

# **Chapter 21**

**Post-Secondary Recruitment  
Program of the Federal Public Service**



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# Post-Secondary Recruitment Program of the Federal Public Service

## Main Points

**21.1** Our review of the Post-Secondary Recruitment program in the federal public service found that the Public Service Commission of Canada is recruiting qualified candidates. But there are too few of them given the significant number of public service executives, professionals and managers who will be eligible to retire in the near future. The government has to immediately address the recruitment issue so that it can continue to deliver programs and provide services of quality to Canadians.

**21.2** We found weaknesses in the program's efficiency and effectiveness in the following areas:

- Forecasting of recruitment needs is not clearly spelled out. Without a clear idea of the number and type of employees needed, it is difficult to establish clear recruitment levels and develop appropriate recruitment strategies.
- The recruitment levels under the program have not been met consistently.
- In light of the increased competition for university graduates, the Commission needs to be a more aggressive recruiter of graduates. There has to be better promotion of the public service as a career choice, increased visibility on campus and improvement in scheduling and timeliness of recruitment.
- Very few departments participate in the program, which limits its capacity to renew the public service.
- The Commission does not establish and manage inventories of qualified candidates for departments.
- The program and its activities have not been evaluated consistently and systematically to improve their effectiveness and efficiency. As a result, it makes it difficult for the government to take appropriate corrective action on recruitment.
- Reporting of results is not adequate.

**21.3** We are concerned about the government's ability to address the recruitment challenge.

### Background and other observations

**21.4** The public service has become significantly older. Seventy percent of executives could retire by 2008, and the feeder groups, the people who could eventually replace them, have a similar retirement profile. Public servants under 35 years of age are underrepresented.

**21.5** For existing senior executives, it took an average of 10 years for them to move from a professional entry level to an executive level. Recruitment has, therefore, become imperative to ensure a well-functioning public service in the future.

**21.6** The public service has changed and requires a higher proportion of knowledge workers than in the past. Today, these workers constitute 55 percent of public servants.

**21.7** Recruitment has been an issue in the public service for at least 10 years. Many reports, and more recently the 1999 Speech from the Throne, have reported the need to recruit for the public service because of demographics and other factors, such as increased competition for qualified candidates.

**21.8** It is recognized that an effective and non-partisan public service is essential to the strong functioning of a democratic country. To remain a vibrant institution, the public service must be able to recruit and retain well-qualified employees.

**21.9** The government recognizes that recruitment in the public service is a priority. In his March 2000 annual report, the Clerk of the Privy Council stated the following: “We need to start recruiting people now so that we have the time to groom and nurture skills and so new recruits will have time to benefit from the depth of experience and knowledge of public servants across the country.”

**21.10** We are concerned about the government’s ability to address the urgent challenge of recruitment for the years ahead.

**The responses of the Treasury Board Secretariat, on behalf of the government and the departments audited, and of the Public Service Commission are included at the end of this chapter. The responses recognize the importance of recruitment and indicate plans to address the issues identified.**

## Introduction

### Entering the federal public service

**21.11** Staffing in the federal public service, which includes initial appointments as well as promotions, is administered by the Public Service Commission of Canada under the *Public Service Employment Act*. The Act covers 20 departments and some 60 agencies, which form the core public service.

**21.12** To hire new people in the public service, departments and agencies must have vacant positions and have allocated funds for these positions. Initial hiring into the public service can be done in a variety of ways. The majority of external hiring is done through individual competitions to fill vacant positions, as required. This

practice is known as “general recruitment” (see Exhibit 21.1). It is not a structured program but a series of specific departmental staffing actions.

**21.13** The Post-Secondary Recruitment program is a structured program. It is the government’s main recruitment vehicle for a wide variety of entry-level positions in the Administrative and Foreign Service, and Scientific and Professional categories. (See the list of occupational groups in these categories in Appendix A.)

**21.14** The public service has traditionally hired at the entry level and promoted from within. Indeed, section 11 of the Act states that “appointments shall be made from within the Public Service except where, in the opinion of the

**The Post-Secondary Recruitment program is a structured program. It is the government’s main recruitment vehicle for a wide variety of entry-level positions.**

Exhibit 21.1

### Recruitment in the Federal Public Service

General recruitment	Components of the Post-Secondary Recruitment program		
Individual competitions for vacant positions in departments and agencies for all categories, occupational groups and levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specific entry-level positions for departments and agencies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Entry-level positions for departmental development programs:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Foreign Service Officer Development program for the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade</li> <li>▪ Economics Recruitment and Development program for Statistics Canada</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Entry-level positions for corporate development programs:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Management Trainee Program (MTP), managed by the Public Service Commission</li> <li>▪ Accelerated Economist Trainee Program (AETP), managed by the Commission</li> <li>▪ Financial Officer Recruitment and Development program (FORD), managed by the Treasury Board Secretariat</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>Candidates can apply during the posting period, which varies between 10 and 15 working days.</p> <p>Positions are posted through the Public Service Commission’s Web site.</p>	<p>Students can apply during the campaigns of Post-Secondary Recruitment program. The fall campaign usually runs for four weeks in September and October. The winter campaign usually runs for four weeks in January. The application period for some corporate development programs may run a little longer.</p>		

Source: Public Service Commission of Canada

Commission, it is not in the best interests of the Public Service to do so.”

**21.15** The positions in the Scientific and Professional category require a university degree, as do almost half of those in the Administrative and Foreign Service category. Managers and executives are usually selected from all these categories, which, including the Executive Group, comprise what are often referred to as “knowledge workers.”

**21.16** Because the nature of the public service’s work has shifted, these categories make up an increasingly larger proportion of the public service’s work force. Today, they represent about 55 percent of the work force, up from about one third in the mid-1980s. Therefore, replenishing these categories is critical to a well-functioning public service.

**21.17** The Public Service Commission manages the Post-Secondary Recruitment program, which has three components: recruitment for specific jobs in departments and agencies, recruitment for departmental development programs, and recruitment for three corporate development programs (see Exhibit 21.1). The specific jobs in departments include economists and policy analysts, nurses, commerce officers, and information technology specialists. Departmental development programs include the Foreign Service Development Program at the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, and the Economists Recruitment and Development program at Statistics Canada. The corporate development programs comprise the Management Trainee Program (MTP), the Accelerated Economist Training Program (AETP) and the Financial Officer Recruitment and Development (FORD) program. They are designed to move candidates through to middle management or professional levels quickly.

