

National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy

2005–2006 Estimates

Report on Plans and Priorities

The Right Honourable Paul Martin
Prime Minister of Canada

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SECTION I – OVERVIEW

Message from the Executive Director

The National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy (NRTEE) was created in 1994 to promote sustainable development. Through the provision of information and advice, it assists federal departments, ministers and parliamentarians in their decision making, as well as influencing opinion leaders in other key sectors.

Through targeted analysis, the NRTEE articulates important problems and challenges in the complex interconnections between Canada's environment and economy, and assesses how policy tools can best be used to benefit the economy while protecting the environment and maintaining our natural capital.

Over the past 10 years, the NRTEE has nurtured a depth and breadth of expertise, integrating the views of stakeholders across the country in many key sectors, establishing a reputation for working effectively in highly contentious areas and providing credible, balanced advice that decision makers in government and industry can trust.

At the same time there has been a steady advance in the federal government's efforts to incorporate sustainability objectives into policy and decision making. With the coming into force of the Kyoto Protocol, the Government of Canada has requested the NRTEE's advice and recommendations in the development of a long-term energy and climate change strategy for Canada. In support of this mandate, the Prime Minister announced on February 16, 2005 the appointment of 12 new members and Chair to the NRTEE. While the details and implications of these changes cannot be elaborated at the time of this writing, it is clear that this will be the primary focus for the NRTEE in the coming period.

In 2005, the NRTEE will also release reports in three areas. One report is on how fiscal policy can reduce energy-based carbon emissions without increasing other pollutants, while at the same time maintaining opportunities for existing energy sources and uses. Another report tackles the issue of how Canada's capital markets can better support and stimulate sustainable, responsible environmental activities. A third report makes recommendations on regulatory and fiscal reforms to preserve natural capital and promote sustainable development of one of the world's three great forest ecosystems, Canada's boreal forest, which spans a third of this country's total land area.

The NRTEE is ready to help the federal government face the sustainable development challenge head-on in 2005, and looks forward to playing a part in the promotion of economic prosperity and the preservation of the environment for future generations.

Eugene Nyberg
Acting Executive Director and
Chief Executive Officer

Summary Information

Raison d'Être

The National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy (NRTEE) promotes the sustainability of our environment and our economy through the provision of information and advice.

Economic growth and prosperity are of central importance to Canadians. However, typically there are trade-offs between economic activity and the health of the Canadian and global environments. In response to this dilemma, the NRTEE channels rigorous research, stakeholder views and the resulting new knowledge into policy making to improve economic and environmental outcomes.

Strategic Outcome

Federal policy development on environment and economy issues, as well as decisions in other key sectors, are influenced by NRTEE advice.

Financial Resources (\$ thousands)

2005–2006	2006–2007	2007–2008
\$5,051.0	\$5,051.0	\$5,051.0

Human Resources (full-time equivalents)

2005–2006	2006–2007	2007–2008
28	28	28

Departmental Priorities

	Type	Planned Spending (\$ thousands)		
		2005–2006	2006–2007	2007–2008
Priority 1: Provide advice on environment and economy issues	Ongoing	\$4,711.0	\$4,801.0	\$4,791.0
Priority 2: Strengthen management accountability and systems and implement new federal initiatives	Ongoing	\$340.0	\$250.0	\$260.0

External Recommendations Addressing the NRTEE in 2003–2004

Recommendations	Response
Parliamentary committee recommendations (none)	(N/A)
Auditor General recommendations (none)	(N/A)

Departmental Plans and Priorities

Our planning context: Factors influencing the NRTEE’s operating environment

The NRTEE’s operating environment is changing dramatically, particularly with regard to the important new management initiatives and reporting requirements introduced in the last year. Management initiatives included shared services, human resources modernization and new systems for managing information, while reporting requirements included those imposed by the Expenditure Review process, the introduction of the Program Activity Architecture, and public disclosure of contracts and hospitality expenses on the website.

For the NRTEE, an agency with a small staff, the greatest challenge posed by these changes is not financial. Rather, it lies in developing the capacity to understand and to respond appropriately to new demands, often within short timelines. As well, the uncertain schedule for implementing new initiatives complicates planning and budgeting. Because these initiatives are in the early stages of implementation, the agency expects to experience continuing pressures to adapt and respond over the next few years.

Despite these obstacles, the NRTEE remains firmly focused on providing advice and responding to government-wide initiatives.

