



Standing Committee on
Public Accounts Appearance
Report 14 – Regional Relief and Recovery Fund
April 7, 2022

Briefing binder for the Interim President of the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario (FedNor) during an appearance before the Standing Committee on Public Accounts (PACP).

Aussi disponible en français sous le titre : Comparution devant le Comité permanent des comptes publics (PACP)

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Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario
Appearance before the Standing Committee on Public Accounts (PACP)

April 7, 2022

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Note: In addition to the material contained in this appearance binder, the Interim President of the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario (FedNor) also referenced the generic background information contained within the Prairies Economic Development Canada (PrairiesCan) appearance binder which can be found on open.canada.ca.

OPENING REMARKS

Audit of RRRF by
the Office of the Auditor General

FOR MANON BRASSARD

INTERIM PRESIDENT, FEDNOR

Standing Committee on Public Accounts
April 7, 2022 from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm

Good morning. Bonjour.

It is my privilege, to appear before this committee, today.

I would start by saying that I am joining you from Gatineau, which is located on the unceded territory of the Algonquin, an Anishinaabe people.

I am here in my capacity as FedNor's Interim President.

As noted in the Auditor General's report, FedNor was previously an Initiative under the Department of Innovation, Science and Economic Development.

FedNor was established, as a standalone regional development agency, on August 12, 2021.

I joined FedNor on that date.

I'm pleased to talk to you about FedNor's experience, in delivering the Regional Relief and Recovery Fund – the RRRF in Northern Ontario, and the Agency's response to the Auditor General's audit of the program.

The audit has provided input that will help us better serve Canadians, when implementing national programming.

FedNor was able to deliver the RRRF quickly and effectively thanks to the proven and established processes and mechanisms built into its systems.

In Northern Ontario, the COVID-19 pandemic has had wide-ranging impacts on local economies, affecting businesses and communities that, in many cases, depend on single industries.

The RRRF has been vital for one of the hardest hit sectors in Northern Ontario, the tourism industry.

The region's tourism products are primarily geared towards the American market and tend to attract tourists who are seeking to experience the great outdoors.

With the extended closure of the United States border, the industry found itself in a precarious situation and its very survival was at stake.

But while the tourism industry was perhaps the most hard-hit sector in the region, it was not the only one.

As a result, there was significant demand for support through the RRRF from the manufacturing sector, and those businesses engaged in agriculture, forestry, hunting and fishing -- all which were significantly impacted.

Funding offered through the region's Community Futures organizations supported rural main street businesses and small/micro enterprises (including sole proprietors and social enterprises) located in communities across Northern Ontario, including those Indigenous, rural, and remote.

FedNor took swift action, and with the 24 Community Futures organizations, delivered more than \$100 million across the region, effectively providing support to key sectors, like tourism, agri-food and manufacturing and contributing to the economic stability and well-being of the region.

In total, more than 1200 businesses and organizations benefited from RRRF support in the region.

More than 30% of our total funding went to support tourism.

Approvals for women majority-owned or -led businesses is almost double the percentage of women majority-owned or -led SMEs in the business population.

Approvals for Indigenous-owned or majority-owned applicants was over one-and-a-half times the percentage of Indigenous-owned or majority-owned SMEs in the business population.

The audit process, which took place as FedNor and its partner RDAs were still delivering the RRRF, enabled FedNor to work with other audited RDAs to quickly respond to concerns.

It also provided valuable recommendations to help us better serve Canadians when implementing national programming.

The Agency immediately sought to improve its practices and has already taken action to address the recommendations of the audit report.

In fact, lessons learned from the delivery of the program and the audit process have been applied to Budget 2021 programs.

As we work together to better serve Canadians, FedNor and the audited RDAs will continue to move forward on our action plan.

I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have. Thank you.

