and social services.

Government of NS – support

Support for Volunteerism in Nova Scotia was highlighted by the Government of Nova Scotia in the Speech from the Throne - May 2006. The Government publicly recognized the valuable contribution made by volunteers and made the commitment to support the volunteer community. Immediately following, the Honourable Barry Barnet was appointed Nova Scotia's first Minister of Volunteerism.

Both the Premier of NS and Minister of Volunteerism were presented with a report prepared by the Nova Scotia Network of the Canadian Volunteerism Initiative entitled: *"Talking with Volunteers - Recommendations for Government Action"*. That report cites insurance as one of the most significant issues affecting volunteers and the voluntary sector. The Insurance Bureau of Canada (IBC) conducted a series of consultations focussing on the affordability and accessibility of insurance and included the voluntary sector in their stakeholders. Input from those consultations culminated in the Atlantic Task Force Report on the Affordability and Accessibility of Insurance which included a series of recommendations - many of which were directed at government and ways they could support the issues cited by the voluntary sector.

Recommendations for Action

It has been recommended that the Nova Scotia Government, in co-operation with an Insurance Company, provide and offer an alternative approach to insurance protection and risk management for volunteers and the voluntary sector in Nova Scotia.

This alternative approach would still require the volunteer sector to remain responsible for the appropriate supervision of their insurance program and be required to pay annual insurance premium costs.

