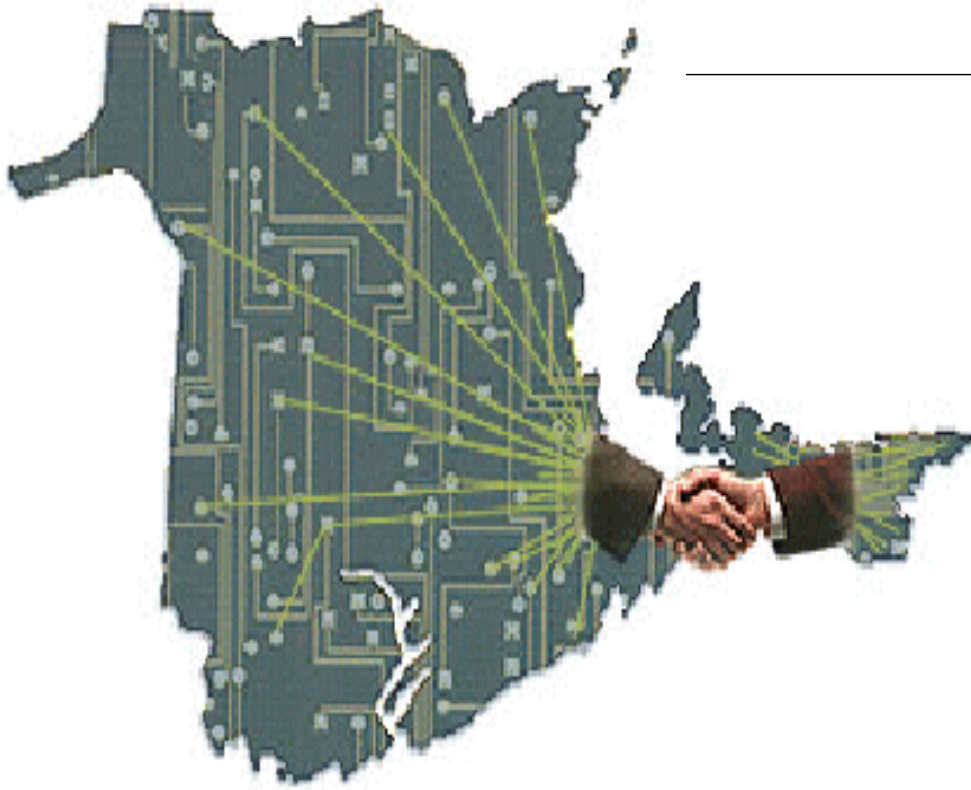


ANNUAL REPORT 2011-2012



NB/PEI EDUCATIONAL COMPUTER NETWORK

Over 40 Years of Inter-Institutional Collaboration

April 1, 2011 - March 31, 2012

**OBJECTIVE OF THE NB/PEI 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 Web site at:
<http://www.nbpei-ecn.ca> (English)
<http://www.rie-nbipe.ca> (French)

NB/PEI EDUCATIONAL COMPUTER NETWORK MEMBERS



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UNIVERSITÉ DE MONCTON
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The NB/PEI 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 NB/PEI 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 2011-2012, meeting all of the objectives laid out at the beginning of the year in the approved 2011-2012 network plan/budget submission:

- renewing the ECN partnership agreement for another five-year term, to begin in May 2012;
- celebrating the ECN's 40 years of collaboration with 45 current and past ECN Network Committee and Board members in attendance at an event held at St. Thomas University in November 2011;
- announcing, in conjunction with its partners (which now include the New Brunswick Community College and Collège communautaire du Nouveau-Brunswick) the most recent iteration of the high speed research and education network connecting member and partner institutions;
- continuing to purchase software jointly in order to benefit from volume licensing discounts; and
- partnering with Interuniversity Services Inc. (ISI) for the second time to host a one-day workshop in November 2011 on Desktop and Application Virtualization attended by approximately 50 participants.

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 Educational Computer Network (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 NB/PEI ECN.

