

# Canadian Intergovernmental Conference Secretariat

2011–12

## **Departmental Performance Report**

The Honourable Peter Penashue  
Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs  
President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada



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## Minister's Message

The Canadian Intergovernmental Conference Secretariat (CICS) is an impartial intergovernmental organization that plays a key role in the Canadian federation. Its mandate consists of providing the administrative support required for the planning and holding of federal-provincial-territorial and provincial-territorial conferences of first ministers, ministers and deputy ministers.

In fiscal year 2011-12, CICS organized 60 senior-level meetings, including 38 federal-provincial-territorial conferences and 22 provincial-territorial conferences. With regard to conference services, a number of strategic initiatives were undertaken to modernize the Secretariat's delivery model. New services such as a secure document retrieval system, on-line registration and WiFi on conference site were added to the CICS repertoire. In addition, a plan for the integration of videoconferencing was developed and continues to evolve. Partnerships were strengthened and response rates of evaluations were increased by 70% thanks to sustained efforts surrounding a new marketing and communications strategy.



CICS is committed to maintaining its leading-edge role as a service provider for conferences, and to remaining the first choice for governments in organizing intergovernmental meetings. Governments benefit from substantial economies of scale in using CICS services, which is all the more relevant in the current economic environment.

In that context, as the President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, I am very pleased to table the Secretariat's Departmental Performance Report for 2011-12, which highlights its accomplishments over the past fiscal year.

The Honourable Peter Penashue  
Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs  
President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada

## Section I: Organizational Overview

### Raison d'être

The Canadian Intergovernmental Conference Secretariat (CICS) was established pursuant to an agreement reached at the May 1973 First Ministers' Conference and was designated a department of the federal government by an Order-in-Council dated November 29, 1973. Its one program mandate is to provide administrative services for the planning and conduct of First Ministers', Ministers' and Deputy Ministers' federal-provincial-territorial and provincial-territorial conferences.

CICS is an agency of the federal and provincial governments and, as such, acts as a neutral intergovernmental body. Its budget is supported by both orders of government and its staff includes federal and provincial/territorial public servants. The Secretary reports to all governments annually. The operations are reviewed by federal and provincial senior officials designated by their respective First Ministers. CICS reports to Parliament through the President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada.

### Responsibilities

The mandate of the Secretariat is to serve federal, provincial and territorial governments in the planning and conduct of senior level intergovernmental conferences held across Canada. The primary objective of CICS is to relieve client departments in virtually every major sector of intergovernmental activity of the numerous technical and administrative tasks associated with the planning and conduct of multilateral conferences, thereby enabling them to concentrate on substantive policy issues. CICS provides continuous, effective, impartial administrative services to these meetings.

### Benefits for Canadians

The planning and conduct of multilateral meetings of First Ministers, Ministers and Deputy Ministers is a critical component of the workings of the Canadian federation. By skillfully and professionally planning and delivering of services at these meetings, CICS allows governments to discuss important issues without getting distracted by process. The risk of error and omission is significantly mitigated by tapping into the Secretariat's experience and impartiality.

