Nova Scotia Energy Board

IN THE MATTER OF *The Public Utilities Act,* R.S.N.S. 1989, c.380, as amended

2025 Annual Power Line Technician (PLT) Report

NS Power
Report

March 31, 2026

NON-CONFIDENTIAL

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This is Nova Scotia Power Incorporated's (NS Power or Company) 2025 Power Line Technician (PLT) Staffing and Reliability Report (PLT Report).

In its letter dated July 20, 2017, the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board (NSUARB, Board) directed as follows:

> In the IRs, Board Staff noted that some of the information provided in the PLT report may be duplicated in the annual Performance Standards Report and questioned whether a change should be made. NSPI suggested removing the service reliability information from the PLT report and also discontinuing the ESRP component from the PLT report since a separate overview of the ESRP drills is being filed with the Board on an annual basis. NSPI provided a proposed template for future filing of a condensed PLT report which would include the Supervisor Call-back, Customer Survey, and PLT staffing tables.
>
> The Board accepts NSPI's proposal for a condensed PLT report, however, the tables should continue to include a Regional breakdown of journeyperson PLTs, retirements, attrition, and new apprentice hires. In addition, narratives should be included to supplement those tables.
>
> The Board also agrees with excluding the ESRP updates from future PLT reports.

Power System Outage Response, LLC originally prepared two recommendations for NS Power's PLT Staffing and Reliability Report in 2007:

> **Recommendation 1**
>
> NSPI should continually monitor PLT staffing and reductions to ensure that no deterioration of performance results. Specifically, NSPI should conduct annual customer surveys concerning service response and maintain a continuing record of customer service response complaints. This information, along with outage frequency and duration performance should be reported to the Board annually at the region and total system level. The outage performance data should be reported utilizing the 2.5 Beta standard deviation. Additionally, the report should contain statistics concerning changes in PLT staffing and NSPI conclusions as to the relationship, if any, of these staffing changes and the performance results mentioned.

Recommendation 2

NSPI should aggressively pursue the Customer Operations Work Force planning initiative in managing PLT staffing levels. An annual status report should be made to the Board reflecting the base (target) PLT staffing level, current PLT staffing, actual attrition as compared to 5-year window projection, replacements/additions since previous report, and revised total of required replacements.

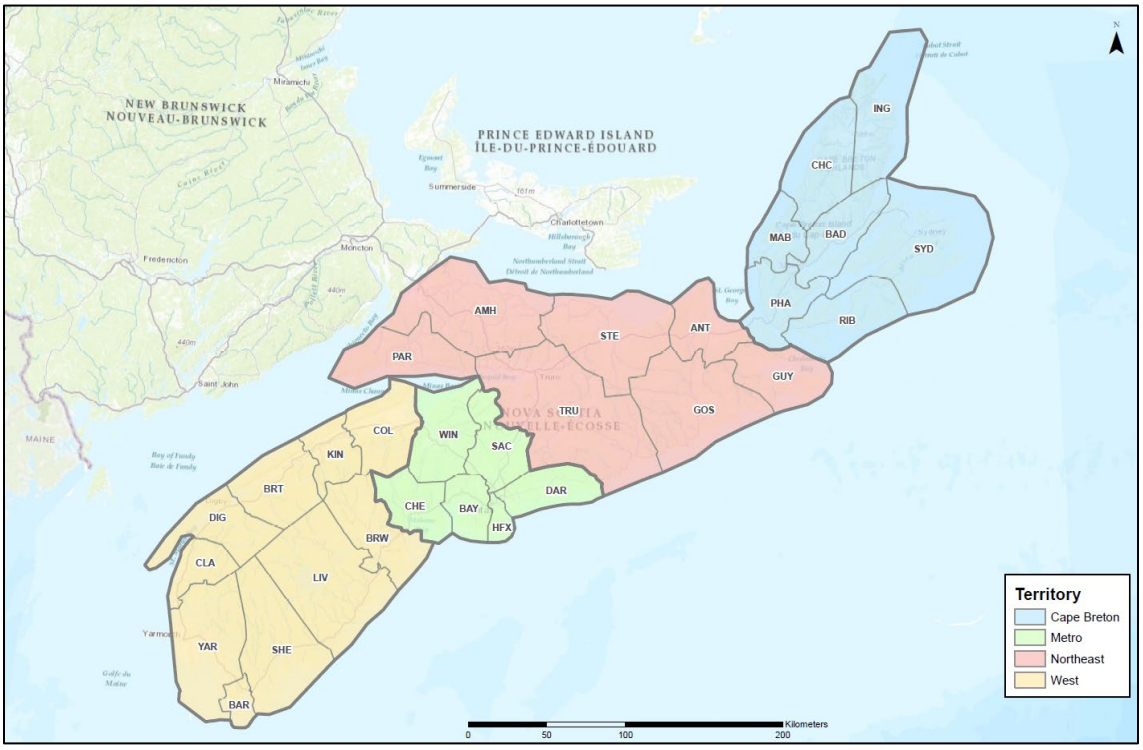
In accordance with the NSUARB's letter of July 20, 2017, NS Power no longer provides outage performance data in this report.