Issue: Results of RRRF Audit and FedNor next steps

Updated : April 2, 2022

Key messages

- **The Auditor General concluded the RRRF was successful at providing last-resort assistance to thousands of businesses and organizations affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.**
- **The RRRF was an urgent relief program that targeted businesses and organizations that did not qualify for other pandemic support programs. From conception to delivery, RRRF took less than seven weeks to stand-up.**
- **FedNor took swift action and with the region's Community Futures Organizations delivered more than \$100 million across Northern Ontario to more than 1200 businesses and organizations who needed it the most. This includes significant support to businesses majority-owned or -led by under-represented groups.**
- **FedNor has already put to use lessons learned from RRRF and other past programs, including in the design and delivery of 4 new Budget 2021 pandemic economic recovery initiatives.**

Table 1 : Number of businesses supported through RRRF by ownership and compared to percentage of Northern Ontario Businesses (Survey on Financing and Growth of SMEs, 2017)

Business majority owned or -led by...*	Stream 1 - Approved applications with SMEs	Stream 2 - Approved applications with SMEs	Approved applications with SMEs (both streams)	Approved value of contributions	Ownership as a percentage of the total businesses supported****	Percentage of Northern Ontario businesses (Survey on Financing and Growth of SMEs, 2017)
Women	36	333	369	\$23.8 million	32%	17%
Indigenous Peoples	17	62	79	\$7.0 million	7%	4%
Visible minorities	13	21	34	\$4.4 million	3%	3%
Youth	7	145	152	\$10.7 million	13%	1%
Persons with disabilities	2	16	18	\$3.0 million	2%	0.8%
LGBTQ2+	2	**	2	\$0.7 million	0.2%	N/A
Members of OLMC***	9	110	119	\$8.7 million	10%	N/A

* Groups are not mutually exclusive.

** LGBTQ2+ was not collected for Stream 2.

*** Official Language Minority Communities (OLMCs) in Northern Ontario refers to the Francophone population.

**** Through RRRF, 1,148 businesses and 65 organizations were supported.

N/A Not included in 2017 Survey

Background

FedNor implementation of findings and agreed-to recommendations

- Recommendation (1):** Efforts are always needed to distribute supports in a way that's inclusive and reflective of the populations in the context of the program objectives. GBA+ and other data need to be collected to inform decision making about the needs of under-represented groups in future programming. FedNor has taken several steps, and will continue to look for ways, including as it continues the process of becoming a standalone Regional Development Agency (RDA), to better support underrepresented groups within new programming and existing programming. This includes:

 - applying GBA+ analyses in the development of four (4) new pandemic recovery initiatives under Budget 2021;
 - a pilot-test to collect applicant-level data to support GBA+ analysis. Funding applicants will be asked to self-identify their organization/business as being majority-owned or -led by an under-represented group.
- Recommendation (2):** FedNor supports an outcome whereby national programs are designed, coordinated and delivered by the RDAs in a manner that also reflects the place-based nature of RDAs' mandates. Efforts in support of this outcome have begun. For example, FedNor worked with the other RDAs to develop reporting frameworks to collect consistent information for assessment and reporting on four (4) new pandemic recovery initiatives under Budget 2021.
- Recommendation (3):** FedNor has also agreed to work with the other RDAs to support greater consistency on reporting on project outcomes when designing national programs. For example, with new pandemic recovery initiatives launched as a result of Budget 2021, the RDAs have developed a data reporting template that combines information on applications received, projects approved, and program targets.

Issue : Regional Relief and Recovery Fund results in Northern Ontario

Updated : April 2, 2022

Key messages

- In Northern Ontario, demand for the Regional Relief and Recovery Fund was strong.
- FedNor was allocated five percent, over \$110 million dollars, of the over \$2 billion dollars allocated nationally to the Regional Development Agencies.
- FedNor took swift action and with the region's Community Futures Organizations delivered more than \$100 million dollars across Northern Ontario to more than 1200 businesses and organizations who needed it the most.

Supplementary response(s)

- FedNor successfully leveraged established programs and experienced staff to rapidly respond to mitigate COVID-19 impacts to help ensure businesses remained viable and positioned for recovery.
- This includes providing critical support to the region's hard hit tourism sector. More than 370 tourism businesses and organizations received nearly \$31 million through RRRF.
- Results for this program show that funding was also provided to the businesses that needed it the most, with significant support provided to underrepresented groups.

