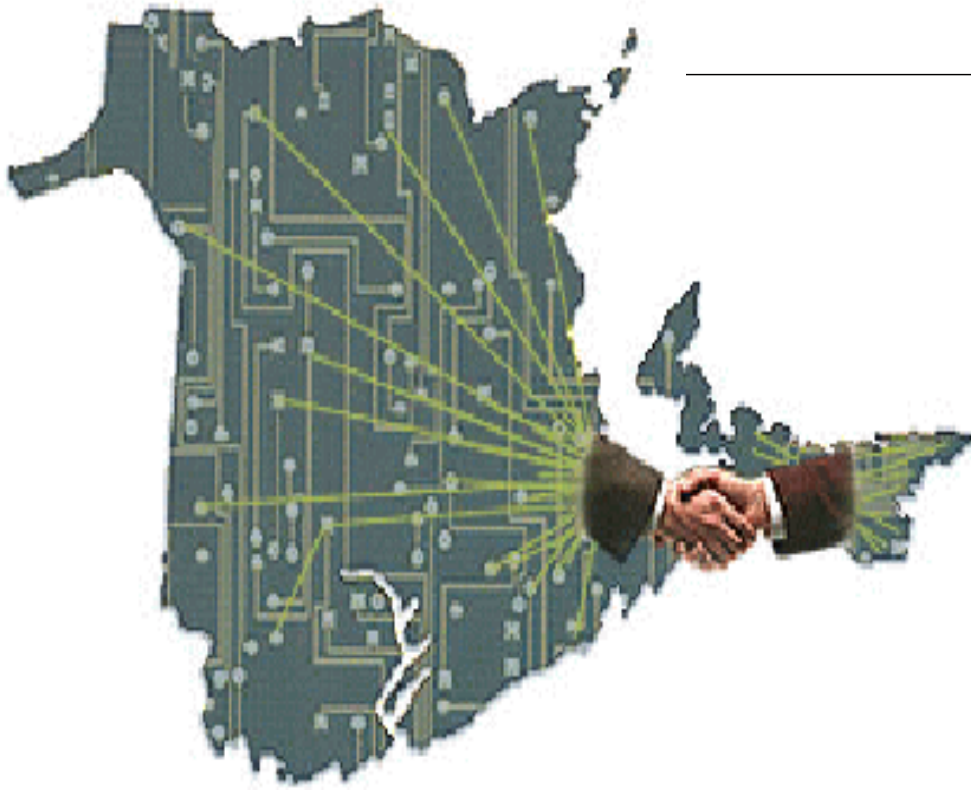


ANNUAL REPORT 2012-2013



NB/PEI EDUCATIONAL COMPUTER NETWORK

Over 40 Years of Inter-Institutional Collaboration

April 1, 2012 - March 31, 2013

**OBJECTIVE OF THE NEW BRUNSWICK AND PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND
EDUCATIONAL COMPUTER NETWORK**

To ensure high quality Information and Communication Technology (ICT) services to all member institutions in New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island.

The primary services provided by the Network are connectivity among its members and to the wider world, purchasing, licensing and support of computer hardware and software, network-based services and information exchange.

Visit our website at:
<http://www.nbpei-ecn.ca> (English)
<http://www.rie-nbipe.ca> (French)

NEW BRUNSWICK and PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND EDUCATIONAL COMPUTER NETWORK MEMBERS



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The NB/PEI Educational Computer Network (ECN), founded in 1970, connects all of the universities in New Brunswick (NB) and the university and community college in Prince Edward Island (PEI). The primary service provided by the network is connectivity among its members and to the wider world. However, additional benefits are enjoyed by the members in the areas of joint purchasing and licensing, shared support services, professional development, and the delivery of network-based services and information exchange.

This approach has enabled all members to realize the benefits of a high capacity, high speed communications network at a reasonable cost, regardless of size. It also allows the ECN members to take advantage of economies of scale not available to any individual member institution, and ensures that smaller institutions receive the same level of service as larger ones. Finally, member institutions become stronger on the national front by providing a united voice with respect to the collective needs of New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island members.