### **An aging public service work force**

**21.18** The public service has become significantly older over the past eight years. This characteristic is particularly more pronounced in the Executive, Administrative and Foreign Service, and Scientific and Professional categories, where some 45 percent of the work force is aged over 45. In contrast, only 18 percent of public servants in these categories are under 35. Part of the reason for these figures is that during Program Review, many experienced employees as well as younger ones left under a departure incentive program, and hiring was extremely limited.

**21.19** The Treasury Board Secretariat expects the annual separation rates of the Executive category to increase from six percent in 1999–2000 to almost 10 percent after 2002–03. In April 2000 we reported that 70 percent of executives could retire without any penalty by 2008. To be eligible for retirement without a penalty, an employee must be aged 55 and have 30 years of pensionable service, or be aged 60 with a minimum of two years of pensionable service.

**21.20** Data show that the “feeder groups” (the traditional pool of candidates for executive positions) are also older than the average age of the public service. As well, this pool will see higher departure rates in the next decade, which will increase the difficulty of replacing many executives (see Exhibit 21.2). Data from the Treasury Board Secretariat’s information system indicates the following:

- in the primary feeder group, which accounts for half of promotions to the Executive category, 48 percent of employees will be eligible to retire by 2008; and
- in the secondary feeder group, which accounts for almost one quarter of executive appointments, 53 percent of



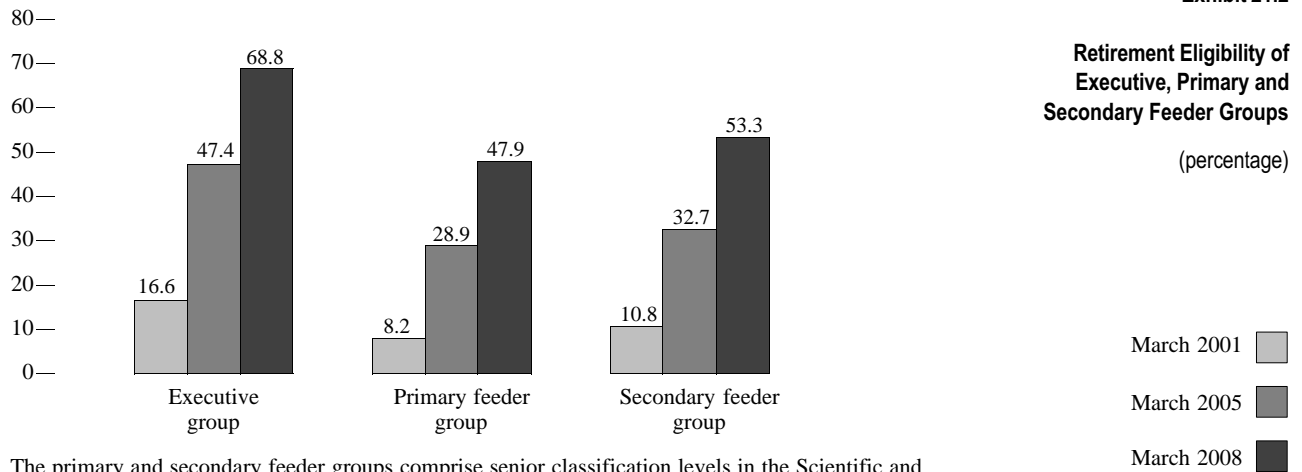
employees will be eligible to retire by 2008.

**21.21** Our Office and other organizations continue to express concerns about the need to recruit knowledge workers and to improve recruitment practices. For instance, in 1998 we reported on the impact of staff shortages on the management of the International Tax Directorate. In 1999 we noted the need for more flexible recruitment practices for the science and technology community. This year we continue to examine ongoing staff shortages and their

overall impact on service quality and program delivery in financial management (see our October 2000 Report, Chapter 13) and health and safety (see our December 2000 Report, Chapter 24).

**Focus of the audit**

**21.22** The purpose of our audit was to determine the extent to which the Post-Secondary Recruitment program would help the government renew its aging professional and management work force and to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the program.



The primary and secondary feeder groups comprise senior classification levels in the Scientific and Professional, and Administrative and Foreign Service occupational categories (see table below).

Primary feeder group	Secondary feeder group
Scientific and Professional <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Economics, Sociology and Statistics (ES 06, ES-07)</li> </ul>	Scientific and Professional <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Auditing (AU-05)</li> <li>Engineering and Land Survey (ENENG-05, ENENG-06)</li> <li>Physical Sciences (PC-04, PC-05)</li> <li>Scientific Research (SEREM-02)</li> </ul>
Administrative and Foreign Service <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Administrative Services (AS-06, AS-07)</li> <li>Foreign Service (FS-02)</li> <li>Program Administration (PM-05, PM-06)</li> </ul>	Administrative and Foreign Service <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Commerce (CO-03, CO-04)</li> <li>Computer Systems Administration (CS-04, CS-05)</li> <li>Financial Administration (FI-03, FI-04)</li> <li>Information Services (IS-06)</li> <li>Personnel Administration (PE-05, PE-06)</li> <li>Purchasing and Supply (PG-06)</li> </ul>

**Source:** Treasury Board Incumbent File (excluding the Canada Customs Revenue Agency) – *Not audited*

**We continue to find a clear lack of co-ordination and direction in dealing with the government's recruitment priority.**

**21.23** We looked at the program as the government's main structured program for recruiting university graduates in the Administrative and Foreign Service and Scientific and Professional categories. We examined how the Public Service Commission and the Treasury Board Secretariat manage recruitment from a central perspective. We also examined how the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Fisheries and Oceans, and Statistics Canada identified their human resource requirements and made use of the Post-Secondary Recruitment program.

**21.24** We selected these departments based on the Public Service Commission's information, which ranked them as key users of the program in 1998–99.

**21.25** We reviewed three main phases of the recruitment process: planning, the management of recruitment activities, and the assessment and reporting of results.

**21.26** During our audit we interviewed senior human resource managers from various private and para-public organizations to learn about their recruitment practices. We also spoke to university placement officers to discuss their views on the Post-Secondary Recruitment program.

**21.27** We present more details in **About the Audit** at the end of this chapter.

## **Observations and Recommendations**

### **Lack of Corporate Direction Hampers Recruitment Planning**

**21.28** The 1998 Committee of Senior Officials' (COSO) subcommittee report on the human resource community called for a more strategic approach to human resources management. In 1998, La Relève noted the need for a human resource strategy for the public service to

retain more employees and focus recruitment in areas of skill shortages.

**21.29** We continue to find a clear lack of co-ordination and direction in dealing with the government's recruitment priority partly because of unclear roles and responsibilities.

**21.30** Under the *Financial Administration Act*, the Treasury Board determines the size of the public service and ensures that human resources are allocated and used effectively. It aims to perform a strategic and results-oriented management role as the government's management board.