Table 2 : RRRF program details as of February 21, 2022

Program	FedNor budget allocation	Number of approved projects	Total invested	Amount lapsed	Estimated jobs maintained	Program end date
Regional Recovery and Relief Fund (RRRF) Stream 1	\$56.4 million*	197	\$50.4 million	\$6.0 million	2,584	March 31, 2022
Regional Recovery and Relief Fund (RRRF) Stream 2	\$55.4 million	24	\$53.8 million	\$1.6 million	2,426	March 31, 2022
Total	\$111.8 million	221	\$104.2 million	\$7.6 million	5,010	

*including \$0.6 million in O&M

Table 3 : Number of businesses supported through RRRF by ownership and compared to percentage of Northern Ontario Businesses (Survey on Financing and Growth of SMEs, 2017)

Business majority owned or -led by...*	Stream 1 - Approved applications with SMEs	Stream 2 - Approved applications with SMEs	Approved applications with SMEs (both streams)	Approved value of contributions	Ownership as a percentage of the total businesses supported****	Percentage of Northern Ontario businesses (Survey on Financing and Growth of SMEs, 2017)
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Youth	7	145	152	\$10.7 million	13%	1%
Persons with disabilities	2	16	18	\$3.0 million	2%	0.8%
LGBTQ2+	2	**	2	\$0.7 million	0.2%	N/A
Members of OLMC***	9	110	119	\$8.7 million	10%	N/A

* Groups are not mutually exclusive.

** LGBTQ2+ was not collected for Stream 2.

*** Official Language Minority Communities (OLMCs) in Northern Ontario refers to the Francophone population.

**** Through RRRF, 1,148 businesses and 65 organizations were supported.

N/A Not included in 2017 Survey

Background

- The RRRF was announced on April 17, 2020, to provide support for businesses and organizations that were unable to access other federal pandemic support or needed additional assistance.
- The program was delivered directly by the Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) (Stream 1) and through Community Futures Organizations (CFOs) (Stream 2) in rural areas. Funding offered through CFOs was intended for SMEs, particularly rural main street businesses and small/micro enterprises (including sole proprietors and social enterprises) located in rural communities.
- Over two billion dollars was allocated to the program – 25 per cent of which was earmarked for the tourism sector.
- The application period for this fund closed on June 30, 2021.
- Because the RRRF was a back-stop program under the COVID-19 Economic Response Plan, its original design was revised throughout the pandemic to adjust to changes of other programs under the Plan.
- All contributions to SMEs were repayable or conditionally repayable with no interest or security position taken. Repayments will be made in installments over a maximum term of five years from the date the first payment was issued; a payment moratorium is available up to December 31, 2023. However, recipients of contributions up to \$40,000 who repay 75 per cent of their contribution before this date, will be granted a 25-per-cent forgiveness up to a maximum of \$10,000. Recipients of contributions between \$40,000 and \$60,000 will be granted up to an additional \$10,000 in forgiveness (50 per cent of additional \$20,000), if total non-forgivable portion is repaid by December 31, 2023. The full balance must be repaid no later than December 31, 2025.
- As of February 21, 2022, RRRF support through both streams was provided to:
 - more than 1,200 businesses and organizations in Northern Ontario, maintaining more than estimated 5,000 jobs;

- more than 370 tourism businesses and organizations with nearly \$31 million in contributions (representing 31.6 per cent of total RRRF funding). FedNor exceeded the minimum target of 25 per cent of all RRRF funding to assist local tourism businesses.

Issue : FedNor's Approach to RRRF

Updated : March 24, 2022

Key messages

- **FedNor's approach to RRRF delivery was to quickly mobilize and provide emergency financial assistance to Northern Ontario stakeholders while balancing national program priorities with regional need.**
- **Mitigating risk was a key consideration in program design and administration. Strategies included adapting existing tools, streamlining processes, applying both client attestation and evidence-based verification, and collaborating with other agencies on best practices.**

Supplementary response(s)

- FedNor streamlined its assessment and approval processes for RRRF to ensure quick delivery of funding to organizations. Results indicate that project approvals were received on average within 24 days.