Priority 1: To provide advice to decision makers on environment and economy issues of national relevance

Description of the priority

The first priority of the NRTEE is to provide advice on issues that lie at the intersection of the environment and the economy. With its small budget of \$5.1 million, the agency nevertheless delivers an ever-growing body of advice on issues of national importance—advice that decision makers in and beyond the federal government agree makes a valuable contribution to the state of our knowledge about sustainable development.

Providing advice involves two broad areas of work: producing the advice, then promoting it. Producing the advice involves conducting original research and convening stakeholders to ensure balance and credibility. Research is commissioned to analyze the environmental and economic facts and trends underlying each issue area. A broad group of stakeholders is then convened and asked for their input. This NRTEE process—which is designed to help stakeholders overcome entrenched differences in some very contentious issue areas—helps clarify areas of consensus

and debate and to pinpoint the consequences of action and inaction. The work typically takes 18 to 24 months and is directed by a task force representing a range of stakeholder perspectives.

The culmination of this effort is the publication of a *State of the Debate* report presenting the findings, analysis and recommendations from the research and consultation process. At this point, the agency engages in the second area of work, the communication and promotion of its findings and recommendations. Once released, a report's findings are vigorously promoted through a variety of communications channels to ensure they reach targeted decision makers and opinion leaders across the country. The agency has learned that this second step is crucial to raising awareness and understanding and to influencing policy development and decision making among those who did not participate in the original work. Taken together, the production of advice and its promotion contribute directly to the agency's strategic outcome, which is to influence policy and decisions related to environment and economy issues.

Plans for 2005–2008

In 2005, the agency will conclude three of its programs with the release of *State of the Debate* reports. These programs are:

- Ecological Fiscal Reform and Energy—which is exploring how fiscal policy can promote the decarbonization of Canadian energy systems while maintaining options and opportunities for existing energy sources and uses;
- Capital Markets and Sustainability—which is looking at how Canada's capital markets can better support and stimulate environmentally and socially responsible activities; and
- Conserving Canada's Natural Capital: The Boreal Forest—which is studying how regulatory and fiscal reforms can enhance natural capital while maintaining economic activities in Canada's boreal forest.

A fourth program, the Energy and Climate Change Initiative, is scheduled to report in March 2006. In anticipation of these completions, the agency is identifying new issues and expects to launch three new programs in 2005 and a fourth in early 2006. These new programs will be the agency's main focus through 2006, with completion expected in 2007. The cycle of identifying new issues, producing advice and promoting advice is ongoing (see the chart below illustrating this cycle). Further details of these efforts are provided in Section II of this document.

Performance indicators for this priority

The agency will have succeeded in providing advice when decision makers report that the NRTEE has given them a new way of viewing issues and raised their awareness and understanding of the issues. These indicators are regularly monitored through surveys of participants in NRTEE processes and through annual evaluation efforts that focus on interviews with senior government and industry representatives.

Timelines for issue identification and for producing, reporting and promoting advice

Programs/ Issue areas	2005			2006			2007			2008	
EFR & Energy											
Capital Markets											
Boreal Forest											
Energy & Climate Change											
New issue											
New issue											
New issue											
Ongoing new issue identification	→						→				

Key:

Produce advice	Report	Promote advice
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Priority 2: To strengthen management accountability and systems and implement new federal initiatives

Description of the priority

The NRTEE's second priority is to strengthen management accountability and systems and to implement new federal initiatives. Even with limited staff and a small budget, the agency takes seriously its responsibility to ensure that the stewardship of its financial and human resources is effective and aligned with government-wide initiatives. To this end, the agency has identified four major areas that will be the focus over this planning period: implementation of the *Public Service Modernization Act*, shared services and systems, management of government information, and implementation of a content management system for the agency's website. Due to the size and organizational structure of the NRTEE, the planned costs related to these individual initiatives are relatively small and primarily relate to employee salary costs required to investigate, monitor and implement the initiatives within the agency.

Plans for 2005–2008

Public Service Modernization Act (PSMA): The NRTEE is named in Schedule II of the *Financial Administration Act* and is a separate employer. Accordingly, the implementation of the PSMA within the NRTEE centres on the new *Public Service Labour Relations Act (PSLRA)*. The agency has been monitoring and investigating its responsibilities under the PSLRA by participating in information sessions presented by the Public Service Human Resources Agency of Canada. The agency expects to comply with the requirements of this legislation during 2005, in advance of its coming into force.