**21.31** The Public Service Commission's mandate is to ensure that Canada has a highly competent, non-partisan public service that is representative of the population it serves. Over the years, the Commission has delegated much of its staffing responsibilities to departments and adopted an advisory and oversight role. However, the Commission has retained authority for initial appointments to the public service and responds to requests from departments for recruitment from outside the public service.

**21.32** Departments are responsible for determining the resources they need for program delivery and obtaining funds and guidance from the Treasury Board Secretariat to address resource shortages. They must work with the Commission to recruit new staff.

**21.33** We expected the Secretariat and the Commission, which have shared responsibilities for human resource management, to take lead roles on recruitment.

**21.34** The Clerk of the Privy Council, as Head of the Public Service, established three priorities for human resource management in his Seventh Annual Report to the Prime Minister in March 2000: recruitment, workplace well-being, and learning and development. He established three subcommittees of

COSO to work on these priorities. In the spring of 2000 the Clerk asked all deputy ministers about their plans in these three critical areas for the short, medium, and long term, and what corporate support or help they needed.

**21.35** The Clerk chaired the subcommittee on recruitment, which indicates the priority he placed on this area. The July 2000 subcommittee report outlined expected behaviours for all managers, highlighted some best practices for other departments to consider, and attached a general plan for central agencies. (Appendix B contains highlights of the report, which deals with the broad issue of recruitment, not just the Post-Secondary Recruitment program.)

**21.36** In response to the Clerk about the three human resource priorities, most deputy ministers stated that they would be facing a significant recruitment challenge over the next five years. While they also expressed a general need for support from central agencies, we did not see any specific plans or requests for direction or additional resources. Some managers we interviewed mentioned that their department needed funding for interim positions and for training of new employees, yet this need does not seem to have been translated into specific planning demands.

**21.37** We asked the Treasury Board Secretariat if it had summarized the deputy ministers' responses to the Clerk and assessed whether their plans were sufficient to meet the overall need for recruitment. The Secretariat had not done so because it was waiting for departments to submit individual business cases to address recruitment issues. It expects them to review the uses of resources, including the use of employees hired for a specific period and contractors before seeking additional resources for recruitment. The Secretariat needs to be more active in providing clearer direction to departments

on dealing with the recruitment priority and challenging their plans accordingly.

**21.38** Our review of the Secretariat's documents indicates that operational planning and forecasting capacity varied significantly from one organization to the next. According to the Treasury Board's recent estimates and projections, there is a need to increase recruitment levels substantially. However, these analyses do not break down the needed results by occupational groups. We did not find any evidence that the Board shared this information with the Commission (responsible for overall recruitment) or with departments (responsible for identifying their needs) to support the development of an overall recruitment strategy.

**21.39** The Public Service Commission could play a more proactive role in managing its Post-Secondary Recruitment program, given the recruitment priority, and in taking action where departmental responses seem to be inadequate to meet the recruitment challenge.

**21.40** In our view, the current situation indicates that a government recruitment strategy is needed to provide direction for departments and the Commission on how best to manage the recruitment priority. We believe that if central agencies keep waiting for departments to act and departments keep waiting for direction and support from the central agencies to act, the recruitment priority will not be managed in a strategic and proactive manner.

**21.41** In our April 2000 Report, Chapter 9, Streamlining the Human Resource Management Regime: A Study of Changing Roles and Responsibilities, we stated that unresolved structural and systemic issues were partly the root of these problems.

**21.42** No one is clearly the driving force behind recruitment, and the government has not developed its strategic direction and goals for recruitment. For

**Deputy ministers stated that they would be facing a significant recruitment challenge over the next five years.**

these reasons, we are concerned about the government's ability to address the recruitment priority.

### **Planning Under the Post-Secondary Recruitment Program Is Ad Hoc**

**We are concerned about the government's ability to address the recruitment priority.**

**21.43** We expected that recruitment levels for the Post-Secondary Recruitment program would be aligned with forecast vacancies according to retirement and attrition rates over five years. We also expected that based on established levels, recruitment strategies would be developed to reach and recruit the necessary candidates.

**21.44** In reviewing some current profiles of senior managers, we learned that on average, it took them 10 years to move from their professional entry-level to an executive position. Given this fact and the objective of the Post-Secondary Recruitment program (to recruit for the short- and long-term needs of the public service), we found no analysis of the way the program will help to replace the many senior workers who will be eligible to retire in eight years or of its chance of success in doing so.

**21.45** Recruitment levels of the program are based on ad hoc requests of a few departments. We found no evidence that the Public Service Commission or the Treasury Board Secretariat challenge the number of positions proposed by departments to address the recruitment priority.

**21.46** Annual recruitment levels of some corporate development programs have been set, but have not been met. For example, over the last four years, the MTP has hired between 27 and 71 candidates. For the same period, recruitment levels for the MTP were set at 80 and then 100 for the last two years. The AETP has not reached its annual recruitment level of 14 in the last four years. Though the FORD program does not have a set recruitment

level, it has hired about 100 candidates annually. FORD officials say that the program has played a key role in renewing and rejuvenating the finance community. However, they recognize that more recruitment is needed because there is a growing need to implement a recruitment strategy for filling middle management positions in the financial community.

**21.47** For its part, Statistics Canada has formally made human resource planning a priority and recruited more employees to sustain its work force. Exhibit 21.3 illustrates some key components of its recruitment practices. To meet its forecasts, Statistics Canada has recruited an average of 200 knowledge workers annually, using the Post-Secondary Recruitment program as the primary vehicle.

**21.48** In 1998–99 Fisheries and Oceans undertook a special recruitment initiative to renew their science and technology community and aimed to create 86 new positions in areas where gaps were predicted. The Department identified the Post-Secondary Recruitment program as the key to hire these professionals and scientists. The Department intended to convert 17 term employees to indeterminate (or permanent) status and recruit up to 69 candidates through the program. In fact, it reduced the target to 81 new positions, converted the status of 53 of its term employees, staffed 22 positions with temporary or casual employees and hired only six candidates through the program.

**21.49** In February 2000 Fisheries and Oceans stated in a letter to the Clerk that it would annually hire 100 more employees than its projected attrition rate. The department is not participating in this year's fall campaign of the program and is still developing recruitment strategies and plans. For these reasons, we are concerned about the Department's ability to meet its commitment in 2000–01.

**For its part, Statistics Canada has formally made human resource planning a priority and recruited more employees to sustain its work force.**

**Key Components of Statistics  
Canada's Recruitment  
Practices**

**Management support**

- Management is continuously involved in human resource planning, including recruitment.
- Policies, systems and practices are effective for managing work force needs because they have been tested and applied for about 10 years.
- The Department follows a central approach to its recruitment and development programs and has a number of management committees and reporting structures that it uses to deliver them.

