

**ACTION PLAN IMPLEMENTATION STATUS UPDATE
REPORT TO THE EVALUATION, PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT AND REVIEW COMMITTEE
AS OF SEPTEMBER 30, 2009**

NORTHERN AFFAIRS ORGANIZATION - BRANCH			
Summative Evaluation of INAC's Food Mail Program (200763) <i>AEC APPROVAL DATE: 17/APR/2009</i>			
PROJECT RECOMMENDATIONS	ACTION PLAN	EXPECTED COMPLETION DATE	PROGRAM RESPONSE
<p>1. INAC should take the lead in developing a broad-based strategic approach aimed at building upon existing resources/programs to more effectively deal with northern food security issues from an integrated and multidisciplinary standpoint.</p>	<p>Disagree. INAC has no mandate to take on this role, and it is not clear why INAC would be better positioned to do this than other departments, such as Health Canada (which has a Food Security Reference Group that looks at food security issues affecting Aboriginal Canadians) and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. INAC remains committed to working with other government departments, Aboriginal organizations, NGOs and other stakeholders in developing a horizontal, multidisciplinary approach to northern food security, and intends to contribute where appropriate to do so.</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>	<p>Status: Update/Rationale:</p>
<p>1.1 Work with federal, provincial/territorial, regional and community partners to develop a long-term Federal Food Security Strategy, which encompasses the Food Mail Program, along with other existing and future initiatives aimed at addressing issues related to health and nutrition in isolated northern communities.</p>	<p>Partially agree. INAC fully supports efforts to develop such a long-term federal strategy on food security, especially where it concerns isolated northern communities, and already works with federal, provincial/territorial, regional and community partners to address certain food security issues, for example as a participant in Health Canada's Food Security Reference Group. However, addressing issues related to health and nutrition is more</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>	<p>Status: Update/Rationale: As of 30/09/2009:</p> <p>A review of the Food Mail Program is near completion. The review work has involved engagement with other levels of government, community representatives, Aboriginal organizations, and federal partners on the issue of food security in isolated northern communities.</p>

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	properly a part of Health Canada's mandate.		
1.2 Create a formal FMP Advisory Board composed of key stakeholders representing INAC, CPC, Health Canada, and relevant national and provincial/territorial Aboriginal organizations to provide oversight, assist with the development of strategic objectives and priorities, and ensure community needs and perspectives are recognized.	Agree. Northern Affairs Organization (NAO), under the direction of the Devolution and Territorial Relations (DTR) Branch, will implement an oversight mechanism, pending the approval of required funding.	Spring 2010	<p>Status: Stakeholders have been engaged with, although no formal body has been created yet.</p> <p>Update/Rationale: As of 30/09/2009:</p> <p>The ongoing review of the program has involved engagement with a broad range of stakeholders. Steps have been taken to implement a formal advisory group once a decision on the future of the program has been made.</p>
1.3 Develop and maintain strong working relationships between the FMP and Health Canada programs with a nutritional component (e.g., Aboriginal Head Start, Diabetes Initiative, Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program) and community food-based programs such as day care centres and school breakfast and snack programs.	Partially agree. INAC has maintained a strong working relationship between the FMP and Health Canada programs with a nutritional component for many years, and intends to continue doing so. There might be potential for better alignment between the FMP and some of Health Canada's programs, and INAC will look into this issue. However, it is not clear what kind of relationship the FMP could have with community food-based programs, apart from providing information about the program and about comparative food costs across isolated northern communities.	Not applicable	<p>Status: Ongoing</p> <p>Update/Rationale:</p> <p>INAC continues to work closely with Health Canada on several aspects related to the Food Mail Program. Review work has included options that look at ways strengthen relationships and linkages to Health Canada programs such as Aboriginal Head Start, Diabetes Initiative, Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program. It has also included examination of the list of eligible foods in concert with Health Canada and other stakeholders.</p>

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2. The proposed FMP Advisory Board should assist INAC in creating greater community awareness about the FMP and about the importance of proper nutrition.	Partially agree. The FMP Advisory Board should play a role in assisting INAC to create greater awareness about the FMP. Mechanisms to increase this awareness will be considered as part of the next phase of the review of the program. However, nutrition education and nutrition promotion is more properly the mandate of Health Canada and relevant provincial, territorial or regional government departments.	Winter 2010	<p>Status: Stakeholders have been engaged on this issue.</p> <p>Update/Rationale: As of 30/09/2009:</p> <p>Review work has involved examining more effective ways of creating greater community awareness, including better marketing and advertising by retailers. Once a decision about the future of the program is made, INAC will be in a position to implement changes.</p>
2.1 Develop a formal communication campaign aimed at eligible communities that increases understanding and awareness of the FMP mandate, objectives, intended outcomes, administration, management and operations.	Agree. This will be considered as part of the next phase of the review of the program.	Winter 2010	<p>Status: In development</p> <p>Update/Rationale: As of 30/09/2009:</p> <p>Review work and options development has included exploration of more effective ways to increase understanding and awareness of the program. These will be implemented once a decision on the future of the program has been made.</p>
2.2 Work with Health Canada to develop a culturally and linguistically appropriate health promotion campaign aimed at northern Aboriginal people who are undergoing a shift in their traditional harvesting and consumption patterns as	Disagree. Although INAC recognizes the importance of culturally and linguistically appropriate health promotion for northern Aboriginal people, and would be prepared to contribute to Health Canada's efforts in this regard where	Not applicable	<p>Status: No action taken</p> <p>Update/Rationale: As of 30/09/2009:</p> <p>INAC continues to support Health Canada in areas involving nutrition-related health issues of residents of</p>