Shared Services and Systems: In response to this initiative, the NRTEE has been monitoring the information provided by the Treasury Board regarding the proposal for implementing shared administrative services and systems. To comply with the requirements communicated to date, the NRTEE will implement changes to its departmental financial management system in April 2005. As shared administrative services and systems are expected to remain a government-wide priority throughout the 2005–2008 planning period, and as the details of the implementation process are not yet finalized, the NRTEE will continue to monitor the direction provided by the Treasury Board and to take actions to successfully align the delivery of agency administrative services with this initiative.

Management of Government Information: In response to this Treasury Board policy, the NRTEE initiated a major initiative in March 2003 to develop policies, procedures and electronic systems for managing records and information in all media. This program includes a complete catalogue of all information resources as part of the new on-line integrated library system. A new NRTEE Information Management Policy will be put in place in 2005, which will include retention levels for all operational records in accordance with the National Archives' Multi-Institutional Disposition Authority.

Government of Canada Content Management Solution (CMS): In September 2004, the NRTEE undertook a pilot project to examine and support a centrally hosted Government of Canada CMS, through a memorandum of agreement with Public Works and Government Services Canada and nine other departments and agencies. The pilot provides an opportunity to leverage the CMS strategy, lessons learned, stakeholder engagement strategies, common standards and licence

model into a government-wide solution for integrated government information and service delivery. It also offers an opportunity to begin dialogue on common standards and approaches in content and information management across the government enterprise.

Performance indicators for this priority

The NRTEE will be successful in each of these endeavours when it is compliant with government requirements.

SECTION II – ANALYSIS OF PROGRAM ACTIVITIES BY STRATEGIC OUTCOME

Strategic Outcome: Federal policy development on environment and economy issues, as well as decisions in other key sectors, are influenced by NRTEE advice.

Program Activity: Provide advice to decision makers on environment and economy issues.

Financial Resources (\$ thousands):

2004–2005	2005–2006	2006–2007
\$3,821.0	\$3,793.0	\$3,793.0

Human Resources (full-time equivalents):

2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007
20	20	20

The provision of advice to decision makers is the NRTEE’s single program activity (apart from corporate services). As it is synonymous with Priority 1, it was described in Section I of this document in broad terms, including through discussion of how it contributes to the strategic outcome and how performance will be measured.

The focus of Section II will therefore be to provide further details of this activity. This section describes the issue areas in which the NRTEE expects to produce advice in the next three years, and it outlines how that advice will be promoted to decision makers.

Key Program One: Producing Advice

Financial Resources (\$ thousands):

2004–2005	2005–2006	2006–2007
\$2,483.7	\$2,275.8	\$2,275.8

The NRTEE produces advice through commissioned research and the convening of stakeholders. Programs culminate in *State of the Debate* reports with recommendations aimed at government and private sector decision makers. The agency has four programs underway and is in the process of identifying new issues for future programming.

Current Programs

Ecological Fiscal Reform: This program is demonstrating how governments can use fiscal policy to achieve environmental and economic objectives. For the past 18 months, it has been assessing the role of fiscal policy in promoting long-term reductions in carbon emissions, both as a percentage of economic growth and in absolute terms. The program has carried out case studies in three areas where the use of fiscal policy holds potential for long-term carbon emission reductions: energy efficiency, hydrogen energy and renewable energy. Now nearing completion, the program will release a *State of the Debate* report on fiscal policy and energy in April 2005.

Capital Markets and Sustainability: The NRTEE is facilitating an independent multi-stakeholder debate on responsible investment and corporate responsibility by exploring the links between sustainability and corporate financial performance in Canada. The task force that advises and guides the work has attracted leading Canadian and international executives from business, financial and other organizations to its membership. Research is focusing on a number of interrelated areas, including the role of large institutional investors, disclosure practices and rules, issues of materiality and fiduciary responsibility, the rules and ethics of corporate governance, and intangible value. The Capital Markets and Sustainability program is expected to release its final report and recommendations in the fall of 2005. Recommendations will be geared to government and key capital market players.

Conserving Canada's Natural Capital: The Boreal Forest: A time-limited opportunity exists to secure our natural capital in Canada's boreal forest, as industrial development moves northward and many provinces open up previously untouched areas in the boreal for development. The program is examining how to balance conservation and resource development in the boreal forest through a series of case studies and stakeholder consultations. Its final report, expected in the fall of 2005, will recommend a set of regulatory and fiscal policy instruments to help achieve balance.

