

ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS
FIRST NATIONS LABOUR MARKET STRATEGY
DRAFT FOR DISCUSSION – NOT FOR DISTRIBUTION
ISSUE PAPER 22 – Reporting Burden

DESCRIPTION:

A financial and results accountability model that reflects the relationship (partnership, autonomy), is adaptable to agreement holder capacity (readiness and management strength) and is based on risk needs to be developed

OPTIONS:

Principle based approach

- Risk, base reporting burden on risk assessment against real, jointly agreed upon risk factors
- Use, do not request information that is not used
- Duplication and Level of oversight, do not request information that exceeds what a skilled, experienced Board would want

Post-cabinet approval: undertake joint work between ESDC officials and experienced agreement holder staff to review ESDC data holdings, data need and usage in view of minimizing reporting burden*

RATIONALE:

The burden created by micro-management and reporting have been flagged as issues since the Blue Ribbon Panel Report in 2006, “From Red Tape to Clear Results”, and was raised again by the Minister at the Winnipeg Forum and in the Forum Report.

Reporting is necessary to track activity and progress and to account for public funds. It becomes wasteful when it is arbitrary, excessive or provides information that is not used.

When excessive, on the agreement holder side it creates waste and on the Government side, it creates waste and a culture of paternalism and control that is in conflict with a focus on results.

CONSIDERATIONS:

Officials feel that they need to know everything in case something appears in the media and, in the past, Ministers have imposed various rules that have become over layered and for which tracking and oversight have added to the reporting burden. If responsibility for labour market programs has truly been transferred to First Nations, then officials do not need and do not want to know everything. Their focus should be on strong institutions, - governance and policies, - not on uploading agreement holder accounts (which does increase their responsibility)

RECOMMENDED OPTION:

DECISION:

ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS
FIRST NATIONS LABOUR MARKET STRATEGY
DRAFT FOR DISCUSSION – NOT FOR DISTRIBUTION
ISSUE PAPER 22 – Reporting Burden

DATE AND VERSION:

Draft 1, November 23, 2016

*The Ontario Government for its youth employment program used a “continuous improvement” approach where information submitted through the reporting regime was analysed, used to provide feedback and target helpful interventions. The Ontario Government was able to document steady, continuous improvement across its community of program delivery agents. Delivery agents were treated as partners, systems and training were provided to build capacity and improve performance

Reporting Burden:

While it is possible to reconstruct the logic behind the report formats, narrative or qualitative results and progress reports follow a stream of consciousness form that is difficult to follow, hard to complete and does not provide information that is useful or accessible and exceeds what a reasonable board of directors would want to see. Quarterly reports are probably excessive.

Financial Reports are a burden because of arbitrariness in ESDC’s use of its own cost categories and complex controls limiting budget flexibility. ESDC should accept FNLMA’s charter of accounts and roll them up to simple, understood cost categories, eg. Management and Administrative Costs (including capacity building), Capital Costs, Service and Program Delivery Costs, Participant Costs for the Agreement Holder and Sub-agreement holders.