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The voice of tourism

"TIANS believes with a wholistic approach to growth that addresses seasonality, product and people, quality and with a greater understanding of the interconnectivity between tourism and the social, cultural and economic health of the province, we can redefine the sector."

TIANS 2022



Photo Credit: ©Parks Canada / D. Wilson

DEAR INDUSTRY PARTNER,

As we begin the rebuild of Nova Scotia's tourism industry and reflect on the past year as an organization, we are extremely hopeful that the best is yet to come. The global pandemic has provided this generational opportunity to rethink how we approach our personal and professional lives. We will continue to be challenged with daily reminders that we are living with COVID-19. Tourism is resilient and will recover, but it cannot be business as usual. Building confidence both within the public and within businesses will be an important part of the stabilization and rebuild in 2022. How we adapt to the changing marketplace, technology, quality and innovation will also determine our future success. Pre-pandemic, Nova Scotia's tourism industry accounted for over 50,000 jobs and revenue was \$2.6 Billion - accounting for over \$450 million in tax revenue for all levels of government. With projections of revenue for 2021 comparable to 2020 (\$900,000) the economic loss last year stands at \$1.6 Billion, however we are moving on. We will not focus on what was; now is the time to move forward in a mindful and meaningful way that puts the tourism industry's interest first as we recapture our place as Nova Scotia's #1 Service Export.

A recent business confidence survey, reinforces the attitude and aptitude of Nova Scotia operators. Our summary snapshot indicates that over 80% of respondents are optimistic for the potential and the opportunity; they are looking at positive trends, growing regional market and increase in repeat business.

TIANS has continued its work to ensure supports are in place now, and going forward, as the industry regroups and rebuilds. Extension of the federal loan payback to December of 2023, is a recent

example. The solutions we are seeking are practical and focused. Ongoing government intervention will be required to address immediate structural issues to ensure viable businesses survive and our tourism infrastructure, such as motorcoach, air routes, ferry access to the US, are secured.

Over the past year TIANS has continued the work beyond a focus on COVID-19. The work did not stop, on many fronts, as we supported businesses in every Nova Scotia community. With shutdowns impacting the volume of activity TIANS and the NSTHRC are well-positioned to support you through a number of programs into 2022. Wage subsidy support to extend the tourism season, training support, business mentoring, are but a few of the areas we will be focused on.

The following report provides a high-level overview of activity. We are excited to continue our service to the Nova Scotia tourism industry. We are very proud of what you are doing in your communities and look forward to supporting your efforts.

Sincerely,

Wes Surrect, *TIANS Chair*

Darlene Grant Fiander, *TIANS President*





“TIME FOR AN EXTRAORDINARY RETHINK”

On the Labour front, Tourism has been hard hit by the global pandemic.

As labour challenges force change in the tourism industry, we have an incredible opportunity to redefine and reposition work in the tourism economy. With job vacancies at an all-time high and competition across all sectors of the economy, innovation and creativity will be needed to attract workers back and retain those employees we have.

The Nova Scotia Tourism Human Resource Council (NSTHRC) has been focused on innovative program delivery. During 2021, we continued to provide training support for furloughed workers and owners. We had to pivot, like you, and now a number of training programs are available online; as a result, over 5000 tourism employers and employees took advantage of training last year.

Attraction and retention of labour is, and will continue to be, a greater challenge in a ‘living with COVID-19’ environment. Over the past year we have done extensive programming reviews and have worked closely with our partners at Tourism HR Canada to ensure we have the latest labour research for Nova Scotia and support tools for employers.

Our efforts to enhance training, address seasonality and provide credentials to owners and senior managers continues, and will be even more important as we rebuild our leadership capacity in the sector.

As we launch our new Labour Strategy, we need to address the new realities of work. We are committed to rebuilding the province’s tourism labour force - working with you. Nova Scotia is resilient and Nova Scotia workers even more so; together, we will adapt, reshape and reprioritize our greatest asset.

Please take advantage of the supports and resources available through the Nova Scotia Tourism Human Resource Council. Whether you need tools for recruitment, training resources or leadership opportunities, we are here to support you and your people.