Energy and Climate Change Initiative: On February 16 2005, the Prime Minister requested that the NRTEE develop advice on a long-term strategic energy and climate change policy for Canada that:

- sets the course for the 21st Century economy to 2030 – 2050;
- positions Canada to compete in a carbon-constrained world, including business and sub-national government opportunities, and options for aligning our policies and incentives to advance Canada to a position of leadership in renewable energy, efficiency and conservation;
- considers options for post-2012 greenhouse gas reduction targets, including second commitment period and 2050 – 2080 in keeping with objectives aimed at stabilizing concentrations of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere and minimizing temperature increases. In considering options the NRTEE will assess, among others, approaches taken by the United Kingdom and Japan.

This work will build on the recently completed exploratory phase of the NRTEE's Energy and Climate Change Initiative which gathered input from a wide variety of experts and opinion leaders through a series of interviews and three workshops. This new phase of the initiative will be completed in March 2006.

Greening of the Budget: The NRTEE has provided budget advice to the Department of Finance for the last few years, and it will continue to do so depending on the relevance of our information to the government's stated priorities for the coming fiscal year. Recommendations will come from the NRTEE's completed and ongoing programs. For the upcoming budget (i.e., 2005), the NRTEE has provided recommendations dealing with long-term carbon emission reductions to the Minister of Finance.

New Issue Identification

The identification of new issues for possible future examination is an ongoing process at the NRTEE. Many of the issues examined are initially identified by members and scoped by the secretariat. The agency also responds to requests from the federal government for assistance with specific issues. In 2005, the agency will initiate three new programs. In addition, several broad areas are being scoped as the basis for potential new programs:

- municipal solid waste reduction;
- urban freight transport;
- oceans;
- agriculture;
- disaster management and sustainability;
- fresh water; and
- environmental technologies.

Other Initiatives and Stakeholder Events

As well as formal multi-stakeholder processes of the kind described above, the NRTEE also engages in one-time conferences and other events that bring together stakeholders and their different perspectives on key issues. In 2005–2006, the NRTEE is planning:

- a resource recovery, recycling and waste management multi-stakeholder conference, in partnership with Natural Resources Canada. Target date: Fall 2005;
- two cities summits, in partnership with the Cities Secretariat of the Privy Council Office. Target dates: Fall 2005 and 2006; and
- a national conference on oceans, in partnership with the Ocean Management Research Network. Target date: Fall 2005.

Expected Results and Performance Indicators

The expected result of NRTEE issue exploration is the creation of new knowledge. A key indicator tracked by the agency, through surveys and interviews, is the percentage of targeted decision makers who report that NRTEE information provided them with a new way of viewing and responding to the issues.

Key Program Two: Promoting Advice to Decision Makers

Financial Resources (\$ thousands):

2004–2005	2005–2006	2006–2007
\$1,337.3	\$1,517.2	\$1,517.2

In addition to generating advice for decision makers, the NRTEE vigorously promotes its uptake. The agency works to ensure that federal decision makers, stakeholders in key sectors, the media and the public recognize it as a leader in providing objective views and analysis relating to the “state of the debate” on the environment and the economy in Canada.

Through experience, the NRTEE has learned the value of sustaining an active campaign to promote its advice. For a year or more following the release of a *State of the Debate* report, the agency employs a diversity of strategies to reach target audiences in the federal system, as well as opinion leaders and decision makers throughout Canadian society. Each of these audiences is critical to building sufficient momentum for change.

During the next two years, the NRTEE will enter a very active period of promotion with the expected release of three *State of the Debate* reports, the result of its work on *Ecological Fiscal Reform*, *Capital Markets and Sustainability* and *Conserving Canada’s Natural Capital*. The NRTEE will organize briefings with key federal officials, industry groups and non-governmental organizations to discuss the findings from its programs as well as new work in progress. These briefings often take the form of one-on-one sessions, interdepartmental briefings, or speaking engagements at major industry or NGO association conferences. The agency also promotes its findings through quarterly newsletters and e-briefs, and it prepares materials for the media.

The NRTEE will continue to invest in improving its website, which remains an important tool for disseminating key information to stakeholders and members of the public. The Virtual Library feature enables people to easily access over 300 NRTEE documents on sustainable development, all of which are available in both official languages.

Expected Results and Performance Indicators

The expected result of promotional efforts in the short run is that advice reaches its target audiences. Through surveys and interviews, the agency monitors the percentage of targeted mid- and senior-level decision makers who are reached in key sectors.

SECTION III – SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

Management Representation Statement

I submit for tabling in Parliament, the 2005–2006 Report on Plans and Priorities (RPP) for the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy.