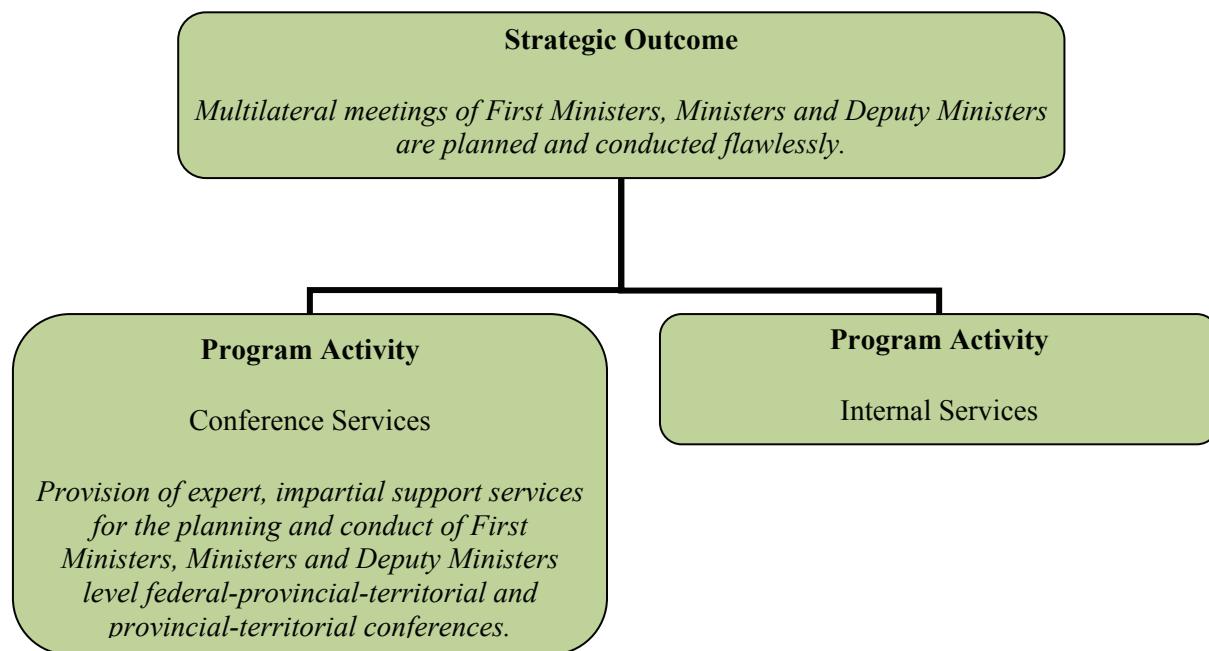
The interests of all Canadians are represented by their elected governments participating in these intergovernmental conferences.

As an institution dedicated to supporting events that give rise to, and support the spirit of cooperation and negotiation among governments, CICS seeks to execute its role to maximum effect, producing an environment conducive to rational discourse and optimal decision-making, to the benefit of all Canadians.

Federal, provincial and territorial governments greatly benefit from significant cost efficiencies and economies of scale through the use of CICS. This is particularly relevant in the current fiscal environment.

## Strategic Outcome and Program Activity Architecture

CICS is a micro agency with a single program mandate. Its Program Activity Architecture is presented below.



## Organizational Priorities

### Summary of Progress against Priorities

<b>Operational Priorities</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Strategic Outcome</b>
Continuous improvement of our services by adopting the best available tools for the planning and conduct of senior-level intergovernmental conferences.	Ongoing	Multilateral meetings of First Ministers, Ministers and Deputy Ministers are planned and conducted flawlessly.

**Progress achieved :**

- Strategic priorities were developed and significant initiatives undertaken to modernize our service delivery model and integrate new technologies to better meet the needs of our clients.
- New services such as on-line registration and a secure document retrieval system were piloted and then successfully added to our repertoire of services.
- A plan for the integration of video-conferencing into our service delivery model was developed and is currently well underway.
- A number of resources, both physical and technological, were replaced and/or renewed to ensure cost efficiencies and to better meet the needs of clients.
- The payment of venue patch fees on behalf of our clients was implemented.

<b>Operational Priorities</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Strategic Outcome</b>
Re-energize our partnerships through increased engagement with stakeholders and clients to ensure that the Secretariat remains the preferred choice of governments for senior-level intergovernmental conference support.	Ongoing; escalated	Multilateral meetings of First Ministers, Ministers and Deputy Ministers are planned and conducted flawlessly.

**Progress achieved:**

- A new comprehensive marketing strategy for CICS was launched including a new website, a new logo and a modernized visual representation of the organization.
- Communication with our clients was increased through a new format for our Annual Report to Governments and a more informative accompanying letter to outline the progress on the strategic priorities for the organization.
- Meetings were held with representatives from the Privy Council Office to discuss the integral role of CICS in facilitating Federal-Provincial-Territorial meetings and thereby contributing to the modernization and transformation of intergovernmental business.
- Individual meetings were held with several of our clients to clarify roles and responsibilities and to ensure the efficiency of collaborative efforts at intergovernmental meetings.
- The number of evaluation forms completed by delegates on-site continues to rise. This year's communication efforts resulted in an increase of 70% in the response rate from last year.