**Human resource planning**

- The Department clearly states the strategic direction. It integrates the strategic direction into the long-term planning process. It links the long-term human resource strategy to the strategic direction.
- The Department integrates human resource planning into its operational planning.
- The Department determines renewal requirements from long-term planning exercises and analyses.
- The Department makes three- to five-year forecasts based on the need to deliver its programs and on attrition and promotion rates.
- The Department continuously assesses the strength of its work force.

**Management of recruitment**

- The Department uses the Post-Secondary Recruitment program for many of its key occupational groups.
- The Department joins the Public Service Commission for promotional visits at university campuses.
- Promotional material explains the Department's working environment.
- The Department stresses merit and fairness in its recruitment practices and provides sensitivity training to recruiters.
- The Department shares information on its recruitment practices.
- The Department's candidates are offered structured training and development opportunities.
- The Department maintains eligibility lists of qualified candidates.

**Performance assessment**

- The Department periodically assesses recruitment strategies. It conducts surveys to improve recruitment practices and determine whether it has met the expectations of candidates.
- The Department gives feedback to the Public Service Commission on recruitment results.
- The Department monitors recruitment costs.
- The Department tracks acceptance and retention rates and uses this information to adjust future recruitment activities.

Source: Statistics Canada

**21.50** The Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade has hired an average of 50 foreign service officers since 1997 and expects to hire 60 through the fall 2000 campaign of the program. In the past three years, it has hired up to 15 management and consular affairs officers annually. Yet it is experiencing high attrition rates because almost a third of foreign service officers leave after 7 to 12 years on the job. In addition, we noted that roughly 40 percent of officers and 38 percent of executives will be eligible to retire in 2001. In our opinion, these

demographics could leave the Department in a difficult position to replace staff if a majority of these employees decide to retire soon. Nevertheless, the Department is not further adjusting its recruitment levels under the program.

**21.51** Central agencies and most departments have not analysed labour markets to assess trends that affect the program. In our view, several factors will make it more difficult to attract candidates in the future: a smaller pool of candidates,

**Central agencies and most departments have not analysed labour markets to assess trends that affect the program.**

increased competition for candidates, and workers' changing expectations.

**21.52 To address the recruitment priority of the federal government, the Treasury Board Secretariat and the Public Service Commission should immediately develop a results-oriented strategy that will identify recruitment expectations for the government.**

**21.53 In this strategy, the Public Service Commission, the Treasury Board Secretariat and departments should identify appropriate recruitment levels for the Post-Secondary Recruitment program.**

**There Is a Trend to Hiring on a Term Basis**

**21.54** Over the past 10 years, specific-period appointments have outnumbered indeterminate appointments by a wide margin (see Exhibit 21.4).

**21.55** Many managers we interviewed gave us a number of reasons for hiring employees on a term basis: uncertainty about long-term funding, short-term project work, and a quicker way to replace an indeterminate employee on assignment. They also prefer term hiring because it is faster than hiring for a permanent position and it gave them a chance to assess the suitability of the candidate — a “try before you buy” approach. (It should be noted that indeterminate employees have a probationary period of up to 12 months in some cases.)

**21.56** Managers also indicated that the conditions of the competitions for term employment are quite restricted in the eligible area of competition, specified skills, and the period to apply. These conditions limit the number of applicants. Managers reported that employees on term status are often converted to indeterminate status because they have a proven track record and have gained knowledge of the department and its operation.

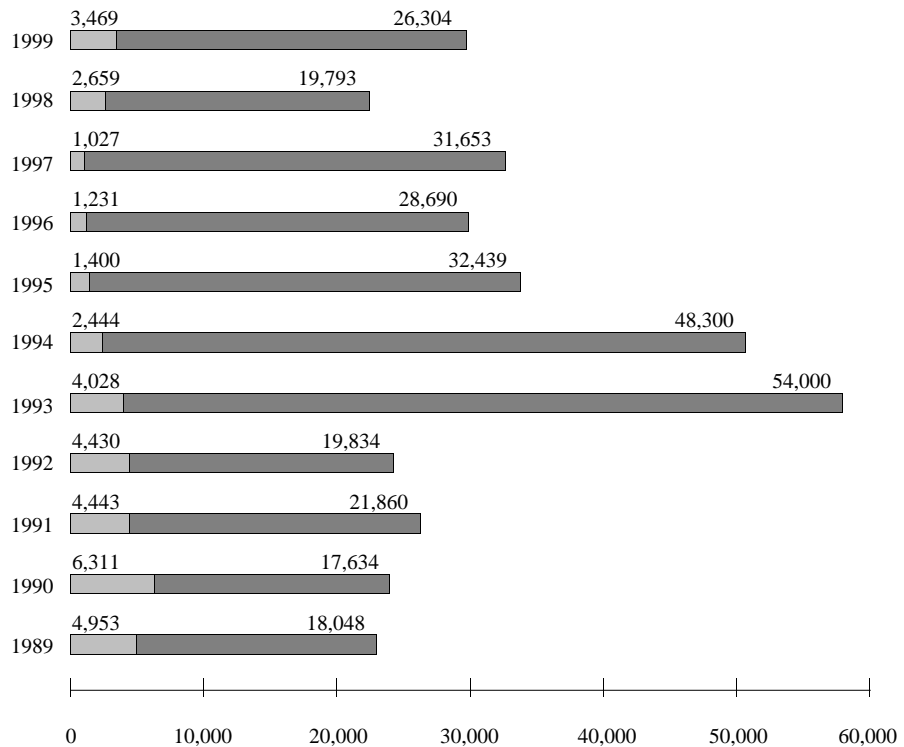
**Exhibit 21.4**

**Types of Appointments to the Public Service**

- Indeterminate
- Determinate

**Note:** Determinate employment (term employment) includes part-time or full-time employment for a fixed, predetermined period.

**Source:** Public Service Commission Annual Reports from 1989 to 1999



**21.57** One director of a school of public administration told us that its students, who were studying for a career in the public service, were willing to accept a contract or a term appointment because they see this offer as the primary means of entry into the public service. The director noted that as a result, graduates would spend some of their energy on seeking indeterminate positions, rather than fully committing themselves to their work and dealing with the challenges of the job. They would also become cynical about the recruitment process and careers in the public service. Some managers we spoke to made the same observations. If hired on a term basis, employees would keep searching for a permanent position elsewhere and would likely leave the department if they received an offer. This continuous search has an impact on the work units' productivity.

