



The Honourable **Stephen McNeil**, Premier of Nova Scotia, signs proclamation declaring April as Insurance Broker Month in Nova Scotia. With the Premier are **Paul Croft**, President of IBANS (left) and **Karen Slaunwhite**, Executive Director, IBANS (right).

Why choose an insurance broker?

By **Karen Slaunwhite, BA, BPR, MEd., CAIB (Hon)**
Executive Director, IBANS

The purchase of an insurance policy is one of the most important decisions we make in our lives. It protects the many assets we have worked hard to acquire, such as our Homes, Automobiles, or Businesses. To this end, brokers can offer four distinct advantages.

Choice: Brokers have access to a wide selection of insurance product through various insurers. Once a broker has properly assessed your individual insurance needs, they do the shopping for you to find you the right coverage at a competitive price.

Service: Brokers are located in every small town across Nova Scotia. We are proud of our "main street" presence and are pleased to provide personal and professional service to our clients. We are there to assist you during the buying process, day to day servicing, or guiding you through the claims process.

Professionalism: Brokers are licenced professionals. They bring their experience and judgment to their role as your personal insurance advisor. Most importantly, they are free to make impartial recommendations. Their first and only responsibility is to serve your interests, so it's advice you can trust. Insurance brokers work to a principle of utmost good faith. IBANS members are also bound by the Federal Privacy Act as well as our very own Code of Ethics.

Claims Advocacy: At the time of a claim is when brokers truly shine. Brokers have the expertise to guide you through this stressful time, ensuring that you are treated fairly and empathetically throughout the process.

Place your trust in a local broker, a person who works and lives in your community, who is more able to understand your specific needs.

Auto insurance rules

The Nova Scotia government announced changes to the province's auto insurance rules on March 8, 2016, to assist some drivers in keeping their insurance premiums stable following an accident.

This regulation is designed to enable insurers to accept repayment from at-fault parties for minor motor vehicle accidents resulting in no bodily injuries. The repayment allows an individual to protect their rates from increasing as a result of the accident.

Nova Scotia is the first province to allow voluntary payments when a driver has a minor at-fault accident without any injuries. This means the driver may be able to reimburse their insurance company for any resulting damages. Under these new rules, once a voluntary payment has been made to the insurance company, the accident is then registered as not-at-fault and will not affect the individuals driving record and insurance rating. The new regulation clarifies the use of voluntary payments, which in the past was common practice among many insurance companies but now provides consistency.

"Some drivers were not getting an opportunity to control their insurance premiums because of inconsistent interpretation of the province's insurance law," said Finance and Treasury Board Minister Randy Delorey. "The changes clarify options available to drivers to maintain their auto insurance costs."

Karen Slaunwhite, Executive Director of IBANS states, "This change in the regulations will benefit many consumers and will aid in providing consistency to the marketplace."

The Insurance Brokers Association of Nova Scotia recommends contacting your insurance broker to learn more about these changes. Remember, there's never been a better time to talk to a broker.

A Night of Celebration: IBANS hosts the 2016 Graduation and Aspire Awards Dinner

On April 7 at The Westin Hotel in Halifax, IBANS celebrated their 2015/2016 graduates and Aspire Awards recipients and nominees with a fantastic evening of celebration for the insurance community. The event, which had 240 in attendance, was the largest attended ceremony that IBANS has held in recent years.



"This is a perfect opportunity to come together and celebrate excellence in our profession," says Karen Slaunwhite, IBANS Executive Director. "As professionals, insurance brokers set the bar high in all they do, and we are very proud to have the opportunity to recognize all the great work they do for their clients day in and day out."

IBANS re-launched their awards program this year, calling it The Aspire Awards. The program has five categories in which member brokers, insurance company representatives and, for the first time, consumers can nominate deserving members of the insurance community. These awards mark professional excellence and recognize the valuable efforts and unique contributions of those working in the industry.

At the event, IBANS also celebrated 28 Canadian Accredited Insurance Broker (CAIB) graduates as well as one one Elite Force Producer Academy graduate.



2016 Award Recipients: (L to R) **Sharyn Hiscock**, Life Long Learning Award, Fairway Insurance Services Inc.; **Jean-Marc Thibodeau**, Emerging Professional Award, Fraser & Hoyt/Arthur J. Gallagher Ltd.; **Stuart MacLeod**, Lifetime Achievement Award, MacLeod Lorway Insurance; **Cindy Steadman**, Above and Beyond Award, Macdonald Chisholm Trask Insurance; **Michelle Baker**, Insurance Company Representative Award, Intact Insurance.

2016 Award Recipients

- Above & Beyond Award** – Cindy Steadman, Macdonald Chisholm Trask Insurance
- Emerging Professional Award** – Jean-Marc Thibodeau, Fraser & Hoyt/Arthur J. Gallagher Ltd.
- Life Long Learning Award** – Sharyn Hiscock, Fairway Insurance Services Inc.
- Insurance Company Representative Award** – Michelle Baker, Intact Insurance
- Lifetime Achievement Award** – Stuart MacLeod, MacLeod Lorway Insurance

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