Management Priorities	Type	Strategic Outcome
To strengthen internal management practices at CICS.	Ongoing	Multilateral meetings of First Ministers, Ministers and Deputy Ministers are planned and conducted flawlessly.
<b>Progress Achieved</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Progress has been achieved to enhance budgeting and financial systems and to develop business intelligence to support management decisions;</li> <li>• Core control over financial management within the CICS is exercised in a manner compliant with the requirements contained in policies, directives and corresponding legislation tested by the Office of the Comptroller General.</li> <li>• The adoption of the Expense Management Tool of the Shared Travel Services has provided valuable information to enhance our service delivery and improve our management practices.</li> <li>• By increasing our use of shared services offered by Public Works and Government Services Canada, CICS has attained greater efficiencies in its Internal Services.</li> </ul>		

## Risk Analysis

As an organization that services the senior level intergovernmental conference activities undertaken by 14 jurisdictions and their respective departments, CICS has no control over the timing, location and costs of such meetings. The Secretariat is funded annually at a level sufficient to finance a level of conference activity in the 110-120 range. Over a ten-year period, we were averaging over 100 conferences annually. The economic environment and political situation in 2011-12 has contributed to a decline in intergovernmental activity. While fiscal restraint continued to be a reality, eight governments also found themselves in an election period. In that context, CICS organized and served 60 senior-level meetings.

The flawless delivery of high quality services to the Secretariat's clients is made possible only by the total dedication and commitment of the agency's personnel; personnel who possess the aptitudes, character and devotion necessary for efficient CICS operations. Furthermore, retention of corporate memory and conference practices, procedures and protocols is fundamental to the success of CICS in carrying out its mandate. CICS' departmental clients are also subject to high turnover rates among the staff assigned to conference planning. Consequently, CICS personnel play a key role in providing new contacts with pertinent information on the practices and processes related to intergovernmental machinery.

Given that CICS reports to 14 governments, it must ensure that its services not only remain pertinent, impartial, confidential and equitable to all clients but, more critical, that they be perceived as such in an environment that often can be highly political.

As a result, the Secretariat has always been cognizant of the importance of risk management issues and continues to make steady progress towards the effective implementation of integrated risk management. CICS' highest risks continue to be:

1. Maintaining the credibility of the agency as a neutral conference service provider;
2. Maintaining continuity of CICS' conference services capability and supporting infrastructure;
3. Maintaining due diligence and reporting on appropriate controls, given the increased emphasis on accountability, delegated authority and resource management;
4. The ability to react and adjust to expansions and reductions in the number of requests for CICS services;
5. Access to qualified personnel; and
6. Retention of corporate memory and practices.

## Summary of Performance

### 2011–12 Financial Resources (\$ millions)

Planned Spending	Total Authorities	Actual Spending
6.6	7.0	5.6

### 2011–12 Human Resources (full-time equivalents [FTEs])

Planned	Actual	Difference
36	32	4

## Summary of Performance Tables

### Progress toward Strategic Outcome

**Strategic Outcome:** Multilateral meetings of First Ministers, Ministers and Deputy Ministers are planned and conducted flawlessly.

Performance Indicators	Targets	2011–12 Performance
Extent to which senior government officials are satisfied with various CICS services in the planning and conduct of multilateral meetings of First Ministers, Ministers and Deputy Ministers.	90% satisfaction- High degree of stakeholder trust and confidence in CICS' independence and high degree of satisfaction with CICS services.	Survey results of both conference planners and conference delegates confirmed a very high level of satisfaction with the quality of services provided by CICS. All targets were met and many surpassed. As well, informal feedback was very complimentary. Sector demand for services remained stable with an additional new sector requesting CICS services.

### Performance Summary, Excluding Internal Services (\$ millions)

Program Activity	2010–11 Actual Spending	2011–12				Alignment to Government of Canada Outcome
		Main Estimates	Planned Spending	Total Authorities	Actual Spending	
Conference Services	3.0	4.4	4.4	4.7	3.5	<a href="#">Well-managed and efficient government operations.</a>

