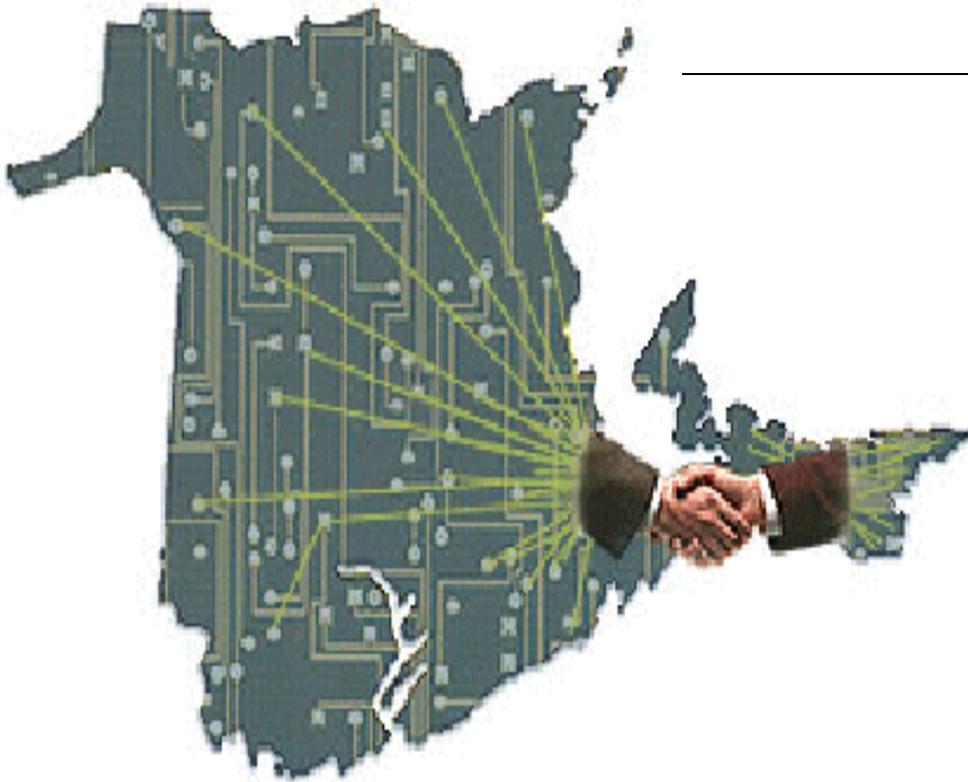


ANNUAL REPORT 2010-2011



NB/PEI EDUCATIONAL COMPUTER NETWORK

Network Committee

April 1, 2010 - March 31, 2011

June 2011

**OBJECTIVE OF THE NB/PEI EDUCATIONAL
COMPUTER NETWORK**

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

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

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

NB/PEI EDUCATIONAL COMPUTER NETWORK MEMBERS



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MOUNT ALLISON UNIVERSITY

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ST. THOMAS UNIVERSITY

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UNIVERSITÉ DE MONCTON
EDMUNDSTON MONCTON SHIPPAGAN

UNIVERSITÉ DE MONCTON

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I EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The NB/PEI ECN, founded in 1970, connects all of the universities in New Brunswick (NB) and the universities and community colleges in Prince Edward Island (PEI) with the most recent five-year agreement taking effect on May 1, 2007. The primary service provided by the network is connectivity among its members and to the wider world. However, additional benefits are enjoyed by the members in the areas of joint purchasing and licensing, shared support services, professional development, and the delivery of network-based services and information exchange.

This approach (i.e. combining the needs and resources of the members to acquire, implement and operate a shared connection) has allowed all members to realize the benefits of a high capacity, high speed communications network at a cost affordable to all institutions, regardless of size. It also allows the NB/PEI ECN members to take advantage of economies of scale not available to any individual member institution and ensures that smaller institutions receive the same level of service as larger ones.