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a consequence of global environmental/climate changes and changing food preferences in the younger generation.	appropriate, health promotion <i>per se</i> is a Health Canada responsibility, and it remains with that department to set its own priorities in this regard.		isolated Northern communities, with the expectation that Health Canada has the lead and sets priorities where health promotion is concerned.
2.3 Work with community-based leaders and health professionals to develop local, hands-on programs (e.g., community kitchens, recipe books) intended to teach local people about southern food preparation, nutritional content and integration with country foods.	Disagree. The FMP is a transportation subsidy designed to address one aspect of food security in isolated northern communities. Activities related to health promotion, nutrition education, and the like are the responsibility of Health Canada, provincial, territorial and regional government departments, and community authorities. It would be inefficient, ineffective and inappropriate for INAC to attempt to take on such responsibilities.	Not applicable	Status No action taken Update/Rationale: As of 30/09/2009: Engagement during the review process did not suggest that stakeholders preferred to take the lead in local nutrition promotion efforts themselves.
3. INAC should provide overall leadership, with guidance from the FMP Advisory Board, to improve the program's efficiency and effectiveness through increased accountability and Aboriginal involvement.	Partially agree. At present, INAC does provide overall leadership to improve the FMP's efficiency and effectiveness. Implementing the FMP Advisory Board would most likely enhance these efforts, and increased accountability and Aboriginal involvement are to be welcomed where appropriate. However, there are a number of other ways in which the efficiency and effectiveness of the FMP might be improved. Therefore,	Not applicable	Status Ongoing Update/Rationale: As of 30/09/2009: Although no formal advisory body has been created yet, INAC continues to take the lead in exploring ways to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Food Mail Program, and to that end has engaged with a wide variety of stakeholders during the review process, including Aboriginal organizations such as AFN and ITK.

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	efforts in this regard should not be limited just to increased accountability or Aboriginal involvement.		
3.1 Address food quality and service delivery issues by improving program transparency and accountability on the part of all players involved in the FMP process.	Partially agree. INAC continues to work with Canada Post to address food quality and service delivery issues, and recognizes that better communications about the FMP are necessary (see 2.1). However, it is not clear the FMP needs to be more transparent. Rather, in many cases, what is required is that stakeholders make an effort to better inform themselves about the program, as neither INAC nor Canada Post have a direct relationship with end users of the FMP. Similarly, there is often greater accountability on the part of various actors in the FMP process than is realized by end users. Nevertheless, depending on the timing involved and on decisions regarding alternative delivery models, INAC is willing to explore a claims process with Canada Post and other stakeholders, although such a measure could well result in greater program cost.	Not applicable	<p>Status: Ongoing</p> <p>Update/Rationale: As of 30/09/2009:</p> <p>INAC and Canada Post continue to work on ways to improve food quality and service delivery, and also to track service delivery performance. End-to-end inspections of Food Mail supply chains have been conducted in three regions in 2009, and further inspections are planned. Canada Post has posted online training modules on its website that address all aspects of Food Mail shipping and handling, to improve knowledge among the various actors in the Food Mail supply chain. However, there continue to be food quality issues that arise outside of this supply chain, which remain a challenge to address.</p> <p>Additional approaches to address food quality and service delivery issues are being considered as part of the review of the Program. This includes looking at formalized agreements with retailers.</p>
3.2 Engage Aboriginal organizations in reviewing and revising the FMP eligibility	Partially agree. INAC agrees that culturally appropriate items should be	Winter 2010	Status: Ongoing

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list to ensure items are culturally appropriate.	included in the list of eligible foods, taking into account nutritional considerations.		Update/Rationale: As of 30/09/2009: As part of the review of the program, the role of culturally appropriate food on eligibility lists is being evaluated in concert with Aboriginal organizations.
3.3 Improve access to direct/personal orders for Aboriginal individuals and institutions (e.g., day care centre) so as to maximize their resources.	Partially agree. INAC recognizes that greater efforts should be made to improve awareness of the program. However, measures to promote personal and institutional orders have broader implications, and further work needs to be done to determine who such users are and the context for these orders, and to understand the impacts for on the viability of retailers and thus on food costs in the community.	Winter 2010	Status: No action taken yet. Update/Rationale: As of 30/09/2009: Review work continues to focus on the issue of personal and institutional orders. However, it would be premature to implement any changes with respect to such orders before a decision about the future of the program is made.
4. INAC, with guidance from the FMP Advisory Board, should identify existing programs and mechanisms to support local community initiatives aimed at reducing dependency on southern foods	Partially agree. See below.	Not applicable	Status: See below Update/Rationale: As of 30/09/2009:

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<p>4.1. Support local, sustainable complementary initiatives (e.g., community freezers, community gardens, inter-community sharing of traditional foods) that necessitate strong community involvement, development and control.</p>	<p>Partially agree. INAC supports community freezer initiatives in the Territories and in Nunavik and Nunatsiavut through its Northern Contaminants Program, and has been involved in an initiative to explore ways of supporting greenhouses in Aboriginal communities. INAC is also willing to explore with the appropriate stakeholders ways to facilitate inter-community sharing of traditional foods, although the Food Mail Program may not be the best means to achieve this. However, such complementary activities might be better considered by a forum such as Health Canada's Food Security Reference Group, as they lie outside the FMP's objective.</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>	<p>Status: Under development</p> <p>Update/Rationale: As of 30/09/2009:</p> <p>As part of the review of the program, ways to support local and regional initiatives are being explored, such as community freezers, greenhouses, and inter-community sharing of country foods.</p>