Background

- The RRRF, announced on April 17, 2020, provided support to businesses and organizations that were unable to access other federal pandemic support or required additional assistance. FedNor and Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) were able to begin processing applications within 7 weeks of program announcement, where normally structuring a new program would take several months.
- The program was delivered by FedNor directly and through a network of Community Futures organizations (CFOs) that operate within FedNor's region; both streams of the program were delivered via a continuous intake process.
- FedNor delivered available RRRF resources via a nationally coordinated, regionally tailored approach to support direct liquidity needs of organizations within key priority sectors in Northern Ontario (e.g. Agri-food, Forestry, Mining Supply and Services, Tourism).
- Funding offered through CFOs was intended for SMEs, particularly rural main street businesses and small/micro enterprises (including sole proprietors and social enterprises). The loans issued by CFOs were similar to the loan parameters offered by the Canada Emergency Business Account (CEBA) loans (conditionally repayable loans \$60,000 and less).
- FedNor delivered direct funding support to SMEs and other organizations as follows:
 - Loan requests that normally exceeded \$60,000;
 - Non-repayable funding supports to eligible not-for-profit entities; and
 - Further distribution of funding agreements in support of businesses.
- FedNor communicated the program parameters, including an outline of eligibility requirements, eligible and ineligible costs, via a Program and Applicant Guide that was available on FedNor's website.
- FedNor streamlined its assessment and approval processes for RRRF to ensure quick delivery of funding to organizations. Results indicate that we achieved project approvals in 1/3 of our normal processing times. Some of the streamlining decisions included:
 - Use of a single phase application form
 - Reliance on client-based attestations, at the onset of the project for the application request and upon completion with the submission of final claims.
 - Use of targeted project assessment tools.
 - Post-payment sampling verification was employed to ensure initial payments were not delayed.
- Payment verification was conducted for all final claims, including sampling verification.
- Ongoing adjustments were made to the process as the program evolved

Issue : FedNor approach to Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+).

Updated : April 2, 2022

Key messages

- **FedNor acknowledges the importance of Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) and will continue to prioritize its deployment in policy and program design.**
- **FedNor seeks to enhance business supports for under-represented groups and networks including women, Indigenous peoples, young entrepreneurs and Black Canadians, by promoting and leveraging their entrepreneurial talent to strengthen the innovation and diversity of Northern Ontario's economy.**
- **Across Northern Ontario, under-represented groups received a greater portion of the Regional Relief and Recovery Fund (RRRF) funds than their representation in the marketplace.**
- **As FedNor continues the process of becoming a standalone Regional Development Agency, it is working to build its capacity to further strengthen its application of the principles of diversity and gender-equality across the organization, including, but not limited to, the areas of client services, research and policy-making and program design.**

Table 4 : Number of businesses supported through RRRF by ownership and compared to percentage of Northern Ontario Businesses (Survey on Financing and Growth of SMEs, 2017)

Business majority owned or -led by...*	Stream 1 - Approved applications with SMEs	Stream 2 - Approved applications with SMEs	Approved applications with SMEs (both streams)	Approved value of contributions	Ownership as a percentage of the total businesses supported****	Percentage of Northern Ontario businesses (Survey on Financing and Growth of SMEs, 2017)
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Persons with disabilities	2	16	18	\$3.0 million	2%	0.8%
LGBTQ2+	2	**	2	\$0.7 million	0.2%	N/A
Members of OLMC***	9	110	119	\$8.7 million	10%	N/A

* Groups are not mutually exclusive.

** LGBTQ2+ was not collected for Stream 2.

*** Official Language Minority Communities (OLMCs) in Northern Ontario refers to the Francophone population.

**** Through RRRF, 1,148 businesses and 65 organizations were supported.

N/A Not included in 2017 Survey

Background

FedNor support of underrepresented groups through other economic development programs:

- As of March 08, 2022 FedNor has invested in 25 projects with over \$6.1 million (including the top-up) in assistance to women entrepreneurs through the Women’s Entrepreneurship Strategy (WES).
- Fifteen per cent of the Northern Ontario Development Program (NODP) budget is allocated in support of underrepresented groups. Through this holdover, FedNor supports projects that directly impact systemically marginalized populations. Since November 4, 2015, through its core programs, FedNor contributed over \$300 million (representing over 18 per cent of projects funded by FedNor) in support of projects for underrepresented groups of women, Indigenous people, Francophones, and youth.
 - Core programming is: Northern Ontario Development Program (NODP), Regional Economic Growth through Innovation (REGI), Economic Development Initiative (EDI) for Official Language Minority Communities (OLMCs), and Community Futures Program (CFP).