**21.58** Job creation and employment rates are rising and unemployment rates are falling; this trend means that there is more competition for fewer resources. In the 1990's employment increased for knowledge workers in the management, scientific, professional and technical fields. University placement officers also indicated that qualified graduates might not consider the public service for short-term employment when competitors offer permanent positions. Consequently, the public service may be losing qualified candidates and may be finding it more difficult to attract them in an increasingly competitive market.

**21.59** In our view, this short-term hiring practice shows a lack of long-range planning. Managers are being reactive by filling their vacant positions with specific-period hiring, with little regard for long-range needs. This trend may also affect the planning and use of the Post-Secondary Recruitment program.

**21.60** **The Public Service Commission should review departments' hiring on a term basis and assess the extent to**

**which this practice has an impact on the government's strategy for recruitment and on the use of the Post-Secondary Recruitment program.**

### **The Public Service Commission Needs to Be a Better Recruiter**

**21.61** The Public Service Commission and departments share responsibilities for the Post-Secondary Recruitment program's two campaigns that take place each year.

**21.62** As the overall manager of the program, the Commission is responsible for promotion, administration of the application process, initial testing and pre-screening. For corporate development programs (MTP, AETP, and FORD program), it often runs assessment centres and co-ordinates interviews. Once the Commission refers candidates to departments, its work is completed.

**21.63** Departments provide the Commission with the type and number of positions for which they will be recruiting and indicate the education and skills required. Some of them promote their positions on visits to university campuses. After the Commission has referred candidates, most departments undertake additional selection processes, including further review of applications, testing and interviews. In many cases, the process takes up to nine months from application to job offer.

**21.64** Despite the lengthy process to reach a final decision, officials from departments that used the program were very satisfied with the results and found that selected candidates were well qualified.

**Promoting the federal public service to university graduates could be improved**

**21.65** We expected to find promotion of the public service and its values, and a realistic presentation of the working environment in general.

**Despite the lengthy recruitment process, officials found that selected candidates were well qualified.**

**In our view, short-term hiring shows a lack of long-range planning.**

**Students were not aware that the government was hiring and no longer downsizing.**

**21.66** According to university placement officers and a recent survey of students, the Commission was not sufficiently and aggressively promoting the advantages and benefits of a career in the public service. Information on benefits and compensation, work environment, work challenges and careers was lacking. As well, students were not aware that the government was hiring and no longer downsizing. This fact is significant given the competition for qualified candidates.

**21.67** We noted that the Commission has undertaken some promotion initiatives. In 1999 the Commission prepared a Speaker's Resource Kit, which contains general information on the federal public service. For the fall 2000 campaign of the Post-Secondary Recruitment program, the Commission posted more information on its Web site ([www.jobs.gc.ca](http://www.jobs.gc.ca)) about the benefits of a career in the public service.

**21.68** In 1999 the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade produced documentation for candidates that presents a realistic picture of the advantages and disadvantages of a foreign service career. Statistics Canada has a booklet that outlines the selection process and the advantages of a career in the organization.

**21.69** In our opinion, more needs to be done to promote the public service as a career choice.

**Government visibility on campuses could be better co-ordinated**

**21.70** We expected the Commission and departments to co-ordinate their visits to university campuses.

**21.71** During the program's campaigns, the Commission uses its regional offices' staff to visit university campuses. Some departments that advertise positions through the program also go to universities; others do not.

**21.72** We noted that visits by the Commission and departments do not always coincide. Moreover, university placement officers indicated that students were sometimes confused about the image of the public service.

**21.73** Some students did not know if the Commission was recruiting for the public service, the Commission itself or the departments. Others were unaware that some departments belong to the public service. The Commission and departments need to review the promotion of the public service as a whole and explain more clearly how positions fit into the overall picture.

**21.74** University placement officers indicated that a united approach would have more impact. The Commission could promote careers in the public service in general, and departments could elaborate on the advantages of the opportunities they have to offer. The placement officers and human resource officials in private organizations believe that the most effective practice is to assign for every visit a senior manager who can answer broad questions and a recent recruit who can relate to students' needs.

**21.75** University placement officers suggested that the government promote employment opportunities in the students' first undergraduate years to encourage them to consider and prepare for a career in the public service. They also suggested that the government might wish to increase its visibility on campuses. This greater presence would allow it to further promote the public service as a career choice and provide more timely information to students on the Post-Secondary Recruitment program.

**The scheduling of the program's campaigns raises problems**

**21.76** University placement officers and government managers are concerned about the brevity and the restrictive timing of the program's campaigns. Each campaign lasts some four weeks, usually



in September and again in January. Recruitment for corporate and departmental development programs is only done in the fall. The program's fall campaign starts in the first week of the semester when most students select their courses, organize their timetables and settle in; the candidate's assessment process takes place during mid-term exams.

**21.77** Information on the program's Web site is limited, except during the two campaigns. There is no continuous application process for the Post-Secondary Recruitment program.

**The program does not offer opportunities across the country**

**21.78** While over two thirds of the federal public service work outside the National Capital Region (NCR), we expected that the program would recruit for entry-level positions in other regions.

**21.79** We found that the program offered jobs primarily in the NCR. University placement officers told us that students are frustrated by the lack of regional work opportunities and the need to relocate to the NCR. The Commission's

regional personnel believes that the program has to be tailored to regional recruitment needs because current opportunities in the NCR are not always attractive to candidates.

**21.80** Placement officers added that when the Commission's regional representatives are on campus, they promote only positions advertised under the program. They do not talk about possible regional opportunities in departments that may arise during the year through general recruitment.

**21.81** Recruiters of organizations in the private and para-public sectors have more aggressive, timely and flexible recruitment practices (see Exhibit 21.5).

**21.82** When compared with the Commission's recruitment practices, these organizations are more visible on campuses and regularly meet with placement staff and faculty members of institutions. They clearly define their corporate image and do not limit requests for applications to specific periods or campaigns. Their managers focus more on the recruitment results than on process, which is usually less time-consuming.