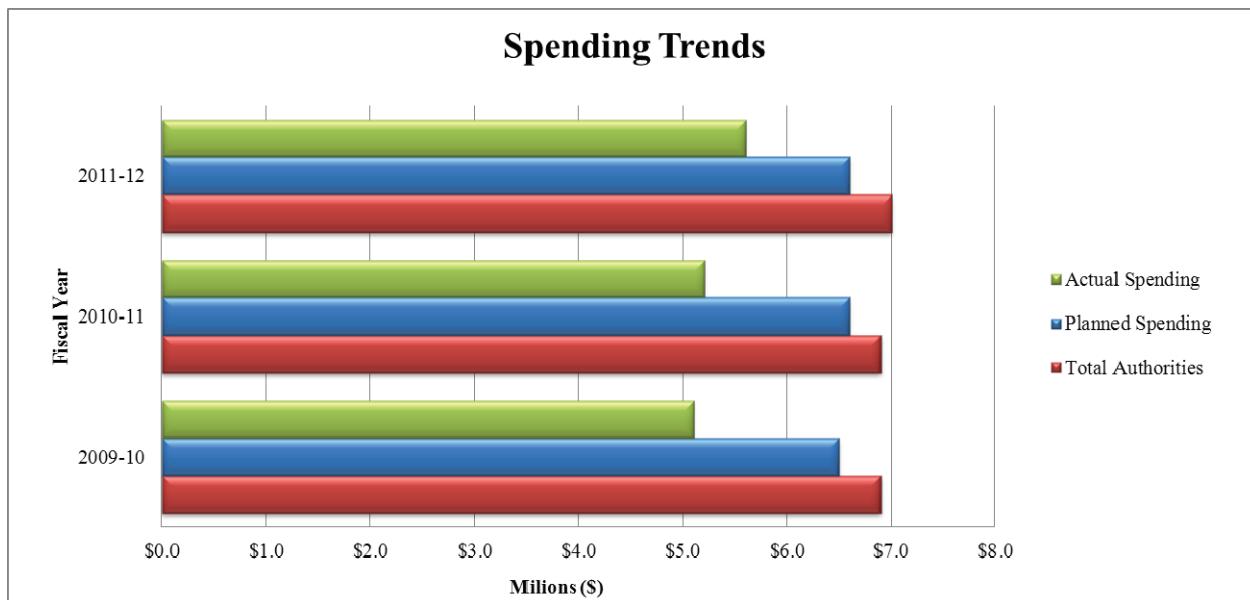
### Performance Summary for Internal Services (\$ millions)

Program Activity	2010-11 Actual Spending	2011-12			
		Main Estimates	Planned Spending	Total Authorities	Actual Spending
Internal Services	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.3	2.1

### Strategic Environmental Assessment

During 2011–12 CICS acknowledged and fulfilled their responsibility with regards to the [\*Cabinet Directive on the Environmental Assessment of Policy, Plan and Program Proposals\*](#).

### Expenditure Profile



### Estimates by Vote

For information on CICS's organizational Votes and/or statutory expenditures, please see the Public Accounts of Canada 2012 (Volume II). An electronic version of the [Public Accounts 2012](#) is available on the [Public Works and Government Services Canada](#) website.

## Section II: Analysis of Program Activities by Strategic Outcome

### Strategic Outcome

Multilateral meetings of First Ministers, Ministers and Deputy Ministers are planned and conducted flawlessly.

### Program Activity 1: Conference Services

#### Program Activity Description

Provision of expert, impartial support services for the planning and conduct of First Ministers, Ministers and Deputy Ministers level federal-provincial-territorial and provincial-territorial conferences.

The CICS does not convene intergovernmental meetings. It is called upon to respond to decisions taken by governments to meet on key issues. Decisions concerning the location of such meetings, their number in a given fiscal year, their timing and duration, are all factors beyond the control of the Secretariat. The level of CICS expenditures for each fiscal year is, however, directly affected by these factors.

#### 2011–12 Financial Resources (\$ millions)

Planned Spending	Total Authorities	Actual Spending
4.4	4.7	3.5

#### 2011–12 Human Resources (full-time equivalents [FTEs])

Planned	Actual	Difference
24	22	2

### Program Activity Performance Summary

Expected Results	Performance Indicators	Targets	Actual Results
Flawlessly planned and conducted events.	Survey results, client satisfaction letters, number of client departments utilizing CICS services.	To maintain the highest degree of customer satisfaction.	100% of planners surveyed indicated that they were satisfied or very satisfied with CICS services overall. Similarly, 95% of conference delegates were satisfied or very satisfied with CICS services overall.

### Performance Summary and Analysis of Program Activity

In 2011-12, CICS provided its services to sixty senior level intergovernmental conferences. The breakdown of the meetings is as follows:

Vice-Regal: 1    Premiers: 2    Ministers: 23    Deputy Ministers: 34

Based on its PAA, the Secretariat's performance measurement framework (PMF) outlines its overall measurement strategy. Performance is assessed annually using internal data and documents as well as two surveys of clients; one a sampling of conference planners and the second of conference delegates.