This document has been prepared based on the reporting principles contained in the *Guide to the preparation of Part III of the Estimates: Reports on Plans and Priorities*.

- It adheres to the specific reporting requirements outlined in the TBS guidance;
- It uses an approved program activity architecture (PAA) structure;
- It provides a basis of accountability for the results achieved with the resources and authorities entrusted to it; and
- It reports finances based on approved planned spending numbers from the Treasury Board Secretariat.

Eugene Nyberg
Acting Executive Director and
Chief Executive Officer

Organizational Information

The Prime Minister of Canada is the minister responsible for the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy.

The Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer is responsible for the NRTEE's single activity (i.e., to provide advice on strategic environment and economy issues of national relevance), including total gross planned spending of \$5.0 million and the 28 full-time equivalents associated with this activity.

National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy (NRTEE)

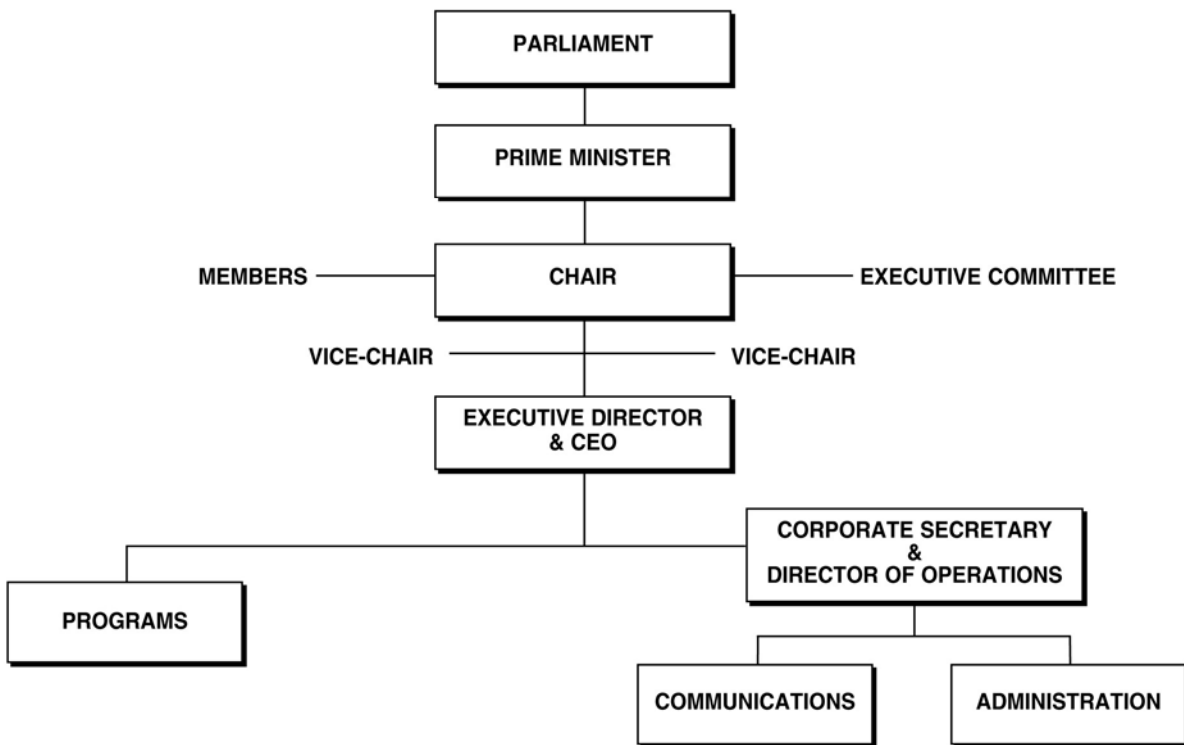


Table 1: Departmental Planned Spending and Full-Time Equivalents

(\$ thousands)	Forecast Spending 2004–2005 ⁽¹⁾	Planned Spending 2005–2006	Planned Spending 2006–2007	Planned Spending 2007–2008
Provide advice on environment and economy issues	5,077.0	5,051.0	5,051.0	5,051.0
Budgetary Main Estimates (gross)	5,077.0	5,051.0	5,051.0	5,051.0
Non-Budgetary Main Estimates (gross)	–	–	–	–
Less: Respendable revenue	–	–	–	–
Total Main Estimates	5,077.0	5,051.0	5,051.0	5,051.0
<i>Adjustments:</i>				
Supplementary Estimates:	–	–	–	–
Budget Announcement:	–	-10.0⁽²⁾	–	–
<i>Total Adjustments</i>	–	–	–	–
Total Planned Spending	5,077.0	5,041.0	5,051.0	5,051.0