Project Examples

- Through the Women’s Entrepreneurship Ecosystem Fund FedNor invested in LaCloche Manitoulin Business Assistance Corporation (LAMBAC): \$1,897,075 to support The Northern Ontario Women (NOW) Program delivered by the LAMBAC Community Futures Development Corporation, stimulates women-owned and women-led business start-ups and scale-ups by increasing their access to business development supports throughout the region.
- FedNor invested over \$1 million for one project through the Black Entrepreneurship Program:

- The Afro-Heritage Association of Sudbury: In March 2022, FedNor announced \$1,150,000 to support the Northern Ontario Black Economic Empowerment Program (NOBEEP). The pan Northern program will provide culturally relevant supports to black entrepreneurs including mentorship, business development services, and networking opportunities.

Issue : FedNor measures and programs related to COVID-19 in Northern Ontario

Updated : April 4, 2022

Key messages

- **Through the Regional Relief and Recovery Fund (RRRF), over 100 million dollars was invested through FedNor and the region's Community Futures Organizations to help over 1200 businesses and organizations mitigate the impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic.**
- **FedNor is delivering over \$22 million allocated through the Regional Air Transportation Initiative to help regional air transportation ecosystems affected by the economic impacts of COVID-19 to remain operational and to support the economic growth in the region.**
- **In addition to these investments, FedNor also received additional specific funding to further support women majority owned and -led businesses and Black entrepreneurs.**

Supplementary response(s)

- Recovery programs announced as part of Budget 2021, and delivered by the RDAs, will inject \$83 million into Northern Ontario's economy over the next few years.
- Nearly two-thirds of this new funding has been approved to support businesses and organizations in the tourism and aero sectors, and in support of community revitalization and jobs growth.

Table 5 : FedNor Covid Measures as of February 21, 2022 (inclusive)

Program	FedNor budget allocation	Number of approved projects	Total invested	Program end date
Budget 2021 Programs				
Aerospace Regional Recovery Initiative	\$11.88 million	1	\$0	March 31, 2023
Canada Community Revitalization Fund	\$19.14 million	53	\$2.1 million	March 31, 2022
Tourism Relief Fund (10 per cent set aside for Indigenous tourism projects)	\$25.3 million	69	\$2.4 million	March 31, 2022
Jobs and Growth	\$26.6 million	19	\$1.9 million	March 31, 2023
Regional Recovery and Relief Fund - Stream 1 (includes \$0.6 million for O&M)	\$56.4 million	197	\$50.4 million	March 31, 2022
Regional Recovery and Relief Fund - Stream 2 (direct funding)	\$55.4 million	24	\$53.8 million	March 31, 2022
Other Temporary Program				
Black Entrepreneurship Program	\$1.19 million	1	\$59,570	March 31, 2024
Regional Air Transportation Initiative	\$23.5 million	22	\$20.5 million	March 31, 2023
Women Entrepreneurship Strategy (WES) Ecosystem Fund	\$863,000	2	\$0	March 31, 2023
Total	\$220 million	388	\$131 million	

Background

- The economic impacts of the COVID-19 crisis have been felt acutely by communities and organizations across Northern Ontario. Many Indigenous communities in rural and remote areas and have struggled with the impacts of COVID-19 because they lack access to basic infrastructure such as broadband.
- In response to the unique challenges faced by women entrepreneurs during the COVID-19 crisis, the government approved an additional \$15 million in funding to the funding already available for the Women Entrepreneurship Strategy (WES) Ecosystem Fund in fiscal year 2020-21. FedNor received \$863,000 of this funding.
- FedNor also set aside \$5 million funding to provide urgent support to tourism-impacted communities in Northern Ontario.
- FedNor is working with the other RDAs on the Black Entrepreneurship Program, which will help thousands of Black business owners and entrepreneurs across the country recover from the COVID-19 pandemic and grow their businesses.
- To help clients maintain cash flow, FedNor also deferred payments for all clients and waived associated interest until January 1, 2021.
- As of March 31, 2022, over \$51.3 million (nearly two-thirds) of the Budget 2021 recovery program funding has been approved supporting 158 businesses and organizations in the tourism and aero sectors, and in support of community revitalization and jobs growth.