Sincerely,

**Beatrice Stutz, Chair
Nova Scotia Tourism
Human Resource Council**



NOW MORE THAN EVER – YOUR PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION IS HERE FOR YOU



"TIANS is our first point of contact when we need anything for training or skills support. The Association has been such a huge help. We are climbing back up towards a bright future and they will be there right next to us."

Patrick and Pamela Wallace
Owner/Operators
Trout Point Lodge

"TIANS and the Nova Scotia Tourism Human Resource Council's support of Industry's training and development is so valuable and it allows us to upskill, train and cross train our teams. We are very grateful and appreciative of the support."

**Hospitality Human Resources
Committee**

"Our members rely on the programming that is provided and often call upon the expertise of the TIANS and NSTHRC staff to determine the best fit for our needs. We understand the important work that they do and appreciate that these opportunities are available to our rural communities."

**Destination Eastern and
Northumberland Shores**

PROVINCIAL ADVOCACY FOCUS

GOVERNMENT SUPPORTS TO STABILIZE AND REOPEN
– EXTENSION OF CEWS AND CERS, PIVOT AWAY FROM
BROAD ACCESS

COMMERCIAL INSURANCE – ACCESS AND
INCREASING COSTS, EXPLORING ALTERNATIVE
MODELS FOR COVERAGE

CAR RENTAL ISSUE – INVENTORY SHORTAGE
AFFECTING PEAK SEASON, CONNECTION TO
INTERMODAL WEAKNESS

CONFIDENCE CAMPAIGNS – CAMPAIGNS SUPPORTING
LOCAL, REACTIVATING REGIONAL TRAVEL

EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE REFORM – REGIONAL AND
SECTOR SPECIFIC ROUNDTABLES

MINIMUM WAGE REVIEW – PROVINCIAL AND SECTOR
SPECIFIC FEEDBACK

PROVINCIAL BUDGET SUBMISSION – INCREASED
TOURISM BUDGET, AIR ACCESS, TOURISM LOAN BOARD

SEASONALITY – POLICY ADJUSTMENTS, TAX BREAKS,
PRODUCT AND EXPERIENCE DEVELOPMENT

IMMIGRATION POLICY – TFW REFORM, TOURISM
SPECIFIC STREAM

NEW RESEARCH INITIATIVES – LABOUR MARKET
DASHBOARD, BUSINESS CONFIDENCE, ACCESSIBILITY
PRODUCT INVENTORY

ATLANTIC CANADA ADVOCACY

During the past year TIAN'S President, who serves as Chair of the Atlantic Canada Caucus of Tourism Industry Associations (TIA), has helped escalate a number of priorities with governments at both the federal and provincial level. Joint correspondence from the Atlantic Caucus to government leaders has heightened awareness and support on issues of safeguarding our aviation and motorcoach infrastructure which will be vital to rebuilding routes, access and intermodal transportation over the coming years.

LEADERSHIP

TOURISM STRONG

TIANS continued to leverage the TourismStrong.ca portal to provide Industry with current information regarding relevant news, government supports and resources to rebuild. The positive response from operators to continue to access timely information has proven it as a credible, trusted site.

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

Throughout the year, TIANS has focused a significant amount of effort around government relations and communications. TIANS leadership met regularly with Cabinet and Deputy Ministers, MLA's and other political leaders to provide insight around the impact of COVID-19 and where program gaps existed. Virtual industry meetings and session were also hosted, connecting operators directly to representatives from key departments such as Health, Labour, Skills & Immigration and Communities Culture, Tourism & Heritage.

Prior to the 2021 provincial election, TIANS prepared a Tourism Platform document and secured feedback from the parties. Topics of focus included Management of Tourism, Economy and Labour, Seasonality and Environment. Industry was provided with summary responses and encouraged to meet with local candidates to discuss the issues.

TOURISM NOVA SCOTIA RESTRUCTURING

As part of the new Conservative government strategy, following a Crown Corporation review process, Tourism Nova Scotia restructured and is now part of Communities, Culture, Tourism and Heritage. TIANS has provided perspective around this shift, supporting enhanced integration with other government partners and supports, while still seeking opportunities to be nimble and responsive to industry needs. In Spring 2022, Darlene MacDonald was formally appointed as the Executive Director for Tourism NS.