In addition to sharing expertise and realizing economies of scale, an added benefit associated with acting as a collective is the ability to influence organizations such as CANARIE (Canadian Advanced Network and Research for Industry and Education) and the Federal government. By providing a united voice with respect to the collective needs of New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island members, member institutions become stronger on the national front.

The Network Committee focused on the following priorities in 2010-2011:

- The continued provision of a high-speed, high bandwidth and affordable connection for all members remains a key priority of the ECN. The existing network continues to perform well.
- In addition, the ECN has been working to identify and plan the required expenditures, activities and partnerships to develop the new iteration of the network, expected to be launched in the upcoming fiscal year. In 2010-2011, an MOU was signed between ECN members, National Research Council for Information Technology – Fredericton, New Brunswick Community College and Collège Communautaire de Nouveau-Brunswick to work together to design and fund the next iteration of the network (connecting the partner institutions across the Province through a combination of leased high bandwidth and dark fibre). The network will be three to four times faster than the existing network. Work continues on this important initiative.
- A celebration to highlight the ECN's 40 years of collaboration is being planned to occur in the upcoming fiscal year, to occur in conjunction with the launch of the network.
- Continuing to purchase software jointly in order to benefit from volume licensing discounts.
- The ECN partnered with Interuniversity Services Inc. (ISI) in November 2010 to host a one-day workshop on customer service for ECN members. Discussions between the two organizations will continue into the new fiscal year to identify other possible areas of collaboration.

II NB/PEI EDUCATIONAL COMPUTER NETWORK (NB/PEI ECN)

2.1 Background

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

The current five-year agreement took effect on May 1, 2007. Current members are Mount Allison University, l'Université de Moncton, the University of New Brunswick, St. Thomas University, the University of Prince Edward Island, Holland College, the Maritime College of Forest Technology and the MPHEC.

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

In establishing the network, the intention was to share resources and expertise within the fixed budget of smaller institutions. The concern was not as much one of economics but quality of service, to ensure smaller institutions receive the same level of service as the larger ones. The first ten years of the agreement dealt with mainframe computer issues and then progressed to a network emphasis and the issues of connectivity, and the provision of shared expertise. During the last five years, the network infrastructure has continued to evolve and expand. Emphasis has shifted to networking, microcomputers and the considerable amount of support and knowledge-base needed to manage them, with much of the emphasis on software. The Network's cost sharing of regional connections to the Internet and participation in joint software site licenses has become increasingly important in cost effectiveness.

In 2010-2011, the NB/PEI ECN completed its 40th year of operation. The primary services provided by the Network are connectivity among its members and to the wider world, purchasing, licensing and support of computer hardware and software, network-based services and information exchange.

In addition to providing connectivity among its members, the New Brunswick portion of the network also connects New Brunswick member institutions to the wider world through a shared connection to the Canadian advanced research network (Ca*net 4) and through Ca*Net 4 to the world. The Prince Edward Island portion of the network also has a direct connection to Ca*net4.

2.2 Meetings

During the 2010-2011 fiscal year, the members of the Network Committee met five times:

April 7, 2010	University of New Brunswick
June 14, 2010	Memorial University
October 6, 2010	University of Prince Edward Island
November 2, 2010	Fredericton Inn
January 26, 2011	Teleconference

As reported in the last Annual Report, the members of the NB/PEI ECN Board of Directors met by teleconference on April 20, 2010 to approve the 2008-2009 Annual Report and the 2010-2011 budget submission.

A second Board meeting teleconference took place on September 22, 2010 to approve the 2009-2010 Annual Report, approve the ECN's participation in a new network partnership with NBCC, CCNB, and NRC to develop and fund the new network. Board members also discussed the 40th Anniversary celebrations of the ECN which will be organized in conjunction with the launch of the network, to occur in the next fiscal year. Finally, Yvon Fontaine graciously accepted the position of Chair of the NB/PEI ECN Board for a five-year term beginning December 1, 2010. Members thanked Wade MacLaughlan for his ten years of service as Chair of the Board.