The latest five-year agreement will be signed in April 2012 and will cover 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 NB/PEI 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 NB/PEI 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 2011-2012 fiscal year, the members of the NB/PEI ECN Network Committee met seven times:

| | |
|------------------|-----------------------|
| April 7, 2011 | Université de Moncton |
| June 14, 2011 | Mount Allison |
| October 5, 2011 | Holland College |
| November 2, 2011 | Université de Moncton |
| December 7, 2011 | Teleconference |
| January 25, 2012 | Teleconference |
| March 20, 2012 | Teleconference |

In addition, the NB/PEI ECN Board of Directors met by teleconference on June 29, 2011 to approve the 2010-2011 Annual Report and the 2011-2012 network plan/budget submission as well as to receive an update from the Network Committee on the network renewal and planning surrounding the celebration of the ECN's 40th anniversary. In October 2011, Board members also confirmed their commitment to renew the NB/PEI ECN Agreement for another five-year term.

A list of the Board of Directors and Network Committee members is included in Appendix I.

3. Activities of the NB/PEI Network

3.1 Network Activities in New Brunswick

This was a year of significant change to the NB ECN network. Every service provided by carriers saw complete conversion during the year.

The shared Internet connection was migrated to Rogers from Aliant in May 2011 following an RFP process. The transition was not without some issues but these were resolved before students arrived in September 2011. Performance was stable for the remainder of the school year.

In 2010, the ECN signed a partnership agreement with the National Research Council (NRC), New Brunswick Community College (NBCC) and Collège Communautaire de Nouveau Brunswick (CCNB) to build a new province-wide research and education network to serve the needs of all campuses for the three organizations (Appendix II). CANARIE and the Province of New Brunswick were major contributors to the project, providing \$3.148 million and \$850,000 respectively. The project deadline of December 2011 was met. This network places New Brunswick institutions and researchers on a level playing field with the rest of Canada, allowing all New Brunswick campuses to easily participate in collaborative research. New Brunswick institutions connected to CANARIE's new content peering service, diverting approximately 30% away from the commodity Internet.

The new NB network architecture provides an opportunity for the ECN to deploy a second network backbone node in Moncton at Université de Moncton, significantly improving network resiliency for the ECN by eliminating existing single points of failure. Planning is under way with the node expected to be online by summer 2012.

3.2 Network Activities in Prince Edward Island

The current commodity and research network connections are sufficient to meet the needs of existing members.

Peering with a number of large content providers was enabled through the CANARIE research network, which resulted in a decrease in commodity Internet traffic by approximately 25%.

The backup connection to the research network was moved from Fredericton to Halifax in conjunction with some re-design of the CANARIE network.

The year was a stable year for the Prince Edward Island network connecting UPEI and Holland College. In addition, the Eastlink-provisioned Internet service has been reliable and performed well for both institutions.

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 2011-2012, meeting all of the objectives laid out at the beginning of the year in the approved Network Plan, are summarized below:

ECN Agreement

In October 2011, Board members confirmed their commitment to renew the NB/PEI ECN Agreement for another five-year term (May 1, 2012 to April 30, 2017), confirming the continuing existence of this excellent example of inter-institutional collaboration. The new Agreement will be signed early in the 2012-13 fiscal year.

NB/PEI ECN 40th Anniversary/Network Launch

The ECN unveiled, in conjunction with its partners, a new high-speed network, called the Optical Regional Advanced Network (ORAN), on November 18, 2011 at the National Research Council. The ORAN is a joint initiative of the ECN, the National Research Council of Canada, and the newest partners, New Brunswick Community College and Collège communautaire du Nouveau-Brunswick. The new network is designed to provide a high-speed network that maximizes capacity while reducing capital and operating costs for all partners, and to facilitate cutting-edge research and collaboration regionally and globally.

The event also celebrated the ECN's 40th anniversary, hosted by Saint Thomas University. Attendees included current and past members of both the ECN Network Committee and ECN Board.

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. (ISI)

A technical workshop hosted in partnership with ISI, focusing on Desktop and Application Virtualization was held on November 2, 2011 at the Université de Moncton Campus. Participation was high and all institutions were represented. This was the second collaborative project with ISI, who organized the invitations, registration and food services. A panel of ECN Directors presented their interests in the topic of Virtualization, the business drivers as well as the pitfalls. NSCC gave a presentation on their experience which was followed by two vendor presentations. The Network Committee was pleased with the result of the collaboration with ISI, and overall feedback was very positive.