Satisfaction results were very positive this year. In fact as indicated above, 100% of planners surveyed indicated that they were satisfied or very satisfied with CICS services overall. Individual features of the services offered during the planning phase received ratings of satisfaction between 85 and 100%. On a scale of 1 (not at all satisfied) to 5 (very satisfied), average ratings were all at least 4.5 out of 5 for each feature. Therefore, the performance target of 90% was achieved in all cases and surpassed in many. Equally positive, the survey of conference delegates revealed that 95% of them were satisfied or very satisfied with CICS services overall. Individual features of the on-site service received by our clients showed satisfaction ratings between 93 and 99%. When asked for three words to describe the quality of services offered by CICS, planners and delegates most often answered with the following words: professional, efficient, excellent, courteous and organized.

There is a range of other survey results which indicate the high level of satisfaction of conference planners and delegates alike. The following quotes have been gleaned from this year's surveys to provide some insights:

“CICS is the gold standard!”

“Organization of conferences through CICS is outstanding.”

“CICS is the best, no comparison!”

“This meeting has functioned far more smoothly than those I have attended when CICS was not involved.”

The surveys also ask clients for suggestions on how CICS can improve its services. While most did not identify specific areas, a few clients mentioned the need for improved communication about its services and the need to incorporate newer technologies into its service delivery model. These comments serve to reinforce the on-going strategic priorities of the organization.

In addition to the surveys, CICS continues to receive a variety of expressions of appreciation from various clients throughout the year:

“I would like to pass on our thanks for your hard work and diligence in helping us to prepare for this year’s meeting of the FPT DM’s Table on Service Delivery. DMs were once again very complimentary of the efforts of your team. We are fortunate to have the support of your organization in organizing these meetings, and hope to continue the tradition next year when we meet again. Another year, another successful meeting thanks to CICS!”

Cathy McEnaney, Service Canada

“I wanted to thank you and your staff so much for all the work you did to make our National Association of Public Trustees and Guardians (NAPTG) 2011 conference in Winnipeg such a success. All members of the NAPTG very much appreciate the work your Secretariat does for us when we hold a conference, but I personally want to thank you for all the help you gave me, both leading up to and during the conference. I could not have done it without you!”

Joanna K. Knowlton, Public Trustee of Manitoba

## Lessons Learned

2011-12 was a year of introspection followed by action on the part of the CICS management team. We have continued to implement our vision through the execution of our long term strategic plan. As noted in last year's report, anticipating the future needs of our clients is key to ensuring the long-term viability of the organization as the preferred choice for intergovernmental meetings. While CICS had been striving to create a service delivery model that embraces new technologies and meets the changing needs of our clients, events this past year emphasized the importance of continuing and even accelerating these efforts. Consequently, the management team re-affirmed its commitment to transforming in the way we do business.

The numerous initiatives undertaken during 2011-12 to enhance our service delivery model have been very well received by our clients. Our new on-line registration system is now being used by numerous sectors and our on-line document retrieval system is providing a secure way for conference participants to access meeting material prior to the conference.

Perhaps the most anticipated project from our client perspective is our video-conferencing project. CICS is acutely aware of the challenges of offering a video-conference service that is mobile and can be used wherever meetings are held across the country. Careful planning is crucial to the success of this project and CICS invested considerable time and energy in 2011-12 to conduct a thorough analysis of options before making significant investments. We learned that the technology and services required to support interoperability between a large variety of video-conferencing sites is still developing. Given this, we will need to work closely with our clients during the implementation of the project in 2012-13 to manage expectations and involve them in developing the roadmap for the successful integration of video-conferencing into federal-provincial-territorial meetings. Internal to CICS, we also recognize the need to create a working environment for our employees that encourages innovation and fosters commitment to developing new competencies and skills for an ever-changing environment.

## Program Activity 2: Internal Services

### Program Activity Description

Internal Services are activities and resources that support the needs of programs and other corporate obligations of an organization. These groups are: Management and Oversight Services; Communications Services; Legal Services; Human Resources Management Services; Financial Management Services; Information Management Services; Information Technology Services; Real Property Services; Materiel Services; Acquisition Services; and Travel and Other Administrative Services. Internal Services include only those activities and resources that apply across an organization and not to those provided specifically to a program.