Issue : FedNor's overall achievements since November 4, 2015

Updated : April 04, 2022

Key messages

- **FedNor is a key Government of Canada partner for regional economic development in Northern Ontario.**
- **Since November 4, 2015, FedNor has invested over \$528 million in 1,343 projects led by local businesses, organizations and communities, helping to support over an estimated 41,400 jobs in Northern Ontario.**
- **FedNor investments have supported key priorities including innovation, business growth, Indigenous initiatives, clean technology, youth retention, as well as significant relief and recovery funding for businesses as they deal with the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.**

Supplementary response(s)

- FedNor investments support the federal *Prosperity and Growth Strategy for Northern Ontario*, with a focus on key sectors including Mining, Forestry, Tourism, Manufacturing, Agri-Food, and Health and Life Sciences.
- Through its ongoing programs such as Regional Economic Growth through Innovation (REGI), FedNor invests to help entrepreneurs start and grow businesses and create the conditions for the development of strong, dynamic and inclusive regional innovation ecosystems across Northern Ontario.

Background

Table 6 : Project approvals between November 4, 2015 and February 21, 2022 (inclusive).

Program	Number of approved projects	Total Invested	Estimated jobs maintained
Core Programs			
Community Futures Program	66	\$37.6 million	11,983
Economic Development Initiative for OLMCs	34	\$4.1 million	270
Northern Ontario Development Program	501	\$143.0 million	17,042
Regional Economic Growth through Innovation	110	\$50.0 million	4,620
Budget 2021 Programs			
Aerospace Regional Recovery Initiative	1	\$0	0
Canada Community Revitalization Fund	53	\$2.1 million	391
Tourism Relief Fund	69	\$2.4 million	269
Jobs and Growth Fund	19	\$1.9 million	860
Regional Relief and Recovery Fund - Stream 1	197	\$50.4 million	2,584
Regional Relief and Recovery Fund - Stream 2 (direct funding)	24	\$53.8 million	2,426
Other Temporary Programs			
Black Entrepreneurship Program	1	\$59,570	12
Canada 150 Infrastructure Program	165	\$9.8 million	0
Canadian Experiences Fund	33	\$4.8 million	111
Northern Ontario Development Program Regional Relief and Recovery Program	16	\$1.2 million	88
Regional Air Transportation Initiative	22	\$20.5 million	142
Steel and Aluminum Initiative	7	\$2.6 million	104
Women Entrepreneurship Strategy - Contribution Pilot	23	\$1.8 million	157
Women Entrepreneurship Strategy - Regional Ecosystem Fund	2	\$0	403
Total	1,343	\$386.1 million	41,462
RRRF Total	221	\$104.2 million	5,010

- REGI: support to business scale-up, increase commercialization rates and enhance regional cluster development resulting in job creation.
 - This includes promoting the development of regional clusters such as mining in Sudbury and health sciences in Thunder Bay, leading to the expansion of innovation activity and approaches to strengthen connections between stakeholders.
- NODP: FedNor works closely with and invests in communities to help them attract and retain investment and business, in addition to supporting efforts to diversify the regional workforce.
- FedNor's programs provide targeted investments to support women entrepreneurs and to support Indigenous business growth.
- FedNor also continues to invest in a variety of tourism-related projects to improve the region's competitive tourism position, as well as other sectors to respond to the needs of businesses that have been hard hit by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- FedNor is now delivering four additional programs that will inject \$83 million in new funding into the region over the new few years. These new programs were launched last summer and include:

Table 7 : Budget 2021 programs

Budget 2021 program	Program announced	FedNor budget	Program end date
Aerospace Regional Recovery Initiative	July 15, 2021	\$11.88 million over three years	March 31, 2024
Canada Community Revitalization Fund	June 23, 2021	\$19.14 million over two years	March 31, 2023
Jobs and Growth Fund	July 13, 2021	\$26.6 million over three years	March 31, 2024
Tourism Relief Fund	July 12, 2021	\$25.3 million over two years	March 31, 2023

Issue : FedNor delivery of critical support to the region's hardest hit organizations and businesses through the Regional Relief and Recovery Fund (RRRF)

Updated : April 2, 2022

Key messages

- **FedNor provided critical support to the region's hard hit tourism sector. More than 370 tourism businesses and organizations received nearly \$31 million through the Regional Relief and Recovery Fund (RRRF).**
- **Results for this program show that funding was also provided to the businesses that needed it the most.**
- **Across Northern Ontario, underrepresented groups received a greater portion of the RRRF funds than their representation in the marketplace.**
- **RRRF approvals for women majority-owned or -led businesses represented almost double the percentage of women majority-owned or -led SMEs in the business population.**
- **RRRF approvals for Indigenous majority-owned or -led applicants represented over one and a half times the percentage of Indigenous majority-owned or -led SMEs in the business population.**