In addition, the registration fee for one employee per campus of member institutions to the Atlantic Universities and Colleges Technology Conference held in June 2011 at Mount Allison University was funded.

Internet Services

During the last few months of the 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, required because the existing one-year contract in NB with Rogers expires on April 30, 2012. In addition, 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 to be awarded early in the new fiscal year.

CANARIE

At the ECN's 40th anniversary celebration in November 2011, attendees were reminded that CANARIE's mandate was, once again, up for renewal. ECN members agreed, on December 12, 2011 that the ECN Board Chair, Yvon Fontaine, would sign a letter on behalf of the ECN Board supporting the renewal of CANARIE's mandate, as was done in 2006 (the last time CANARIE's mandate was up for renewal). The letter of support was sent on December 19, 2011.

Budget

A balanced 2011-2012 budget prepared by the Network Committee and reviewed by each institution's Vice-President (Finance) or equivalent was approved by the Board at its June 29, 2011 meeting.

In the revenue portion of the budget, the New Brunswick provincial transfer represented a 2% increase while the PEI portion remains frozen. In order 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. In New Brunswick, an amount of \$14,975 was included from the built-up accumulated surplus from previous years in order to balance the budget.

The approved budget allowed the ECN to maintain its existing activities (as described above), fund the next iteration of the high-speed research and education network in New Brunswick and host a media event launching the new network and celebrating the ECN's 40th anniversary.

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 seven years, the four publically-funded universities in New Brunswick will contribute an additional \$150,000 to fund the network in 2011-2012, as the total 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 2011-2012 (showing a surplus of \$96,101.00 [NB: \$88,534; PEI: \$7,567]) as well as the balance of the NB/PEI ECN committed funds as at March 31, 2012, is included in Appendix III. The majority of the current year surplus for New Brunswick is due to the fact that approximately \$66,000 was saved on internet costs over the year thanks to discounted rates received from the provider. Hardware purchases to support the new network have been deferred to the new year as well.

The New Brunswick portion of the committed funds balance (\$297,570) will be held in the committed funds and drawn from in the coming year for the purchase of new hardware to support the network renewal. The Prince Edward Island portion of the committed funds balance (\$144,810) 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. The line item was removed from the 2011-2012 budget. The surplus is due to expenses in travel, maintenance and internet access falling slightly under budget. Three meetings that were held by teleconference led to significant savings in travel by members.

3.5 Network Website

The NB/PEI 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. A redesign of the website to improve the appearance and functionality of the site is underway.

APPENDIX I

Board Members as of March 31, 2012 were:

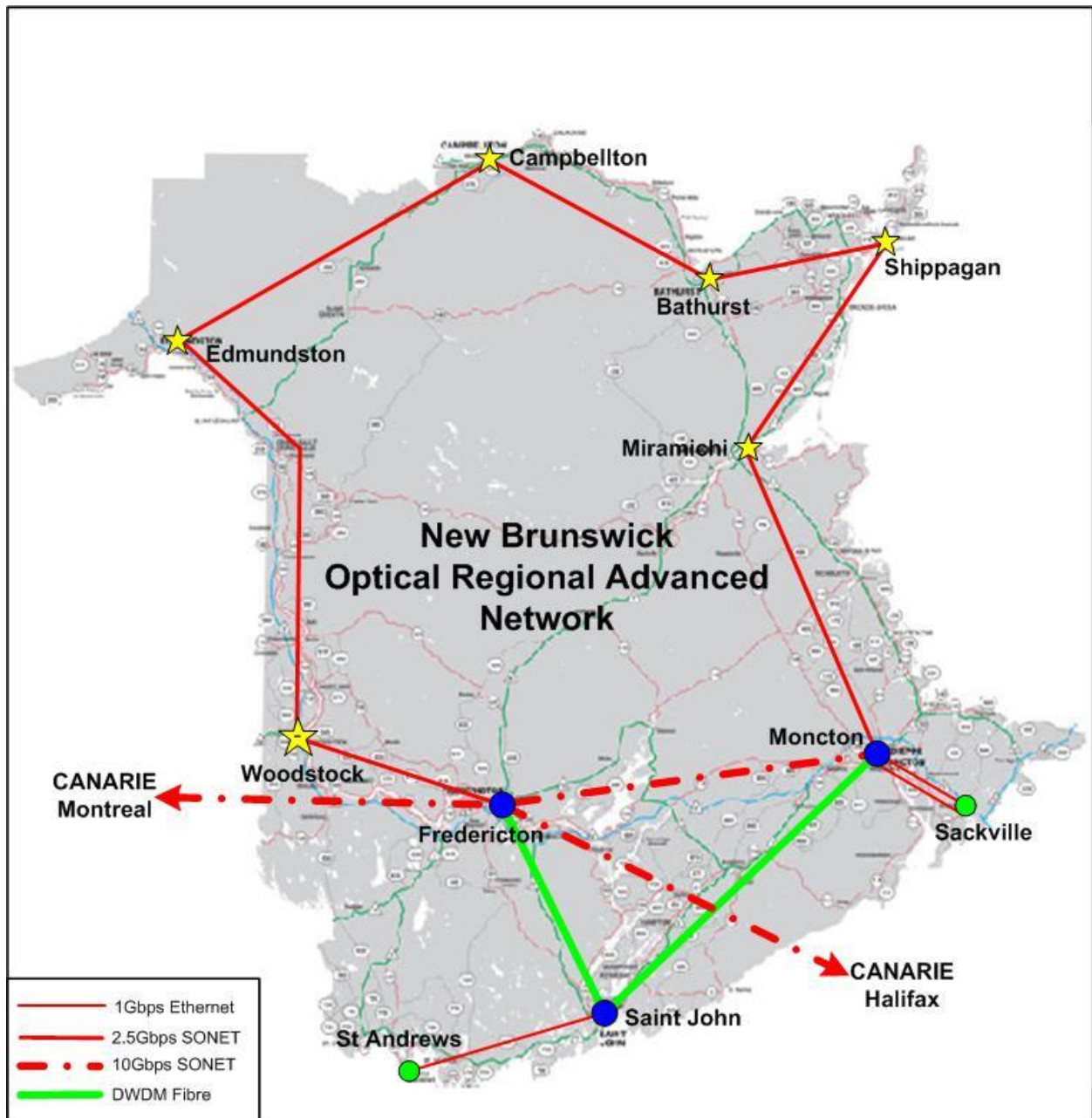
| <u>Institution</u> | <u>Representative</u> |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Mount Allison University | Dr. Robert Campbell |
| St. Thomas University | Ms. Dawn Russell |
| Université de Moncton | M. Yvon Fontaine (Chair) |
| University of New Brunswick | 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, 2012 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 | Mme Rina Robichaud |
| University of New Brunswick | Mr. Terry Nikkel | Mr. Peter Jacobs |
| University of Prince Edward Island | Mr. Blair Vessey | Mr. David Cairns |
| 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.

APPENDIX II



APPENDIX III

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

PERIOD ENDED: 3/31/2012

| Account Description | <u>Budget</u> 2011-2012 | <u>Actual</u> 2011-2012 |
|---|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Revenue | | |
| Provincial Transfers | 946,538 | 946,538 |
| Direct Funding from institutions | 26,476 | 26,476 |
| Committed Funds | 14,975 | 0 |
| Total Revenue | <u>987,989</u> | <u>973,014</u> |
| Expenditures | | |
| Network Oper. Centre & Micro | 193,024 | 188,778 |
| Compaq CSLG Administrator | 0 | 0 |
| Total Network & Shared Personnel | <u>193,024</u> | <u>188,778</u> |
| Provincial Lines | 286,420 | 283,592 |
| Internet Access | 210,000 | 143,598 |
| Advanced Network Connection | 24,000 | 19,000 |
| Total Telecommunications | <u>520,420</u> | <u>446,190</u> |
| Hardware | 70,371 | 56,804 |
| Software | 123,864 | 121,553 |
| Maintenance | 63,320 | 52,570 |
| Total Hardware, Software, Maintenance | <u>257,555</u> | <u>230,927</u> |
| Network Meetings | 17,000 | 11,019 |
| Collaborative Projects | 0 | 0 |
| Total Collaborative Projects, Network Meetings | <u>17,000</u> | <u>11,019</u> |
| Total Expenditures | <u>987,999</u> | <u>876,913</u> |
| Excess of revenue over expenditures (expenditures over revenue) for the year | <u>0</u> | <u>96,101</u> |
| NB & PEI Committed Funds Balance as at March 31, 2012: | | |
| Balance, April 1, 2011 | | 434,813 |
| Net revenue (loss) for the year | | <u>96,101</u> |
| Balance, March 31, 2012 | | <u>530,914</u> |