COMMUNICATIONS

Webinar Series – TIANS worked with financial accounting firms, tax specialists, insurance associations and government agencies, to deliver numerous webinars for tourism operators.

Membership Video and Operator Features –

In 2021, TIANS worked with a professional firm to develop and produce a video focused on the importance and value of membership in the Association. Featuring industry testimonials and highlighting the value-added opportunities offered to members, the video was launched in the Fall and continues to support communication around TIANS focus on supporting the business environment for Tourism rebuilding and growth.



TIANS also worked over the past year to profile a series of operators in blog features and on social media. Focused on a range of businesses, the series focused on interviews with member operators across the province around how they were adapting to shifting business norms and sharing best practices.

Ret'd. General Hillier Keynote

Address – In November, TIANS hosted a virtual keynote address in November featuring General (Ret'd.) Rick Hillier, Canada's Former Chief of the Defence Staff, who shared inspirational messages around Leadership in a Post-COVID era. Hundreds of Industry from across the province attended the address.



ONLINE TRAINING RESOURCES, RESEARCH AND SUPPORTS

Clean it Right – In 2021, TIANS expanded the Clean it Right with a fourth module of sector focused training. In partnership with Tourism Nova Scotia, Industry was provided with complimentary access to modules focused on Accommodations, Food Services,

Retail and a new module targeted on Transportation. To date, well over 2000 participants have completed the training with hundreds of businesses earning their Clean it Right designation which includes marketing collateral and highlighted focus in regional marketing and on NovaScotia.com.



Enhanced Partnership with Cornell University

– TIANS/NSTHRC exclusive eCornell custom online campus was expanded during the past year to offer additional courses and specialized certificates. The portal offers world class executive level management supports for tourism businesses as they continue to rebuild and enhance their operations and service.

Research – Direct links to National associations and research, including Destination Canada, Hotel Association of Canada, Restaurants Canada, Tourism Industry Association of Canada, Conference Board of Canada and others. TIANS has aligned on a number of efforts with our national partners in 2020/2021.

Tourism Help Desk

– A dedicated Help Desk was established at the TIANS office early on in the pandemic to work directly with operators, discerning best access to programs and connecting to appropriate agencies or resources. Hundreds

of calls and emails have been responded to and TIANS continues to be of service to the industry at large.

Industry Survey Work

– TIANS is conducting regular surveys in real time to capture economic data and also respond to Industry needs and priority areas of focus. Surveys have provided insight into business support gaps and needs, specific operational challenges such as insurance access and cost and the anticipated challenges around labour impacting business capacity and quality as the Industry looks to reopen.

Government Input

– Using tourism specific data on the COVID-19 impact, TIANS continues to feed into government policy and new program supports for operators. Funding, tax breaks, incentives — all will be crucial to the hardest hit sector, as we rebuild.

Support Local

– TIANS continues to push for a Nova Scotia First Approach in rebuilding our Sector. By supporting our many businesses and communities the local economy will begin to grow once again.

In appreciation for their ongoing support during these challenging times, TIANS would like to extend sincere appreciation to Tourism Nova Scotia, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency-Nova Scotia (ACOA-NS), Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency and the Nova Scotia Department of Labour, Skills and Immigration.



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DIFFERENT WAY OF DOING BUSINESS

ENGAGING YOUTH

Serve it Up High School Culinary Hub enhanced with new videos NSTHRC working with Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency and the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development to attract youth into careers in tourism. Providing a launching pad today for the professionally trained Cooks for tomorrow. As with many other educational offerings this program has pivoted to accommodate learning opportunities despite the challenges posed by COVID-19 related restrictions.



EMERIT NATIONAL CERTIFICATION AND TRAINING

During the past year, Industry continued to engage in professional development through the emerit National Certification Program coordinated by NSTHRC. 50 Tourism Professionals earned their emerit Certification in the last year, the pinnacle credential for the tourism workforce in Canada.

TOURISM SCHOLARSHIPS

NSTHRC offers annual scholarships in support of higher education within the tourism industry. Scholarships support high school and post-secondary students and tourism professionals. In 2021/2022 \$10,000 in support was awarded.

TOURISM TALENT.COM

TourismTalent.com is an innovative recruitment tool created exclusively for tourism employers and job seekers in Nova Scotia. Now more than ever this portal is an integral resource for talent in our Sector.



TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Sign up for one of NSTHRC's many training courses. Nova Scotia Best Service Excellence Program continues to be the leading customer services program for the tourism sector; SuperHost — Foundations of Service Quality is the next step up in customer excellence and service quality. ServeRight Responsible Beverage Service programs for Servers and Managers have been modified to include cannabis use, as well as alcohol, to keep current with industry needs. All programming is available online; in-person sessions upon request.

- **Pre-Pandemic** – Tourism employed 50,000 Nova Scotians; 1 in 3 people begin working in a tourism job
- **NSTHRC Online Campus and emerit Online Portal** – More than 5000 employees took online training last year

TOURISM LABOUR MARKET FORUM

In February, NSTHRC hosted the 2022 Nova Scotia Labour Market Forum - Rebuilding the Nova Scotia Tourism Workforce. Along with an engaging panel of Industry operators sharing Recruitment and Retention Best Practices, presentations were shared by Tourism HR Canada and the Employment Insurance Commission of Canada.

LABOUR MARKET DASHBOARD

NSTHRC worked with partners from the Association of Industry Sector Councils in 2021 to undertake a broad research initiative to inform the development of a Labour Market Dashboard. The tool will provide business owners and HR managers with detailed data on the current circumstance of Nova Scotia's labour force in 14 industry sector councils. Data includes details about recruitment and retention practices, seasonality of operation, labour vacancies and sector outlook topics.

TOURISM SECTOR SKILLSPASS PORTAL

This year the Council launched a Tourism Sector SkillsPass portal, an online learning platform that offers a range of courses and webinars on a variety of personal and professional topics. Funded by Labour, Skills and Immigration (LSI) and NSTHRC, SkillsPassNS is accessible to industry at no cost.

THE WORK CONTINUES

While COVID-19 has consumed our minds and efforts — the work of our Association did not stop. Tourism will recover and it is important that we continue to work on the systemic issues and challenges facing the sector.

BUSINESS OF TOURISM

TIANS has continued to advocate for a reset of how Tourism is managed in the province to foster the right conditions for the Industry to realize its potential to drive the economy, creating associated employment and tax spinoff. Over the past year, the Association has worked with a number of government and industry stakeholders to look for opportunities to reposition Tourism and regain our role as Nova Scotia's #1 Service Export. Efforts to address gaps in the Tourist Accommodation Registry Act which came into effect in 2020, have resulted in new amendments requiring all short-term rental operators to register into the provincial system. TIANS had worked for a number of years with Industry and government to champion the creation of a tool to address the short-term rental issue. Communication continues around the need for additional adjustments that would allow the camping sector to register, as had been the original intent as the regulations were being developed.

ENVIRONMENT

Recognizing the integral relationship between a healthy natural environment and a strong and sustainable tourism industry, TIANS championed a number of files related to the tourism lens

of environmental issues over the past year. These have included lending support to Bill 57 - The Environmental Goals and Climate Change Reduction Act. While supportive of the overall goals set out in the legislation, TIANS also called on the province to escalate implementation of recommendations from the Lahey Report which has had little to no progress in the past three years. Also in 2021, TIANS provided feedback to HRM around the Centre Plan B which disproportionately focused on development density without consideration for tourism impacts. TIANS also developed a position statement around the need for provincial and municipal leaders to develop a strategic plan around wind farm development that considers tourism impacts

SEASONALITY

TIANS continues to encourage the development of tourism products and experiences that will extend the season and drive economic activity across the province. The Association has been a strong advocate for policy shifts to the Seasonal Tourist Business Designation Program to enable businesses to extend their operational season without a taxation penalty. In 2021, TIANS supported the formal introduction of Bill 177 in the provincial legislature to advance a pilot supporting this model.

INNOVATION AND QUALITY

TIANS has a long-standing commitment to quality as a key pillar in supporting the competitiveness of Nova Scotia as a destination. This will be even more crucial as the Industry rebuilds post-pandemic. In 2021, TIANS delivered a series of webinars focused on enhancing the tourism product and experience for visitors. Over the coming year, mentoring for operators will be coordinated to support advancing quality and innovation for business operators. The work done over the past two years with the fishing sector to explore cross sectoral opportunities will be advanced through programming partnerships to develop new marine tourism experiences.