Table 8: Number of businesses supported through RRRF by ownership and compared to percentage of Northern Ontario Businesses (Survey on Financing and Growth of SMEs, 2017)

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Youth	7	145	152	\$10.7 million	13%	1%
Persons with disabilities	2	16	18	\$3.0 million	2%	0.8%
LGBTQ2+	2	**	2	\$0.7 million	0.2%	N/A
Members of OLMC***	9	110	119	\$8.7 million	10%	N/A

* Groups are not mutually exclusive.

** LGBTQ2+ was not collected for Stream 2.

*** Official Language Minority Communities (OLMCs) in Northern Ontario refers to the Francophone population.

**** Through RRR, 1,148 businesses and 65 organizations were supported.

N/A Not included in 2017 Survey

Background

- As of February 21, 2022, RRRF support through both FedNor and Community Futures organizations was provided to:
 - more than 1200 businesses and organizations in Northern Ontario, maintaining a more than estimated 5,000 jobs;
 - more than 370 tourism businesses and organizations with nearly \$31 million in contributions (representing 31.6 per cent of total RRRF funding), FedNor exceeded the minimum target of 25 per cent of all RRRF funding to assist local tourism businesses.

Overview of the Committee

Standing Committee on Public Accounts (PACP) 44th Parliament, 1st Session

Committee Members

NAME & ROLE	PARTY	RIDING	MEMBER
SINCECHAIR			
John Williamson	Conservative	New Brunswick Southwest, NB	February 2022
VICE-CHAIRS			
Jean Yip	Liberal	Scarborough— Agincourt, ON	January 2018 (Vice- Chair since December 2021)
Nathalie Sinclair- Desgagné	Bloc Québécois	Terrebonne, QC	December 2021
MEMBERS			
Valerie Bradford	Liberal	Kitchener South— Hespeler, ON	December 2021
Han Dong	Liberal	Don Valley North, ON	December 2021
Peter Fragiskatos	Liberal	London North Centre, ON	December 2021
Brenda Shanahan	Liberal	Châteauguay— Lacole, QC	January 2016
Eric Duncan	Conservative	Stormont—Dundas— South Glengarry, ON	February 2022
Philip Lawrence	Conservative	Northumberland— Peterborough South, ON	October 2020
Jeremy Patzer	Conservative	Cypress Hills— Grasslands, SK	February 2022
Blake Desjarlais	New Democratic Party	Edmonton Griesbach, AB	December 2021

CHAIR

John Williamson (New Brunswick Southwest, NB)

Conservative

Member



- First elected as the Member of Parliament for the riding of New Brunswick Southwest in 2011.
- He returned to the House of Commons in 2019.
- Serves as a Member on the Liaison Committee since March 2022.
- Served as a Member and Vice-Chair on the Subcommittee on International Human Rights of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development from December 2021 to February 2022.
- Before entering politics, Mr Williamson is a former National Post editorial writer (1998-2001), he also campaigned on behalf of the CTF to lower income and gasoline taxes and expose wasteful government spending.

1st VICE-CHAIR

Jean Yip (Scarborough—Agincourt, ON)

Liberal

Member



- First elected as the Member of Parliament for the riding of Scarborough—Agincourt in 2017.
- Previously a member of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts from January 2018 to September 2019, and again from February 2020 to August 2021. Also served on the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates in 2019.
- Prior to her work as an MP, Ms. Yip worked in underwriting and insurance.
- She has been involved with the STEM Fellowship Board of Directors, which promotes computer literacy and programming capacity among youth.

2nd VICE-CHAIR

Nathalie Sinclair-Desgagné (Terrebonne, QC)

Bloc Québécois

Member

Critic for Public Accounts



- Elected as the Member of Parliament for the riding of Terrebonne in 2021.
- Obtained her Masters degree from the University of Oxford, and prior to her election, worked as senior economic advisor to the general management of the City of Montreal, as well as for PricewaterhouseCoopers and Deloitte.
- Member of the Canadian Section of ParIAmericas.
- Critic for Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions and also the critic for public finances and pandemic-related programs.
- Passionate about climate change and economic transition.