The Network Committee achieved the following deliverables in 2012-2013, meeting all of the objectives laid out at the beginning of the year in the approved 2012-2013 network plan/budget submission:

- The ECN hired a consultant to perform an IT Assessment of both individual ECN member institutions (to assess the strengths and weaknesses of each organization's technical infrastructure and processes) and the consortium (to identify new areas of collaboration for the group). At yearend, the individual assessments had been completed and presented to senior staff at individual institutions. The consortium-level assessment will be presented to ECN members in the new fiscal year. It is expected that the results of the review will allow the ECN to develop a multi-year strategic plan early in the new fiscal year.
- The ECN partnered once again with Interuniversity Services Inc. (ISI) in November 2012 to host a one-day workshop for ECN members at the University of Prince Edward Island on various Microsoft-related topics (licensing, Windows 7/8, etc.). A Sharepoint session was also hosted at Université de Moncton in February 2013. Both events were well attended.
- All of the NB and PEI institutions within the ECN shared in the joint purchase of commercial internet services for the first time in 2010-11. In the current fiscal year, the NBCC and CCNB also joined this partnership.
- UNB will be making necessary improvements to its main data centre in the upcoming fiscal year. Given that critical ECN equipment is permanently housed at UNB, the ECN has agreed to contribute 10% to a maximum of \$150,000 towards the cost of the project.

1. Background

Following a pilot project in the late 1960's, the NB Educational Computer Network was formed in 1970 when the New Brunswick Higher Education Commission, Mount Allison University, l'Université de Moncton, the University of New Brunswick, and St. Thomas University entered into an agreement to share computer processing services. In 1974, the newly formed Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission (MPHEC) assumed stewardship of the Agreement and in 1975, the University of Prince Edward Island joined as a full member, establishing the NB/PEI ECN. The signing of a five-year agreement, from May 1, 1992 to April 30, 1997, formalized the addition of Holland College as the next member of the group. A subsequent five-year agreement (May 1, 1997 to April 30, 2002) witnessed the addition of the Maritime Forest Ranger School (now the Maritime College of Forest Technology) to the list of member institutions of the ECN.

The latest five-year agreement was signed in April 2012 and covers May 1, 2012 to April 30, 2017. Current members are Mount Allison University, l'Université de Moncton, the University of New Brunswick, St. Thomas University, the University of Prince Edward Island, Holland College, the Maritime College of Forest Technology and the MPHEC.

The ECN is overseen by a Board of Directors, consisting of the Presidents of the member institutions and the Chief Executive Officer of the MPHEC. The overall management and operation of the network and the associated services is the responsibility of a Network Committee consisting of the Senior IT positions from each member institution. The ECN is funded by the Provinces of New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island, through the funding administered by the MPHEC, and is topped-up with some direct funding from the institutions.

In addition to providing connectivity among its members, the New Brunswick portion of the network also connects New Brunswick member institutions to the wider world through a shared connection to the Canadian Advanced Research Network (CANARIE) and through CANARIE to the world. The Prince Edward Island portion of the network also has a direct connection to CANARIE.

2. Meetings

During the 2012-2013 fiscal year, the ECN Board held two meetings (April 12, 2012 and September 7, 2012). At the April 2012 meeting, Dr. Robert Campbell was elected as the new Chairperson of the Board for a five year term.

The members of the ECN Network Committee met six times:

April 11, 2012	Maritime College of Forest Technology
May 22, 2012	Mount Allison
June 5, 2012	Saint Mary's (during AUCTC)
October 3, 2012	Université de Moncton, Edmundston campus
November 21, 2012	UPEI
January 9, 2013	Teleconference
March 6, 2013	Teleconference

A list of the Board and Network Committee members is included in Appendix I. The activities of the ECN are summarized in the next section.

3. Activities of the NB/PEI Network

3.1 Network Activities in New Brunswick

This was another year full of change for the NB ECN network. For a second year in a row, the shared internet connection was migrated to a new vendor. In May 2012, the connection was migrated from Rogers to Bell Aliant. NBCC and CCNB were also successfully added to the ECN internet connection.

The planned installation of a backbone node in Moncton at the Université de Moncton was successfully completed in the summer of 2012. Several existing connections were also moved to optimize the three rings of the ECN network which increase network availability. In addition, a redundant Internet connection was established in Moncton, significantly improving network resiliency for the ECN by eliminating the existing single point of failure.

This year also marked the first full year of operation of the NB ORAN backbone network.

One-third of our average internet traffic has been diverted to the CANARIE peering service, established two years ago, thus reducing overall costs for Internet services, since we need correspondingly less bandwidth from our commercial Internet provider (BellAliant).