2.0 PLT STAFFING LEVELS

NS Power's responses to these recommendations are set out below. The information shows PLT staffing levels reflecting the base (target), current PLT staffing levels, and a forecast for 2026-2031.

For context, NS Power has four operating regions (West, Metro, Northeast, and Cape Breton) as set out in Figure 1 below. Before 2019, there were three operating territories (Western, Central, and Eastern).

Figure 1 – NS Power's Operating Regions



2.1 PLT Staffing Levels

NS Power's PLT staffing levels by region are set out in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2 – PLT Staffing by Region

Region	PLTs (end 2021)	PLTs (end 2022)	PLTs (end 2023)	PLTs (end 2024)	PLTs (end 2025)
West	44	45	45	46	45
Metro	45	43	49	52	54
Northeast	34	31	39	41	45
Cape Breton	29	32	35	36	35
Total NS Power	**152**	**151**	**168**	**175**	**179**

The PLT data for 2026 is set out below in Figure 3 with accompanying notes and explanations.

Figure 3 – PLT Staffing Levels (Actual and Forecast)

	Actuals – End of Year			Forecast – End of Year				
Resources	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**	**2026**	**2027**	**2028**	**2029**	**2030**
Retirements & Resignations	4	12	4	5	3	4	4	4
Attrition (Transfers)	11	2	11	6	6	6	6	6
Total Additions	**32**	**21**	**19**	**8**	**11**	**21**	**17**	**25**
Year End Journey Person PLTs	**168**	**175**	**179**	**176**	**178**	**189**	**196**	**211**
Phase 4 Apprentices	4	7	8	11	21	17	25	17
Phase 3 Apprentices	8	9	12	21	18	25	17	15
Phase 2 Apprentices	8	12	21	18	26	18	16	15
Phase 1 Apprentices	12	21	18	27	18	16	15	14
Total Apprentices in System	**32**	**49**	**59**	**77**	**83**	**76**	**73**	**61**
Total NS Power PLTs	**200**	**224**	**238**	**253**	**261**	**265**	**269**	**272**
Internal NS Power Target	**173**	**234**	**250**	**263**	**263**	**263**	**263**	**263**
Variance	**27**	***-10**	**-12**	**-10**	**-2**	**2**	**6**	**9**

- For the 2024 *Actuals End of Year*, NS Power Filed -12 in the 2024 PLT Report, filed March 31, 2025. This number should have been -10.

The eight phase 4 apprentices showing for 2025 actuals are expected to become journeyperson PLTs in 2026.

In 2025, NS Power increased the total number of PLTs by hiring 12 new individuals, in addition to the seven apprentices who graduated to journeypersons, for a total of 19 new journeyperson PLTs. These new resources will help to execute projects to improve system reliability and respond to the increase in customer driven work seen since 2020. This increase in PLT compliment has coincided with other changes in the business which created opportunities for existing PLTs to take Planner or Supervisor positions within NS Power. There was attrition of 11 PLTs in 2025 compared to a total forecast attrition of six PLTs for 2025 in the 2025 PLT Report. There was a lower number of retirements and resignations in 2025 (four compared to a forecast of six in the 2024 report). Overall, 2025 ended with a lower number of PLTs (12) than target.