**21.83** The Public Service Commission has taken a number of steps to improve

**There is no continuous application process for the Post-Secondary Recruitment program.**

<p><b>Private organizations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Canadian financial institution participates in every job fair on university campuses and offers many perks to attract students. Its Web site is user friendly, and students can submit applications year-round.</li> <li>• A Canadian insurance company participates in every relevant fair on high school and university campuses that have an actuary sciences program. It offers summer positions to students for three years and eventually a permanent job. The company has a Web site that is user-friendly, and students can submit applications year-round. It also advertises job offers in all relevant newspapers and at Human Resources Development Canada. The company developed a hiring and recruiting kit for its managers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An international high-tech firm pays for the tuition fees of the students it hires in the summer so that they can act as its ambassadors year-round on campus. In turn, the firm expects students to participate in career fairs and promote their employer. The firm's Web site is user-friendly, and students can submit applications year-round.</li> </ul> <p><b>Para-public organization</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Canadian research establishment locates and tracks undergraduates in biological sciences and offers them summer or term positions. Its intention is to hire them when they graduate with a Ph.D.</li> </ul>
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**Exhibit 21.5**

**Recruitment Practices of Private and Para-Public Organizations**

**Source:** Canadian organizations

the performance of the Post-Secondary Recruitment program's campaigns. However, university placement officers and government managers believe that more improvements are needed in promoting the public service as a career choice, increasing government visibility on campuses, and scheduling campaigns. In addition, expanding the program to offer more regional positions needs to be explored.

**21.84 To improve its performance as a recruiter of university students under the Post-Secondary Recruitment program, the Public Service Commission should review the design of the program to make it more flexible, adaptable, and timely.**

**21.85 The Public Service Commission should better co-ordinate recruitment efforts with departments to promote the public service as a career choice and to offer opportunities across Canada.**

### **Greater Use Could Be Made of the Program's Campaigns Results**

**21.86** Some 11,500 graduates applied under the Post-Secondary Recruitment program's 1998 campaign. The Commission referred some 6,400 of them to corporate development programs and to departments for further assessments. As a result, about 800 received appointments, leaving nearly 5,600 candidates who were interested in public service positions and met the basic requirements, but who were not hired.

**21.87** According to the Commission's information system, general recruitment competitions in 1998-99 resulted in some 7,000 appointments in the Administrative and Foreign Service and Scientific and Professional categories, of which some 5,400 were for a term period.

### **Inventory of qualified candidates would maximize results**

**21.88** The Commission spends considerable time and money advertising positions, processing applications, and assessing candidates. However, except in very few circumstances, the Commission does not maintain an inventory of the program's qualified candidates for referrals in other general recruitment processes.

**21.89** In our view, if government managers had access to inventories of pre-screened qualified candidates who had been assessed through a broad-based merit process, their staffing process could be more efficient. Managers might also be more encouraged to hire them on an indeterminate basis.

**21.90** The Commission manages an inventory of candidates for positions in information management and information technology (IM-IT) and uses innovative techniques to expand opportunities for graduates and to facilitate staffing for managers. The Post-Secondary Recruitment program could benefit from some of these techniques.

### **Few departments use the program**

**21.91** Between 1996 and 1999, nine departments regularly advertised positions in the Post-Secondary Recruitment program, and seven others did so occasionally. The many departments that do not hire using the program is puzzling, given that they have positions requiring workers with a university degree.

**21.92** Following the call for the renewal of the public service, we expected that more departments would have participated in the program. The number of them taking part in the fall 2000 campaign is higher than in previous years, yet it still represents a small portion of the federal government. We did not find any analysis of this lack of participation.

**21.93 The Public Service Commission should maximize the use of the**

**In 1998, nearly 5,600 candidates met the basic requirements, but were not hired.**

**With the call to renew the public service, we expected that more departments would have participated in the program.**

**campaign results of the Post-Secondary Recruitment program by managing an inventory of pre-screened candidates. This inventory could be used to fill positions that are advertised during the program's campaign and for any other government positions.**

**21.94 The Public Service Commission should determine why more departments are not participating in the program and address departmental concerns in the program's design.**

### **Assessment and Reporting of the Program's Results Are Limited**

**21.95** We expected the Public Service Commission would regularly assess activities of the Post-Secondary Recruitment program, particularly recruitment acceptance rates, retention rates and costs as well as selection tools.

**21.96** Private sector managers provide some analysis and feedback to the human resource divisions to adjust recruitment strategies (see Exhibit 21.6).

**Assessment of the program's recruitment activities is weak**

#### **21.97 Recruitment acceptance and retention rates are not analysed.**

In 1999–2000 the Commission undertook the Longitudinal Study, which reviewed the recruitment process from the submission of applications to appointments for the fall 1998 campaign of the program. The objectives of the study were to improve the understanding of the process, advise on the subject and identify any potential barriers to encouraging diversity in occupational groups.

**21.98** The study states that departments filled only 62 percent of the positions they had advertised through the Post-Secondary Recruitment program in 1998. The study reports a similar figure for previous years. The Commission acknowledged that it cannot explain these shortcomings because it has not systematically gathered information on the number of candidates who have qualified and have been selected through the program. For the same reason, it cannot advise the program's regional co-ordinators to help them adjust their promotion efforts. To improve the monitoring of campaign results, the

**In 1998, departments filled only 62 percent of the positions they had advertised through the Post-Secondary Recruitment program.**

- A Canadian insurance company expects feedback from managers to adjust its recruitment strategy. Managers are held accountable and report to the Chief Executive Officer if a new recruit does not succeed. The human resources division updates its hiring and recruiting kit based on feedback from managers. The division prepares an exit interview report, which includes the views of departing term employees, and submits it to the CEO for action.
- A Canadian financial institution conducts exit interviews of departing employees and adjusts its recruitment strategy accordingly. It also uses the results of exit interviews to update competencies required for entry-level positions.
- A Canadian chemical, mechanical and electrical company advertises work diversity to attract the right talent. It expects employees to have three to four careers with the company. After two years, the human resources division and managers discuss new avenues with employees. Because its turnover rate is very low, the company participates in an annual industrial survey on human resources. The survey provides information on the time to fill a position as well as recruitment acceptance rates and costs.
- An international industrial firm regularly assesses its recruitment practices and tackles competition from other firms for recruiting in the following way: "Continuous challenges have to be offered to employees. To reduce employees' mobility, these challenges have to be better than those offered by competitors. Nowadays, competitive organizations' recruitment strategies need to consider sculpting positions to attract the right talent."

#### **Exhibit 21.6**

#### **Examples of Feedback on Recruitment in Some Private Sector Organizations**

**Source:** Canadian organizations

**The Public Service Commission has undertaken two separate studies to improve its performance in ensuring an employment equity perspective in the candidate's assessment processes.**

Commission has established partnership agreements with participating departments that require them to report the reasons for the difference between the number of advertised positions and hired applicants.

**21.99** We have mentioned in paragraph 21.46 that some corporate development programs had difficulty in reaching their recruitment levels. These levels have not been revised based on past experience, and recruitment activities have not been revisited to meet these levels in the future. As well, we also found that there is no systematic tracking of candidates after their completion of these development programs to determine whether they have remained in the public service or moved into managerial positions.