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

2.3 Activities of the NB/PEI Network

2.3.1 Network Activities in New Brunswick

The New Brunswick network connecting the ten campuses of the four universities, MCFT and MPHEC through a lease with Rogers for the provision of high-speed network links between campuses remained stable throughout the 2010-2011 year.

As noted last year, the New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island institutions signed a joint two-year agreement with Bell-Aliant for the first time last year for the provision of internet services. The New Brunswick portion of the Bell-Aliant Internet connection agreement, shared by all New Brunswick campuses, was upgraded in September 2010 in order to meet expected increases in usage demands. This was accomplished within the allocated budget. As a result, internet access during the year was stable, with adequate capacity to ensure quality service to students, faculty and staff.

The ECN network equipment, purchased in 2007, continues to provide reliable service and is able to meet the current traffic demands of the various institutions. There were a number of single link failures with the carrier during the year, many of which were weather related. In all cases, the redundancy built into the NB network continued to ensure network availability for all campuses.

UNB, on behalf of the ECN, is spearheading the partnership with National Research Council for Information Technology – Fredericton and the New Brunswick colleges to build the next iteration of the New Brunswick network, connecting the partner institutions across the Province through a combination of leased high bandwidth and dark fibre and to solidify funding for the project. Given

the high degree of co-location between these organizations (for example, in Fredericton: UNB, STU, NRC and soon NBCC share one physical location), building a shared network infrastructure appears to be the most cost-effective solution for all of the partner institutions as this will maximize network capacity while reducing purchase and operational costs. In 2010-2011, an MOU was signed between the partner institutions identified above. As the fiscal year ends, the project is in full construction mode with deployment expected in the coming year. A diagram of the network design is included in Appendix II. Specific details pertaining to the funding of the network will be included in the next annual report once officially announced.

2.3.2 Network Activities in Prince Edward Island

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

2.3.3 Summary of Activities

The various initiatives and activities undertaken by the Network Committee during fiscal year 2010-2011 are summarized below:

Budget

A balanced 2010-2011 budget prepared by the Network Committee and reviewed by each institution's Vice-President (Finance) or equivalent was approved by the Board at its April 20, 2010 meeting.

As per the ECN Agreement, the Board is required to review annually the standard rates for services provided from UNB and UPEI to agree on any annual increases to the standard rates. Members approved a 0% increase to the standard rates, based on the cost-of-living adjustment provided to UNB staff, for the most recent year applicable (i.e. 2009-2010).

In the revenue portion of the budget, the New Brunswick provincial transfer represented a 3% increase while the PEI portion remains frozen. The two PEI institutions are once again making a direct contribution of \$26,476 in total to the ECN budget.

One of the key activities partially funded within the NB portion of the budget is the network connection at \$230,000. This annual amount was increased to cover the cost of the increase in pricing for the new network.

Additional funding was set up for hardware purchases for the new network as well but had not been used before the year end. It is expected to be expended in the 2011-2012 year as the network build begins to take shape.

Software

The following software licenses were purchased jointly by ECN members: Minitab, Trend Micro, Novell Netware, SPSS, Malwarebytes, and Waterloo Maple. Through joint purchasing, member institutions save thousands of dollars annually due to the volume licensing discounts offered by vendors. For example by jointly purchasing Malwarebytes this year, members saved

approximately 35% compared to having purchased this software individually.

The Network Committee agreed that the \$50,000 that previously funded the Novell Netware software licensing fees for member institutions be transferred in the upcoming budget to cover the costs of SPSS software licensing fees. This decision was made due to the fact that several member sites have already moved away from Novell Netware with the remaining institutions still using planning to move away from it in the next few years. It was felt that paying for SPSS through the ECN budget was more beneficial to all member institutions.

Kaspersky Anti-Virus software was purchased to replace Trend Micro this year and was deployed with little or no complications. Member sites are pleased with the performance of the new solution.