*as per MPHEC audited financial statements

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

PERIOD ENDED: 3/31/2012

| Account Description | Budget 2011-2012 | Actual 2011-2012 |
|---|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Revenue | | |
| Provincial Transfers | 860,938 | 860,938 |
| Committed Funds | 14,975 | |
| Total Revenue | <u>875,923</u> | <u>860,938</u> |
| Expenditures | | |
| Network Oper. Centre & Micro | 182,409 | 178,395 |
| Compaq CSLG Administrator | 0 | 0 |
| Total Network & Shared Personnel | <u>182,409</u> | <u>178,395</u> |
| Provincial Lines | 230,000 | 230,000 |
| Internet Access | 220,000 | 143,598 |
| Advanced Network Connection | 24,000 | 19,000 |
| Total Telecommunications | <u>464,000</u> | <u>392,598</u> |
| Hardware | 70,371 | 56,804 |
| Software | 106,523 | 104,535 |
| Maintenance | 39,620 | 30,592 |
| Total Hardware, Software, Maintenance | <u>216,514</u> | <u>191,932</u> |
| Network Meetings | 13,000 | 9,480 |
| Collaborative Projects | 0 | 0 |
| Total Collaborative Projects, Network Meetings | <u>13,000</u> | <u>9,480</u> |
| Total Expenditures | <u>875,923</u> | <u>772,404</u> |
| Excess of revenue over expenditures (expenditures over revenue) for the year | <u>0</u> | <u>88,534</u> |
| NB Committed Funds Balance as at March 31, 2012: | | |
| Balance, April 1, 2011 | | 297,570 |
| Net revenue (loss) for the year | | <u>88,534</u> |
| Balance, March 31, 2012 | | <u>386,104</u> |

*as per MPHEC audited financial statements

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

PERIOD ENDED: 3/31/2012

| Account Description | Budget 2011-2012 | Actual 2011-2012 |
|---|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Revenue | | |
| Provincial Transfers | 85,600 | 85,600 |
| Direct HC/UPEI Transfer | 26,476 | 26,476 |
| Total Revenue | 112,076 | 112,076 |
| Expenditures | | |
| Network Oper. Centre & Micro | 10,615 | 10,383 |
| Compaq CSLG Administrator | 0 | 0 |
| Total Network & Shared Personnel | 10,615 | 10,383 |
| Provincial Lines & Internet Access | 56,420 | 53,592 |
| Advanced Network Connection | 0 | 0 |
| Total Telecommunications | 56,420 | 53,592 |
| Hardware | 0 | 0 |
| Software | 17,341 | 17,017 |
| Maintenance | 23,700 | 21,978 |
| Total Hardware, Software, Maintenance | 41,041 | 38,995 |
| Network Meetings | 4,000 | 1,539 |
| Collaborative Projects | 0 | 0 |
| Total Collaborative Projects, Network Meetings | 4,000 | 1,539 |
| Total Revenue | 122,076 | 104,509 |
| Excess of revenue over expenditures (expenditures over revenue) for the year | 0 | 7,567 |
| PEI Committed Funds Balance as at March 31, 2012: | | |
| Balance, April 1, 2011 | | 137,243 |
| Net revenue (loss) for the year | | 7,567 |
| Balance, March 31, 2012 | | 144,810 |

*as per MPHEC audited financial statements