3.2 Network Activities in Prince Edward Island

Holland College doubled the size of its Internet connection from 50Mb/s (with 80Mb/s burstable) to 100Mb/s (and 200Mb/s burstable). As well, the 1Gb/s CANet connection from Charlottetown to Summerside was relocated from the Atlantic Police Academy in Slemon Park to the new Waterfront Campus in downtown Summerside. Network speed and stability has been excellent in the past year.

UPEI campus bandwidth was increased from 150Mb/s to 200Mb/s (burstable to 300 Mb/s) to accommodate an increase in UPEI residence bandwidth from 50Mb/s to 100Mb/s.

UPEI has been activating segments across the campus fibre rings which were installed in 2010, providing increased capacity and resiliency across the local network, between local data centres, and on to the ECN and research network sites.

UPEI has implemented IPv6, the latest version of the communications protocol that provides an identification and location system for computers on networks and routes traffic across the Internet, in select segments of the campus network.

3.3 Other Activities

In addition to the network activities identified above, the additional initiatives and activities undertaken by the Network Committee during fiscal year 2012-2013, meeting all of the objectives laid out at the beginning of the year in the approved Network Plan, are summarized below:

Collaboration/Strategic Planning

In October 2012, the ECN hired Dell to perform an IT assessment of individual member institutions' technical infrastructure and processes and for the consortium (to identify new areas of collaboration for the group). All ECN members institutions/campuses had received their individual assessment results by yearend, including face-to-face presentations to senior management at each institution/campus. Dell is expected to present the consortium-level assessment results and recommendations early in the new fiscal year. Following the receipt of the final report, it is expected that the results of the review will allow the ECN to develop a multi-year strategic plan in the upcoming fiscal year.

UNB Data Centre Improvements

A consultant's report dated February 2012 urged UNB to make necessary improvements to its main data centre as soon as possible. Given that critical ECN equipment is permanently housed at the UNB data centre, the ECN agreed to contribute 10% (to a maximum of \$150,000) towards the cost of the entire project. UNB will be funding the remaining costs of the project. Renovation work is scheduled to begin in January 2014.

ECN Agreement

In October 2011, Board members confirmed their commitment to renew the ECN Agreement for another five-year term (May 1, 2012 to April 30, 2017), confirming the continuation of this excellent example of inter-institutional collaboration. The new Agreement was signed on June 4, 2012.

Software

The following software licenses were purchased jointly by ECN members: Minitab, Kaspersky, SPSS, Malwarebytes, and Waterloo Maple. Through joint purchasing, member institutions save thousands of dollars annually due to the volume licensing discounts offered by vendors.

Professional Development/Collaboration with Interuniversity Services Inc.

The ECN partnered once again with Interuniversity Services Inc. (ISI) in November 2012 to host a one-day workshop for ECN members at the University of Prince Edward Island, on various Microsoft-related topics (licensing, Windows 7/8, etc.). Participation was high and all institutions were represented. Topics included Microsoft licensing, Novell to Windows server consolidation, network architectures and wireless, Windows XP to Windows 7/8.

A Sharepoint session was also hosted at Université de Moncton in February 2013.

In addition, one employee per campus of member institutions was funded through the ECN to attend the Atlantic Universities and Colleges Technology Conference held in June 2012 at St. Mary's University.

Internet Services

During the last few months of the previous fiscal year, the PEI ECN member institutions agreed to join the NB member institutions and NRC on a full cost-recovery basis in an RFP for internet services. ECN members also agreed to partner with the New Brunswick Community College (NBCC) and Collège Communautaire du Nouveau-Brunswick (CCNB) on a full cost-recovery basis on a one-year trial basis. The RFP deadline was February 23, 2012 with a contract awarded

to BellAliant on April 16, 2012. The contract was extended on December 6, 2012 in the current fiscal year to April 30, 2014.

CANARIE

The ECN Board sent a letter to the federal government supporting the renewal of CANARIE's mandate. An acknowledgement letter was received in January 2012 from the Office of the Prime Minister. A letter was also received from Jim Roche, President and CEO of CANARIE, in July 2012 thanking the ECN members for their support and confirming that CANARIE's mandate and funding was successfully renewed for a three-year period.

Meeting Evaluations

Late in the fiscal year, Network Committee members agreed to add a meeting evaluation form as a standing item to the agenda of each meeting. This best practice will help improve future meetings.

Budget

A balanced 2012-2013 budget prepared by the Network Committee and reviewed by each institution's Vice-President (Finance) or equivalent was approved by the Board at its April 12, 2012 meeting.