NB/PEI ECN 40th Anniversary/Network Launch

The ECN Board confirmed support for combining the activities celebrating the network launch and the 40th anniversary even if it required moving the event into 2011. The organizing committee obtained the assistance of David McNeil in the organization of this event. David has been able to touch base with many of the instrumental people involved with the creation and launch of the ECN. The network launch should be close to completion with the final stages of implementation and initial operation of the ring in place by early fall. A date for the event will be determined over the summer months.

Workshop/Collaboration with ISI

A technical workshop focusing on frontline customer service was held on November 2, 2010 in Fredericton at the Fredericton Inn. Participation was high and all institutions were represented. This was the first collaborative project with ISI, who provided and paid the facilitator for the workshop. The Network Committee was pleased with the result of the collaboration. Overall the feedback was very positive. Feedback from other attendees indicated that the event was well organized with a blend of practical activities and customer service fundamentals.

2.3.4 Network Financial Status

A copy of the approved budget and actual expenditures for 2010-2011 showing a surplus of \$60,752.00 [NB: \$64,506; PEI: (\$3,754)] as well as the balance of the NB/PEI ECN committed funds as at March 31, 2011, is included in Appendix III. The current year surplus for New Brunswick is due entirely to the fact that approximately \$64,000 in planned expenditures relating to hardware for the new iteration of the network did not occur. Instead, RDC funded these hardware costs.

The New Brunswick portion of the committed funds balance (\$297,555) will be held in the committed funds as a contingency for the network renewal until costs and commitments are finalized. The Prince Edward Island portion of the committed funds balance (\$137,242) has accumulated as a result of surpluses over the past several years relating to the Province's network connection costs which have been budgeted at \$20,000 per year but have been entirely funded by CANARIE for several years. Given that there is no contract with CANARIE relating to the organization funding this amount each year, the PEI member institutions have been hesitant to remove this line item from the budget. However, in the upcoming fiscal year, the budgeted amount will be reduced to zero within the ECN budget and, if not funded by CANARIE, can be funded from

the build-up in committed funds identified above. This issue will continue to be monitored by the Network Committee in the upcoming fiscal year.

2.3.5 Network Website

The NB/PEI ECN website provides direct links in English and French at, respectively: <http://www.nbpei-ecm.ca> and <http://www.rie-nbipe.ca>. The NB/PEI ECN web site is updated regularly to reflect changes in the Board of Directors and the Network Committee membership and also includes sections on network information, technical sessions and meetings.

APPENDIX I

Board Members as of March 31, 2011 were:

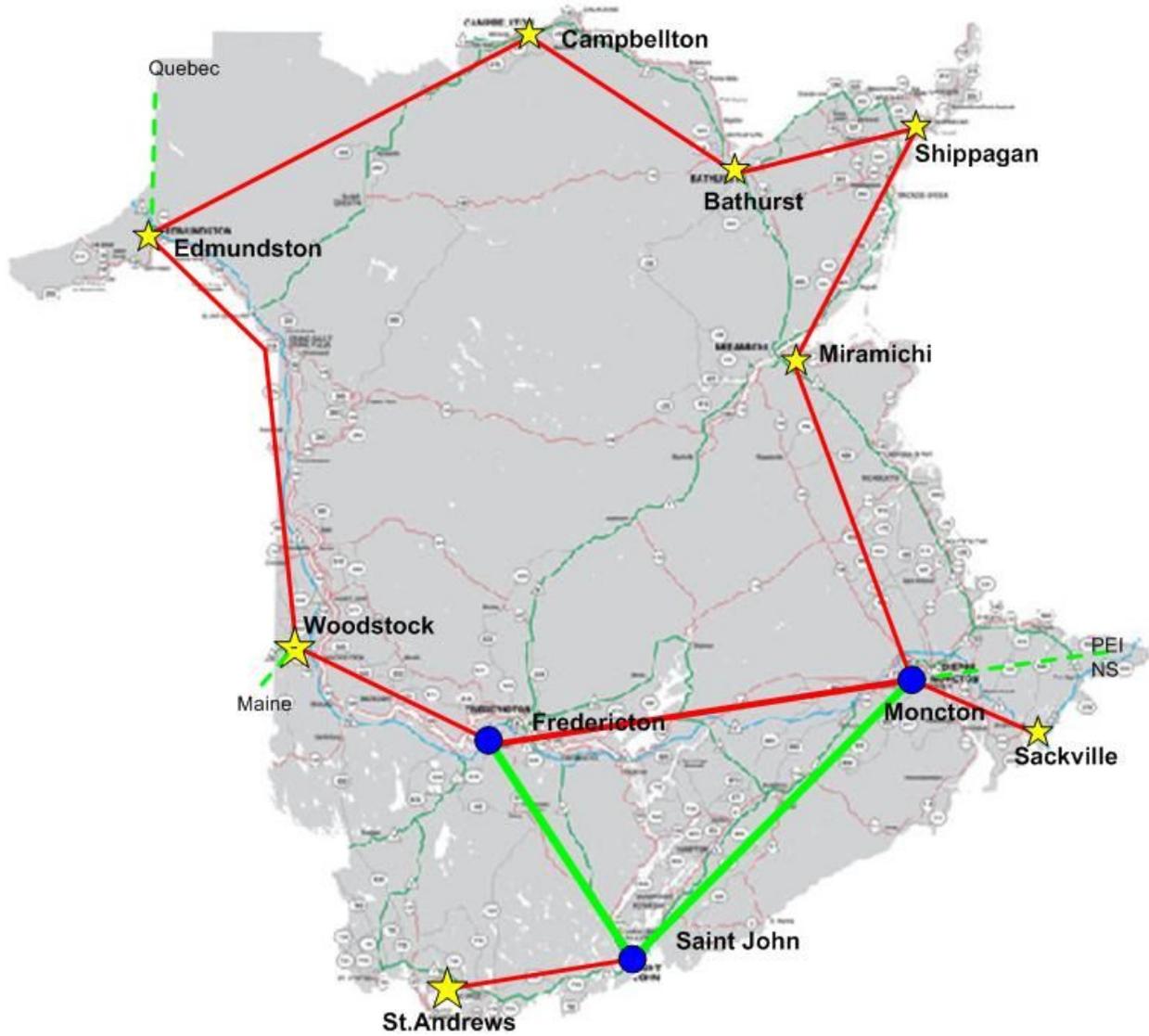
<u>Institution</u>	<u>Representative</u>
Mount Allison University	Dr. Robert Campbell
St. Thomas University	Mr. Dennis Cochrane
Université de Moncton	M. Yvon Fontaine
University of New Brunswick	Dr. Eddy Campbell
University of Prince Edward Island	Mr. Wade MacLauchlan (Chair)
Holland College	Dr. Brian McMillan
Maritime College of Forest Technology	Mr. Robert Whitney
MPHEC	Ms. Mireille Duguay

Network Committee Representatives and Alternates as of March 31, 2011 were:

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

The Chair of the Network Committee was Janice El-Bayoumi.