**21.100** University placement officers would like to know the number of student applications that the Commission received, those referred to departments and corporate development programs and those appointed. This data would help them make recommendations on curriculum and counsel students on careers in the public service.

**21.101** We found that Statistics Canada tracks its recruitment acceptance and retention rates for decisions on human resource planning and adjusts its activities accordingly. The Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade is looking at its problem in retaining foreign service officers. Subsequent to a recent departmental review of its results with the last campaign of the program, the Department is now streamlining its assessment process for Foreign Service and Management and Consular Affairs Officers programs because of similarities in basic recruitment requirements.

**21.102 Knowledge of recruitment costs is uneven.** We expected that the Commission and departments identify recruitment costs and use the information to improve the management of the Post-Secondary Recruitment program. We

found that knowledge and use of this information varied.

**21.103** The Commission has estimated that its direct costs for the program increased from \$1.19 million in 1997–98 to recruit some 350 candidates in one campaign to \$ 1.38 millions in 1998–99 to recruit about 850 in two campaigns. It expected costs to reach \$1.44 million in 1999–2000 to recruit 800 candidates. Assessment and selection costs incurred by departments and corporate development programs are not included in these figures.

**21.104** We found no cost-effectiveness analysis of the program's components, such as visits to universities, various promotion activities and the use of regional offices. This analysis would allow the Commission to maximize its investment in these components and make necessary adjustments.

**21.105** Statistics Canada has a system to adequately monitor its recruitment costs. The Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade recently began to budget and track its recruitment costs.

**21.106** In our view, the uneven knowledge of these costs for recruitment activities — a major investment in human resources — limits the ability of the Commission and the departments to monitor and improve the cost effectiveness of these activities.

**21.107 Selection tools have been assessed for employment equity bias.** The Public Service Commission has undertaken two separate studies to improve its performance in ensuring an employment equity perspective in the candidate's assessment processes. The first study is the External Review of Selected Instruments of the PSC's Personnel Psychology Centre (Cronshaw Report). It assessed a sample of selection tools and tests for potential bias or adverse impact, including some used in the Post-Secondary Recruitment program.

**21.108** As a result, the Commission replaced two tests used for the program because of their adverse impact on employment equity. The Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade changed the education requirements for foreign service officers from a master's degree to a bachelor's degree. Statistics Canada made the same change.

**21.109** The second study, the Longitudinal Study discussed earlier, focussed on the program's outcomes for equity groups.

**21.110** The Task Force on Visible Minorities, chaired by Lewis Perinbam, suggested in June 2000 that one member of a visible minority be recruited for every five new recruits. The task force reported its concern about the significant reductions between the number of applications received from visible minorities and the number of those appointed. It suggested that the merit principle was not being meaningfully applied. The Commission's Longitudinal Study indicated that the program's 1998 campaign resulted in 22 percent of appointments for visible minorities, well above their labour market participation rate and equal to the hiring ratio proposed by the task force. However, the study also noted a considerable decline in representation from applications to referrals, and then to appointments.

**21.111** During our audit, university placement officers mentioned the need for the Commission to increase its contact with various on-campus student associations involved in employment equity issues to further facilitate recruitment under the program. We are aware that the Commission has increased its outreach activities, but it may need to keep universities better informed about its activities.

**21.112** We expect the Commission to use the Longitudinal Study to improve and

monitor the results of its future program campaigns.

**21.113 The program's efficiency and effectiveness has not been assessed.**

Under the program, the departments hired over 1,500 candidates between 1996–97 and 1998–99, and about an expected 800 in 1999–2000. We did not find any assessment to determine the extent to which recruitment levels under the program are adequate to address the government's recruitment priority. We did not find any analysis to determine whether the program complemented other recruitment activities in the public service.

**21.114** Because the overall expectations for recruitment have not been stated, it is difficult to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of the program. For the same reason, it is difficult to determine the extent to which the program is contributing to the renewal of the government's professional and management work force and whether corrective action is necessary.

**Reporting of results needs major improvement**

**21.115** We expected the Commission to report the results of the Post-Secondary Recruitment program.

**21.116** We reviewed the Commission's annual reports, its reports on plans and priorities and performance reports. We found that the information presented in the annual reports is usually limited to quantitative data on numbers and types of appointments. These documents do not provide long-term trend analysis or qualitative information such as hiring trends of recruitment programs, expected shortages in occupational groups, and participation and performance of departments in hiring activities by status of employment. Given that the Commission has not stated expectations for recruitment levels, it cannot adequately report results. However, the Commission needs to at least explain the

**It is difficult to determine the extent to which the program is contributing to the renewal of the government's professional and management work force.**

difficulties that it has encountered in trying to meet recruitment levels and discuss the lessons that it has learned.

**21.117** Departments and corporate development programs do not report systematically to the Commission the results of their activities through the program against their expectations. Nor do they provide feedback on the Commission's level of service. This information would help to assess the extent to which changes should be made to the recruitment strategy.

**21.118 The Public Service Commission and departments should systematically assess recruitment activities under the Post-Secondary Recruitment program to improve its efficiency and effectiveness. The Commission and departments should also report to Parliament on the success of the program.**

**The work of the Committee of Senior Officials on Recruitment is not complete**

**21.119** To highlight the importance of the government's recruitment priority, the Clerk of the Privy Council created in October 1999 a subcommittee of deputy ministers on recruitment. The objectives were to develop a problem statement, a federal strategy, and a work plan to address government recruitment needs. The Committee of Senior Officials (COSO) asked the subcommittee to ensure that recommendations consider options for, among other things, the strategic use of recruitment, future government recruitment campaigns and the integration of recruitment activities with the broader exercise of examining program integrity (ensuring that existing programs are adequately structured and resourced).

**21.120** The following statement from the report reflects our findings:

Demographic and labour market realities are leaving [the federal public service] with gaps to be filled,

and there will be even greater gaps ahead unless [the government] takes serious, sustained action on recruitment. The public service faces an even greater recruitment imperative than most organizations in Canada — all of this taking place in an increasingly competitive labour market for skilled [knowledge] workers. [Moreover, in the next] five years, a significant number of executives and more importantly, their feeder groups, will be eligible to retire. Current recruitment and career development processes are not enough to meet the expected demand.

**21.121** Based on our review of the report and its proposed action plan, we believe that the plan needs further development in setting the government's recruitment levels, building human resource capacity, implementing recruitment alternatives such as "overstocking" or maintaining a pool of generic positions, and reporting results.