In the revenue portion of the budget, the New Brunswick provincial transfer represented a 2.5% increase while the PEI portion remained frozen. To balance the PEI portion of the budget, the two PEI institutions once again made a direct contribution of \$26,476 in total to the budget and an amount of \$20,000 was drawn from the accumulated surplus. In New Brunswick, an amount of \$99,035 was included from the built-up accumulated surplus from previous years in order to balance the budget.

The approved budget allowed the ECN to sustain its existing activities (as described above), fund a one-time increase to hardware expenditures for the purchase of new equipment to support the new ORAN structure, plus ongoing maintenance for the new equipment. The Dell Assessment, though not included in the approved budget, was funded by New Brunswick and PEI using a split based on enrolments.

One of the key activities partially funded within the NB portion of the budget is the network connection at \$230,000. This annual amount was increased to cover the projected cost of the increase in pricing for the new network. In addition to this amount, as has been the case each of the past eight years, the four publically-funded universities in New Brunswick will contribute an additional \$150,000 to fund the network in 2012-2013, as the actual costs to the NB member institutions associated with this activity are \$150,000 higher than funded through the ECN.

3.4 Network Financial Status

A copy of the approved budget and actual expenditures for 2012-2013 (showing a deficit of \$66,419 [NB: \$33,334; PEI: \$33,085]) as well as the balance of the ECN committed funds as at March 31, 2013, is included in Appendix III. The initial projection of \$99,035 from the surplus was not used as the hardware purchased to support the new ORAN structure was significantly below expected costs. Once again for New Brunswick there was savings on Internet costs over the year thanks to discounted rates received from the provider. The IT Assessment completed across the

ECN did factor in additional costs that were not part of the budget submission, however the combined use of the surplus remains below the projected total. PEI cancelled some hardware purchases to accommodate the additional costs for the IT Assessment.

The New Brunswick portion of the committed funds balance (\$352,750) will be used to support the initiatives and collaborative projects that result from the assessment findings (the upgrade to the UNB Data Centre is an example). The Prince Edward Island portion of the committed funds balance (\$111,723) has accumulated as a result of surpluses over the past several years relating to the Province's network connection costs which have been budgeted at \$20,000 per year but have been entirely funded by CANARIE for several years. Three meetings that were held by teleconference led to significant savings in travel by members.

3.5 Network Website

The ECN website provides direct links in English (<http://www.nbpei-ecn.ca>) and French (<http://www.rie-nbipe.ca>). In 2012-2013, Holland College will host and maintain the website. The ECN website has been redesigned this year to improve the appearance and functionality of the site and it is now being hosted by Holland College.

APPENDIX I

Board Members as of March 31, 2013 were:

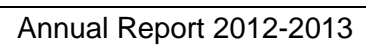
<u>Institution</u>	<u>Representative</u>
Mount Allison University	Dr. Robert Campbell
St. Thomas University	Ms. Dawn Russell
Université de Moncton	M. Raymond Thériault
University of New Brunswick	Dr. Eddy Campbell
University of Prince Edward Island	Dr. Alaa Abd-El-Aziz
Holland College	Dr. Brian McMillan
Maritime College of Forest Technology	Mr. Robert Whitney
MPHEC	Ms. Mireille Duguay

Network Committee Representatives and Alternates as of March 31, 2013 were:

<u>Institution</u>	<u>Representative</u>	<u>Alternate</u>
Mount Allison University	Mr. Helmut Becker	Mr. Peter Crawshaw
St. Thomas University	Mr. Dan Hurley	Mr. Robert Brewer
Université de Moncton	M. André Lee	Ms. Rina Robichaud
University of New Brunswick	Mr. Terry Nikkel	Mr. Charles Spencer
University of Prince Edward Island	Mr. Blair Vessey	Mr. Doug Burton
Holland College	Mr. Richard MacDonald	Mr. Greg Mermuys
Maritime College of Forest Technology	Mr. Jim Bowen	Mr. Mike Boucher
MPHEC	Ms. Rachael Anderson	Ms. Lisa Robichaud

The Chair of the Network Committee was Doug Burton.