#### 2011-12 Financial Resources (\$ millions)

Planned Spending	Total Authorities	Actual Spending
2.2	2.3	2.1

#### 2011-12 Human Resources (full-time equivalents [FTEs])

Planned	Actual	Difference
12	10	2

### Performance Summary, Analysis of Program Activity and Lessons Learned

Internal Services were strengthened in Fiscal Year 2011-12. Work continues on implementing new policies, directives and procedures. A Financial Management Control Framework was developed. As well, the Office of the Comptroller General conducted a Core Control Audit that concluded that “financial management within the Canadian Intergovernmental Conference Secretariat are conducted in a manner compliant with the requirements contained in ten of eleven policies, directives and corresponding legislation tested.” The full report and Management Action Plan is available at the following web link:

<http://www.scics.gc.ca/english/view.asp?x=198>

Most reports to central agencies were compliant with requirements and submitted on time. The Departmental Staffing Accountability Report (DSAR) indicated acceptable performance in all areas, and no key sector required increased attention.

## Section III: Supplementary Information

### Financial Highlights

#### **Condensed Statement of Financial Position (Unaudited)**

As at March 31, 2012

(in dollars)

	<b>Change \$</b>	<b>2011–12</b>	<b>2010–11</b>
Total liabilities	(144,247)	980,885	1,125,132
Total financial assets	244,159	797,689	553,530
Departmental net debt	(388,406)	183,196	571,602
Total non-financial assets	21,925	255,789	233,864
Departmental net financial position	410,331	72,593	(337,738)

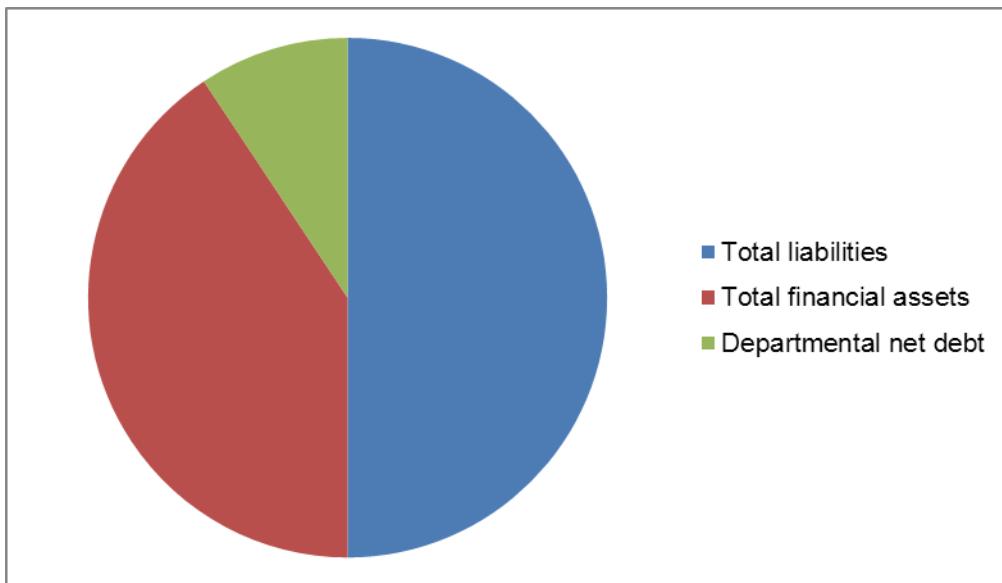
#### **Condensed Statement of Operations and Departmental Net Financial Position (Unaudited)**

For the Year Ended March 31, 2012

(in dollars)

	<b>Change %</b>	<b>2011–12</b>	<b>2010–11</b>
Total expenses	4%	6,007,259	5,781,209
Total revenues	0%	-	-
Net cost of operations before government funding and transfers	4%	6,007,259	5,781,209
Departmental net financial position	121%	72,593	(337,738)

## Financial Highlights—Chart



## Financial Statements

<http://www.scics.gc.ca/English/view.asp?ccid=134>

## List of Supplementary Information Tables

Electronic supplementary information tables listed in the 2011–12 Departmental Performance Report can be found on the [Canadian Intergovernmental Conference Secretariat's website](#).

- ▶ Internal Audits and Evaluations
- ▶ Sources of Non-Respendable Revenue

## Section IV: Other Items of Interest

CICS is an agency of the federal and provincial governments and, as such, acts as a neutral intergovernmental body. The Secretariat produces an annual report to Governments detailing the activities of the agency. It can be found on CICS' website at [www.scics.gc.ca](http://www.scics.gc.ca).

### Organizational Contact Information

Daniel Plourde  
Assistant Secretary  
Telephone: (613) 995-2344  
E-mail: [daniel.plourde@scics.gc.ca](mailto:daniel.plourde@scics.gc.ca)