APPENDIX II



APPENDIX III

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

PERIOD ENDED: 3/31/2011

Account Description	<u>Budget</u> 2010-2011	<u>Actual</u> 2010-2011
Revenue		
Provincial Transfers	946,548	946,539
Direct Funding from institutions	26,476	26,476
Total Revenue	<u>973,014</u>	<u>973,015</u>
Expenditures		
Network Oper. Centre & Micro	193,024	188,778
Compaq CSLG Administrator	0	0
Total Network & Shared Personnel	<u>193,024</u>	<u>188,778</u>
Provincial Lines	276,000	290,284
Internet Access	220,000	189,013
Advanced Network Connection	44,000	19,000
Total Telecommunications	<u>540,000</u>	<u>498,297</u>
Hardware	77,113	3,946
Software	98,830	152,717
Maintenance	47,547	57,139
Total Hardware, Software, Maintenance	<u>223,490</u>	<u>213,801</u>
Network Meetings	3,500	11,386
Collaborative Projects	13,000	0
Total Collaborative Projects, Network Meetings	<u>16,500</u>	<u>11,386</u>
Total Expenditures	<u>973,014</u>	<u>912,263</u>
Excess of revenue over expenditures (expenditures over revenue) for the year	<u>0</u>	<u>60,752</u>
NB & PEI Committed Funds Balance as at March 31, 2011:		
Balance, April 1, 2010		374,045
Net revenue (loss) for the year		<u>60,752</u>
Balance, March 31, 2011		<u>434,797</u>

*as per MPHEC audited financial statements

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

PERIOD ENDED: 3/31/2011

Account Description	Budget 2010-2011	Actual 2010-2011
Revenue		
Provincial Transfers	860,938	860,938
Total Revenue	<u><u>860,938</u></u>	<u><u>860,938</u></u>
Expenditures		
Network Oper. Centre & Micro	182,409	178,395
Compaq CSLG Administrator	0	0
Total Network & Shared Personnel	<u>182,409</u>	<u>178,395</u>
Provincial Lines	230,000	230,000
Internet Access	220,000	189,013
Advanced Network Connection	24,000	19,000
Total Telecommunications	<u>474,000</u>	<u>438,013</u>
Hardware	68,488	3,946
Software	84,994	131,336
Maintenance	38,547	35,089
Total Hardware, Software, Maintenance	<u>192,029</u>	<u>170,371</u>
Network Meetings	10,000	9,653
Collaborative Projects	2,500	0
Total Collaborative Projects, Network Meetings	<u>15,600</u>	<u>9,653</u>
Total Expenditures	<u><u>860,938</u></u>	<u><u>796,432</u></u>
Excess of revenue over expenditures (expenditures over revenue) for the year	<u><u>0</u></u>	<u><u>64,506</u></u>
NB Committed Funds Balance as at March 31, 2011:		
Balance, April 1, 2010		233,049
Net revenue (loss) for the year		<u>64,506</u>
Balance, March 31, 2011		<u><u>297,555</u></u>

*as per MPHEC audited financial statements

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

PERIOD ENDED: 3/31/2011

Account Description	Budget 2010-2011	Actual 2010-2011
Revenue		
Provincial Transfers	85,600	85,600
Direct HC/UPEI Transfer	26,476	26,476
Total Revenue	<u><u>112,076</u></u>	<u><u>112,076</u></u>
Expenditures		
Network Oper. Centre & Micro	10,615	10,383
Compaq CSLG Administrator	0	0
Total Network & Shared Personnel	<u>10,615</u>	<u>10,383</u>
Provincial Lines & Internet Access	46,000	60,284
Advanced Network Connection	20,000	0
Total Telecommunications	<u>66,000</u>	<u>60,284</u>
Hardware	8,625	0
Software	13,836	21,380
Maintenance	9,000	22,050
Total Hardware, Software, Maintenance	<u>31,461</u>	<u>43,431</u>
Network Meetings	3,000	1,734
Collaborative Projects	1,000	0
Total Collaborative Projects, Network Meetings	<u>4,000</u>	<u>1,734</u>
Total Revenue	<u><u>122,076</u></u>	<u><u>115,831</u></u>
Excess of revenue over expenditures (expenditures over revenue) for the year	<u><u>0</u></u>	<u><u>-3,754</u></u>
PEI Committed Funds Balance as at March 31, 2011:		
Balance, April 1, 2010		140,996
Net revenue (loss) for the year		<u>-3,754</u>
Balance, March 31, 2011		<u><u>137,242</u></u>

*as per MPHEC audited financial statements