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APPENDIX III

EDUCATIONAL COMPUTER NETWORK NEW BRUNSWICK AND PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND STATEMENT OF REVENUE AND EXPENDITURES*

PERIOD ENDED: 3/31/2013

Account Description	<u>Budget</u> 2012-2013	<u>Actual</u> 2012-2013
Revenue		
Provincial Transfers	946,548	946,538
Direct Funding from institutions	26,476	26,476
Committed Funds	119,035	66,419
Total Revenue	<u>1,092,059</u>	<u>1,039,433</u>
Expenditures		
Network Oper. Centre & Micro	197,850	203,894
Total Network & Shared Personnel	<u>193,024</u>	<u>203,894</u>
Provincial Lines	287,047	287,047
Internet Access	210,000	93,170
Advanced Network Connection	29,707	19,000
Total Telecommunications	<u>526,754</u>	<u>399,217</u>
Hardware	149,000	88,716
Software	122,435	118,049
Maintenance	82,020	63,584
Total Hardware, Software, Maintenance	<u>353,455</u>	<u>270,349</u>
Network Meetings	14,000	14,707
Collaborative Projects	0	151,267
Total Collaborative Projects, Network Meetings	<u>14,000</u>	<u>165,973</u>
Total Expenditures	<u>1,092,059</u>	<u>1,039,433</u>
Excess of revenue over expenditures (expenditures over revenue) for the year	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
NB & PEI Committed Funds Balance as at March 31, 2013:		
Balance, April 1, 2012		530,892
Net revenue (loss) for the year		<u>(66,419)</u>
Balance, March 31, 2013		<u>464,473</u>

*as per MPHEC audited financial statements

**EDUCATIONAL COMPUTER NETWORK
NEW BRUNSWICK
STATEMENT OF REVENUE AND EXPENDITURES***

PERIOD ENDED: 3/31/2013

Account Description	Budget 2012-2013	Actual 2012-2013
Revenue		
Provincial Transfers	860,948	860,938
Committed Funds	99,035	33,334
Total Revenue	<u>959,983</u>	<u>894,272</u>
Expenditures		
Network Oper. Centre & Micro	186,969	192,680
Total Network & Shared Personnel	<u>186,969</u>	<u>192,680</u>
Provincial Lines	230,000	230,000
Internet Access	210,000	93,170
Advanced Network Connection	24,000	19,000
Total Telecommunications	<u>464,000</u>	<u>342,170</u>
Hardware	134,000	88,716
Software	105,294	101,522
Maintenance	59,720	44,377
Total Hardware, Software, Maintenance	<u>299,014</u>	<u>234,615</u>
Network Meetings	10,000	11,078
Collaborative Projects	0	113,730
Total Collaborative Projects, Network Meetings	<u>10,000</u>	<u>124,808</u>
Total Expenditures	<u>959,983</u>	<u>894,272</u>
Excess of revenue over expenditures (expenditures over revenue) for the year	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
NB Committed Funds Balance as at March 31, 2013:		
Balance, April 1, 2012		386,104
Net revenue (loss) for the year		<u>(33,334)</u>
Balance, March 31, 2013		<u>352,750</u>

*as per MPHEC audited financial statements

**EDUCATIONAL COMPUTER NETWORK
PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND
STATEMENT OF REVENUE AND EXPENDITURES***

PERIOD ENDED: 3/31/2013

Account Description	Budget 2012-2013	Actual 2012-2013
Revenue		
Provincial Transfers	85,600	85,600
Direct HC/UPEI Transfer	26,476	26,476
	20,000	33,085
Total Revenue	<u>132,076</u>	<u>145,161</u>
Expenditures		
Network Oper. Centre & Micro	10,881	11,214
Total Network & Shared Personnel	<u>10,881</u>	<u>11,214</u>
Provincial Lines & Internet Access	57,047	57,047
Advanced Network Connection	5,707	0
Total Telecommunications	<u>62,754</u>	<u>53,592</u>
Hardware	15,000	0
Software	17,141	16,527
Maintenance	22,300	19,207
Total Hardware, Software, Maintenance	<u>54,441</u>	<u>35,734</u>
Network Meetings	4,000	3,629
Collaborative Projects	0	37,537
Total Collaborative Projects, Network Meetings	<u>4,000</u>	<u>41,166</u>
Total Revenue	<u>132,076</u>	<u>145,161</u>
Excess of revenue over expenditures (expenditures over revenue) for the year	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
PEI Committed Funds Balance as at March 31, 2013:		
Balance, April 1, 2012		144,808
Net revenue (loss) for the year		<u>(33,085)</u>
Balance, March 31, 2013		<u>111,723</u>

*as per MPHEC audited financial statements