Valerie Bradford (Kitchener South—Hespeler, ON)

Liberal

Member



- Elected as the Member of Parliament for the riding of KitchenerSouth—Hespeler in 2021.
- Also a member of the Standing Committee on Science and Research.
- Prior to her election, Ms. Bradford was an economic development officer for the City of Kitchener, and served as Chair of the Workforce Planning Board.
- Interested in climate change adaptation and mitigation.

Han Dong (Don Valley North, ON)

Liberal

Member



- First elected as the Member of Parliament for the riding of Don Valley North in 2019.
- Prior to his election, Mr. Dong worked as marketing director of Chianti Foods.
- Is the former MPP for the riding of Trinity—Spadina (now: Trinity—Fort York).
- Is also a current member of the Standing Committee on Industry and Technology.
- Has intervened in the House and in committees to speak about Indigenous Peoples and climate change.

Peter Fragiskatos (London North Centre, ON)

Liberal

Member

Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Revenue



- First elected as the Member of Parliament for the riding of LondonNorth Centre in 2015.
- Holds a PhD in International Relations from Cambridge University.
- Prior to his election, Mr. Fragiskatos was a political science professor at Huron University College and King's University College.
- Is a former member of the Standing Committees on Finance from September 2018-2019, January 2020-August 2020 and October 2020-August 2021.
- Was on the Finance Committee when the Committee heard from witnesses from the fishing industry regarding the Government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic (May 7, 2020). During this meeting he stated "*I think Canada is strengthened when our fishers are doing well*" and "*Canadians ought to get behind the idea of supporting our fishers*".
- Passionate about issues facing Indigenous communities.

Brenda Shanahan (Châteauguay—Lacolle, QC)

Liberal

Member



- First elected as the Member of Parliament for the riding of Châteauguay—Lacolle in 2015.
- Prior to her election, Ms. Shanahan worked as a banker, financial advisor and financial columnist for the Montreal Gazette.
- Was previously a member of the Committee on Public Accounts from January 2016 to January 2018.
- Was appointed Caucus Chair in November, 2021.
- Has risen in the House of Commons to speak to abandoned vessels and the Oceans Protection Plan.

Eric Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry, ON)

Conservative
Member



- First elected as the Member of Parliament for the riding of Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry in 2019.
- Former member and vice-chair for the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs from December 2021 to February 2022.
- Former member of the Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group and Canada-United Kingdom Inter-Parliamentary Association during the 43rd Parliament
- Prior to his election, Mr. Duncan was one of youngest elected officials in Canadian history as a municipal Councillor in North Dundas at the age of 18, and was elected Mayor in 2010 at the age of 22.

Philip Lawrence (Northumberland—Peterborough South, ON)

Conservative
Member

Shadow Minister for Federal Economic Development Agency for Eastern,
Central and Southern Ontario



- First elected as the Member of Parliament for the riding of Northumberland—Peterborough South in 2019.
- Prior to his election, Mr. Lawrence worked at his own law practice, followed by work in the financial services sector.
- Former member of the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights, from February 2020 to August 2020.
- Has interest in providing improved access to internet for rural Canadians

Jeremy Patzer (Cypress Hills – Grasslands, SK)

Conservative

Member



- First elected as the Member of Parliament for the riding of Cypress Hills—Grasslands in 2019.
- Jeremy went on to work in the telecommunications industry for 10 years, in business and residential settings for both rural and urban areas.
- Former member of the Standing Committee on International Trade from Dec 2021 to February 2022; and Industry, Science and Technology from February 2020 to August 2020 and Natural Resources from October 2020 to August 2021.

Blake Desjarlais (Edmonton Griesbach, AB)

New Democratic Party

Member

Critic for Treasury Board



- Elected as the Member of Parliament for the riding of Edmonton Griesbach in 2021.
- Prior to Election, they were appointed national director of the Metis Settlements General Council in 2016.
- In addition to being NDP critic for Treasury Board, is the critic for Diversity and Inclusion; Youth; Sport; and Post-Secondary Education.
- Is the NDP's deputy caucus chair for the 44th Parliament.