Total Planned Spending	5,077.0	5,041.0	5,051.0	5,051.0
Less: Non-respendable revenue	(20.0)	(20.0)	(20.0)	(20.0)
Plus: Cost of services received without charge	408.5	408.5	408.5	408.5
Net Cost of Program	5,465.5	5,429.5	5,439.5	5,439.5

Full-Time Equivalents	28	28	28	28
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⁽¹⁾ Reflects best forecast of total planned spending to the end of the fiscal year and includes approvals obtained since the Main Estimates, Supplementary Estimates and any other adjustments.

⁽²⁾ This reflects the reductions to the department's planned spending as a result of the ERC exercise, which were announced in the 2005 Budget - more information will be provided in the next Supplementary Estimates.

Table 2: Program by Activity

2005–2006 (\$ thousands)										
Program Activity	Budgetary						Non-budgetary	Total Main Estimates	Adjustments (planned spending not in Main Estimates)	Total Planned Spending
	Operating	Capital	Grants and Contributions	Gross	Revenue	Net	Loans, Investments and Advances			
Provide advice on environment and economy issues	5,051.0	–	–	5,051.0	–	5,051.0	–	5,051.0	–	5,051.0
Total	5,051.0	–	–	5,051.0	–	5,051.0	–	5,051.0	–	5,051.0

This table shows total 2005-2006 planned spending for the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy by program activity. All planned spending for 2005-2006 is classified as operating expenses in support of Agency initiatives.

Table 3: Voted and Statutory Items listed in Main Estimates

2005–2006 (\$ thousands)			
Vote or Statutory Item	Truncated Vote or Statutory Wording	Current Main Estimates	Previous Main Estimates
25	Program expenditures	4,592.0	4,688.0
(S)	Contributions to employee benefit plans	439.0	369.0
(S)	Expenditures pursuant to Paragraph 29.1(1) of the <i>Financial Administration Act</i>	20.0	20.0
	Total Department or Agency	5,051.0	5,077.0

This table displays the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy main estimates by vote and statutory items for the current and previous estimates years. The decrease in operating expenditures and increase in contributions to employee benefit plans in the current main estimates is due to a permanent transfer of funds within the operating expenditures vote from operating to personnel expense. The amount of the decrease and increase represents the cost of the employee benefit plans related to the amount transferred.

Table 4: Net Cost of Department for the Estimates Year

2005–2006	
(\$ thousands)	Total
Total Planned Spending	5,051.0
<i>Plus: Services Received without Charge</i>	
Accommodation provided by Public Works and Government Services Canada (PWGSC)	368.5
Pay and benefit services received without charge from Environment Canada	2.0
Audit Services received without charge from the Office of the Auditor General	38.0
<i>Less: Non-responsible Revenue</i>	(20.0)
2005–2006 Net Cost of Department	5,439.5

Table 5: Sources of Respendable and Non-respendable Revenue

Respendable Revenue

(\$ thousands)	Forecast Revenue 2004–2005	Planned Revenue 2005–2006	Planned Revenue 2006–2007	Planned Revenue 2007–2008
<i>Provide advice on environment and economy issues.</i>				
Provide advice on environment and economy issues.	–	–	–	–
Total Respendable Revenue	–	–	–	–

Non-respendable Revenue

(\$ thousands)	Forecast Revenue 2004–2005	Planned Revenue 2005–2006	Planned Revenue 2006–2007	Planned Revenue 2007–2008
<i>Provide advice on environment and economy issues.</i>				
Provide advice on environment and economy issues.				
Expenditures pursuant to section 29.1(1) of the <i>Financial Administration Act</i> ⁽³⁾	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0
Total Non-respendable Revenue	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0

Total Respendable and Non-respendable Revenue	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0
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⁽³⁾ During 1996-1997, the NRTEE commenced cost-recovery for the organization's publications. Under the *NRTEE Act*, and Section 29.1 of the *Financial Administration Act*, the NRTEE has authority to spend any revenues received.

SECTION IV – OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST

Contact for more information

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NRTEE Members

Chair, Glen Murray, Winnipeg, Manitoba
(Nominated by the Prime Minister on
February 16, 2005)

Elyse Allan
President & CEO
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Toronto, Ontario

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Calgary, Alberta

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