LABOUR

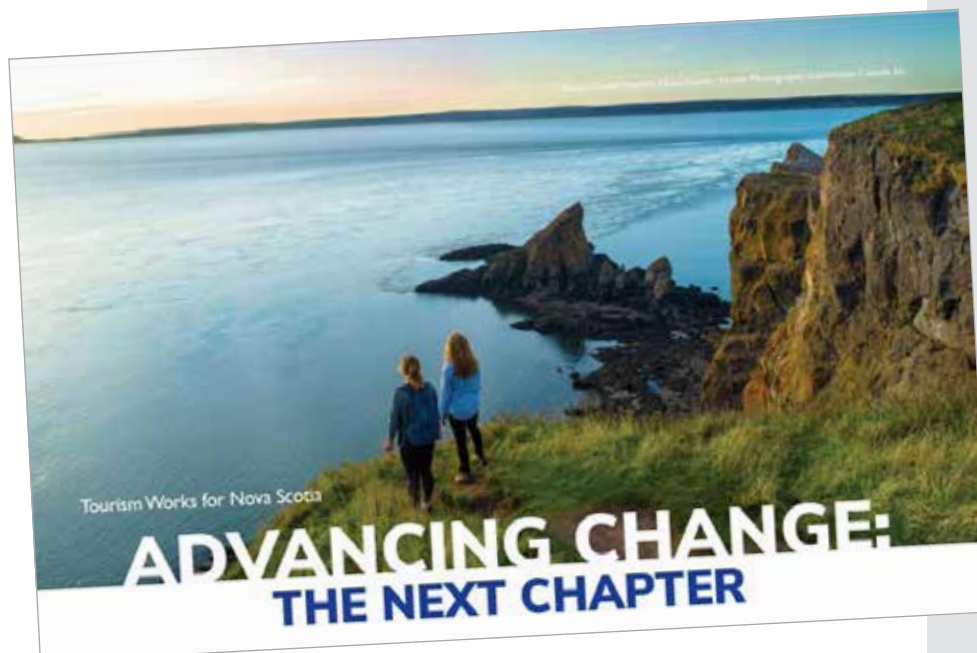
As the Sector Council for Labour and Skills for the Tourism Industry, NSTHRC continued to focus on the development of the workforce and related supports for employers related to recruitment and retention. NSTHRC pivoted to support operators and staff with relevant modular programming and continued to provide training throughout the past year for over 5000 participants. New content was added to the online platforms and the Council worked with participants and facilitators to ensure high quality programming.

ADVANCING CHANGE

Prior to the pandemic TIANS was working on a document to look at how we could achieve Goal #14 of the Ivany Report – \$4 Billion in Tourism Revenue by 2024. We were halfway there and we knew we needed a different approach to reach tourism’s economic potential. This has not changed; in fact, it is even more imperative that we address systemic issues impeding business competitiveness. We need to develop a broader strategy for growth, review the management structure so that Industry is leading the way and ensure our product, people and experiences represent quality and authenticity that visitors will remember.

We need to consider how we leverage the cruise sector, to spread the wealth throughout Nova Scotia Ports; we need an intermodal strategy that considers the movement of people and the role of HIAA; we need to leverage public investment in the sector; and most importantly, we need to take a Nova Scotia First approach to decisions that are evidenced based and foster innovation.

The Tourism Industry in Nova Scotia can recover and rebuild, but we have to take this extraordinary opportunity to be critical of how we do business and be brave enough to change. TIANS commits to lead on these principles. ‘Advancing Change – The Next Chapter’ will be released broadly to Industry this Summer.



TIANS BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2021/2022

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Mr. Blair Parby, *Field Unit Supervisor, Parks Canada*

Mr. John Simon, *President, Canadvac Travel Service/Kefi Travel*



Additional photos provided by: TIANS, TNS.

GET INVOLVED

You are an important part of the tourism industry in Nova Scotia. Now more than ever we encourage you to add your voice to the collective that is shaping the future of tourism in this province. Please take a moment to send us your comments so that we can continue to provide excellent service on your behalf. Do you have a question about an industry issue or trend? Is there a benefit that you would like to have access to, or would you like to share feedback on current benefit suppliers?



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