The total number of journeyperson PLTs in 2025 was originally forecast in the 2023 report to be 195 at the end of 2025. NS Power will continue to increase its workforce to respond to the significantly increasing work volumes observed in recent years, and the Company has already increased the PLT target across the years 2026-2031. Part of this resource plan includes increasing the NS Power apprentice intake to 20 members which began in 2024. In 2025 NS Power partnered with NSCC to add a second Power and Utility Line Work (PULW) Program offering at the NSCC Sydney, Waterfront Campus. While this increases the total apprentice pool, with larger class sizes, it is anticipated that not all members of the class will graduate to journeyperson PLTs. This has been reflected in the forecast with an assumption that 80 percent will graduate from Phase 4 apprentices to journeypersons starting in 2026. NS Power will continue to monitor retirements, attrition, and apprenticeship graduation rates as the workforce grows, and will adapt its hiring practices as required.

Information about PLT retirements by region is set out in Figure 4 below:

Figure 4 – PLT Retirements by Region

	Actual				Forecast				
Region	**2022**	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**	**2026**	**2027**	**2028**	**2029**	**2030**
West	1	0	2	2	0	1	1	1	2
Metro	2	2	2	0	2	1	2	1	2
Northeast	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
Cape Breton	0	1	2	0	3	0	1	2	0
Total	**3**	**4**	**7**	**2**	**5**	**3**	**4**	**4**	**4**

Figure 3 includes the combination of projected resignations and retirements, and Figure 4 includes only projected retirements based on the historical retirement uptake.

New apprentice hiring information is set out in Figure 5.

Figure 5 – New Apprentice Hires

	Actual				Forecast				
Resources	**2022**	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**	**2026**	**2027**	**2028**	**2029**	**2030**
New Apprentice Hires	8	12	21	18	27	18	16	15	10

The 2026 forecast has increased to 27 new apprentices in 2026, with 21 to 25 of these individuals expected to graduate to journeypersons in 2029, based on the assumption that approximately 80 percent will be successful in the program. These changes are driven by the need to increase the PLT workforce because of increased work volumes that are anticipated to persist in the medium term, and increased forecast attrition. The previous report indicated NS Power's desire to hire 20 apprentice PLTs in 2025; however, there were only 18 suitable candidates available. With NS Power's investment in the PULW program at the NSCC Sydney Waterfront campus detailed previously, NS Power believes a target figure of 27 apprentice candidates is achievable in 2026.

2.2 Outage-Related Customer Interactions

Figure 6 provides the number of outage complaint supervisor callbacks conducted through the Customer Care Centre. Customer concerns focus on power interruptions and restoration times for both planned and unplanned outages. The total number of callbacks is broken down by region. As noted in previous reports, the three former territories are now represented by four regions, and this change warrants consideration when comparing the results year-over-year.

Figure 6 – Outage Complaint Supervisor Call-Backs

Area	2018	Area	2019*	Dorian	2020	2021	2022**	Fiona	2023	2024	2025
Western Territory	52	**West**	19	81	37	18	69	4	55	29	9
Central Territory	133	**Metro**	92	77	89	57	136	118	130	47	26
Eastern Territory	53	**North-east**	7	29	9	19	65	235	58	18	19
		Cape Breton	32	32	21	34	107	77	45	35	22
Provincial	238		150	219	156	128	377	434	288	129	76

*Excludes Hurricane Dorian (2019)

** Excludes Hurricane Fiona (2022)

Residential customers' provincial satisfaction levels regarding NS Power's ability to restore power remained stable in 2025 compared to 2024 at 72 percent satisfaction for the year. Increases in satisfaction were seen in two of four regions in 2025 as set out in Figure 7 below. Customer Satisfaction is driven by a multitude of factors and is not exclusively related to storm events. Customer satisfaction is measured by the percentage of respondents giving a satisfaction score of 7 or higher (out of 10).

Figure 7 – Residential Customer Satisfaction - Ability to Restore Power Quickly

Area	2016	2017		2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Western Territory	83	88	**West**	84	87	86	86	77	78	75	82
Central Territory	83	87	**Metro**	86	81	80	80	72	62	71	69
Eastern Territory	78	84	**Northeast**	87	84	83	86	76	63	70	75
			Cape Breton	83	88	85	85	74	66	73	65
Provincial	**82**	**86**		**85**	**84**	**82**	**83**	**74**	**66**	**72**	**72**

As shown in Figure 8, business customers' provincial satisfaction levels regarding NS Power's ability to restore power in 2025 remained consistent with 2024, at 77 percent satisfaction for the year. An increase in satisfaction was seen in the Northeast Territory in 2025.

Figure 8 – Business Customer Satisfaction – Ability to Restore Power Quickly

Area	2016	2017		2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Western Territory	82	83	**West**	88	86	83	88	83	81	84	81
Central Territory	83	88	**Metro**	86	84	78	78	75	71	76	75
Eastern Territory	80	87	**Northeast**	86	83	86	88	84	74	75	82
			Cape Breton	85	84	85	85	82	70	74	72
Provincial	**82**	**87**		**86**	**85**	**82**	**83**	**80**	**74**	**77**	**77**

NS Power anticipates that the PLT staffing increases described in this year's PLT Report will help to improve the increasing trend in supervisor callbacks and decreasing trends in residential and business customer satisfaction shown in Figures 6, 7, and 8, as the company continues to respond to the impacts of climate change and the significant increase in customer-requested work volume. Work volumes for PLT-driven work have increased by over 50 percent since 2020, and the staffing increases in this report are aligned with this change in work volume.

2.3 System Data

In its letter dated July 15, 2020 with respect to the 2020 PLT Report, the NSUARB also directed as follows:

> In addition, when preparing future PLT reports, the Board directs NS Power to identify the number of customers, kilometres of distribution lines, kilometres of transmission lines, number of substations, and peak load, with a breakdown under each of the four operating regions.
>
> //
>
> In its report, NS Power provided a breakdown of outage related supervisor call-backs during 2019 which excluded those associated with Hurricane Dorian. That breakdown showed an unusually high number (61.3%) of call-backs in the Metro operating region (92 out of 150). Future PLT reports should include some text to explain the reasons for exceptional volumes and what steps may need to be taken to address the high occurrences.

Figure 9 below provides the additional information requested, broken down by each of the four operating regions.

Figure 9 – NS Power System Data (2025)

Region	# of Customers	Km of Distribution Lines	Km of Transmission Lines	Substations	Regional Peak Load Non-Coincident (MW)
West	117,911	8,443	1,334	57	690
Metro	258,989	5,910	981	40	1,015
Northeast	100,053	8,660	1,758	35	439
Cape Breton	81,107	5,719	1,391	24	448
Total	558,060	28,732	5,464	156*	-

* In previous reporting NS Power has included stepdown transformers as their own substations. On a go forward **for context of this report,** NS Power has defined a substation as a substation with a transmission supply that services distribution customers.

The total length of transmission and distribution lines varies with time as the system changes as a result of new construction, line removals, and as GIS modelling continues to evolve. The system data in the 2026 report is accordingly different from the 2025 report. The company has observed

a slight increase in both total customer counts as well as total distribution circuit length. These values by region are a snapshot in time taken from NS Power's GIS and do not allow for comparison of the specific breakdown of such changes.

The peak numbers provided in the final column of Figure 9 are not based on the sum of substation, feeder, or individual customer loads. They are estimated using regional generation plus regional inflows minus regional outflows. Small wind and hydro generation are not included, and the estimates do not account for system losses. There may not be exact alignment with distribution regional boundaries.

NS Power continues to use the overall usage and loading of its distribution, transmission, and substation assets to understand and forecast the requirements for serving the Company's customers. NS Power's resource planning and asset management approach, including its Asset Strategy Committees, considers the relevant asset and loading inputs when making data-driven decisions on future capital or resource requirements while always balancing against affordability for customers.