**21.122** For the Post-Secondary Recruitment program, the subcommittee suggests a number of initiatives that mirror our recommendations: improving the promotion of the program, increasing the government's visibility on university campuses, managing an inventory of pre-screened qualified candidates, and encouraging more departments to use the program. However, the subcommittee's report and action plan do not state specific results expected from these initiatives.

## Conclusion

**21.123** Our audit and many public reports we have reviewed indicate that the federal public service is experiencing shortages of knowledge workers, which are expected to worsen as demographics and the retirement of the baby boomers come into play in five years. This looming work force crisis will leave the public service with professional and management positions that will be difficult to fill in an increasingly competitive environment.

Therefore, the government must take immediate action.

**21.124** Current efforts to deal with the recruitment of human resources are not well co-ordinated because leadership of a government recruitment strategy has not been assigned. Moreover, these efforts are neither timely nor efficient and, as such, are not likely to be effective to renew the professional and management work force of the public service in five years.

**21.125** The Public Service Commission, in its current role of recruiter, succeeds in attracting qualified knowledge workers, but this success is not translated into the hiring of sufficient numbers. The design and management of the Post-Secondary Recruitment program needs to be enhanced. The Commission also needs to maximize the use of the program. In particular, the Commission needs to assume its assigned responsibilities as the recruiter:

- to encourage the participation of departments under the program;
- to ensure that government recruitment levels are spelled out and meet the government's objective; and
- to better promote the public service as a career choice to university graduates across Canada.

**21.126** The Treasury Board, in its role of employer, needs to provide guidance and guidelines to the human resource community and government managers to help them adequately deal with the recruitment issue. Furthermore, the Board needs to anticipate departments' resource requirements to help them manage the issue.

**21.127** Departments need to review their participation in corporate initiatives and current hiring practices and carefully assess the impact of these activities on their long-term human resource planning.

**21.128** In addition, the Commission, the Treasury Board Secretariat, and departments need to review how they can best inform Parliament of their progress in recruiting indeterminate employees. A significant improvement would be to report quantitative and qualitative information, such as recruitment practices, resource allocations and achieved results against recruitment levels and specific areas of shortages by occupational groups.

**21.129** In our opinion, even if immediate actions are taken to improve recruitment practices under the Post-Secondary Recruitment program, shortages of knowledge workers may nevertheless occur. The Commission may need to consider other alternatives for recruitment above the entry level to minimize potential consequences for the public service in delivering programs and providing services of quality to Canadians.

***Response of the Treasury Board Secretariat for the government and the departments audited:*** *The seriousness of recruitment to the public service is demonstrated by the government's commitment in the 1999 Speech from the Throne and by the Clerk of the Privy Council who created and chaired a Deputy Minister Committee mandated to develop action strategies on this issue. This committee also recognized (consistent with the Auditor General's observations) that tailored recruitment strategies would be required and that entry into the public service should be a consideration at all levels, not only our perceived entry level positions of the past. For example, the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade has broadened its recruitment strategy to include mid-career transfers and secondments as well as the traditional entry-level recruitment.*

*The Treasury Board is also strengthening its role in overseeing and planning the human resource needs of the public service. As one element of assistance, the Treasury Board Secretariat has launched a*

*Web site on Demographic Analysis of the Federal Public Service Workforce. This site contains references and links to research, both inside and outside of the public service. The Secretariat will be working more closely with the Public Service Commission and departments. Our objective is to work in collaboration in the analysis, planning and development of recruitment strategies that will meet department's unique needs.*

*As well, deputy heads are leading renewal activities. Fisheries and Oceans has created several working groups at the assistant deputy minister level to lead workplace improvement initiatives. These initiatives focus on ways we can enhance our capability to develop meaningful human resource plans that can address recruitment and retention strategies.*

*The government concurs with the Auditor General's recommendations. We agree that the public service must adopt an active renewal approach — one that uses this opportunity to enhance our representation of the citizens we serve and that attracts the people with the skills we need for our future work.*

#### **Response of the Public Service**

**Commission:** *The Commission agrees with the recommendations made on the Post-Secondary Recruitment (PSR) program and the audit observations are consistent with the findings from the Commission's studies, which support the improvements that are under way and those that are being planned.*

*The PSR program has been very important in attracting and recruiting new employees to the public service. The Commission agrees with the statement made in one of the main points of the audit report to the effect that the Public Service Commission is recruiting qualified candidates. In the fiscal year 1999–2000, there were 16,636 PSR applicants for 1,131 advertised positions, demonstrating a good market penetration on campuses. However, this is not the only mechanism*

*for hiring managers. In 1998–99, approximately 85 percent of all indeterminate appointments were made by other means than PSR.*

*The Commission requires significant new investment in resources to maximize the results of the PSR program campaign and make it a strategic recruitment tool for entry into the public service. The Commission needs the resources to rebuild capacity that was lost as a result of the Program Review in 1994 and the consequent decrease in recruitment activities. Recruitment demand has picked up significantly in the last two year. The Commission has re-allocated its resources and:*

- *established an additional annual winter PSR campaign since 1998;*
- *introduced on-line job information and application through [www.jobs.gc.ca](http://www.jobs.gc.ca);*
- *enhanced promotion and marketing efforts through increased campus visits; increased presence in career fairs and expanded outreach to employment equity groups;*
- *undertaken specialized recruitment strategies for groups such as the information technology community; and*
- *re-introduced inventories for high demand areas such as Computer Systems Administration (CS) and Personnel Administration (PE) occupational groups.*

**Specific comments related to the recommendations:** *The Commission will work collaboratively with the Treasury Board Secretariat to support departmental efforts in the elaboration of a results-oriented recruitment action plan and in the determination of appropriate recruitment levels through their human resource planning exercises. The Commission will continue its efforts to assist departments with modeling and demographic analysis. Twelve departments, eight regional areas and four functional communities (policy, communications, regulatory inspection,*



science and technology) have benefited from these services recently. The Commission is also exploring with the Secretariat the establishment, in 2001, of a joint centre of expertise in demographics and modeling.

The President of the Public Service Commission has increased the PSR program's visibility by personally writing to his colleague deputy ministers, asking them to participate in the program's campaigns, to designate recruitment "champions" and to undertake partnership agreements with the Commission on departmental targets and results framework. It has also established an interdepartmental advisory committee on recruitment programs.

The Commission, in collaboration with the Secretariat, has produced a recruitment action plan. Under this initiative, the Commission has submitted a business case for increased resources to modernize and rebuild recruitment capacity across the public service, which includes the redesign of the Post-Secondary Recruitment program's campaign. With increased resources, the Commission will launch a new PSR by fall 2001. The redesign will address, among others:

- establishment of a planning framework and results-oriented strategy

that identifies recruitment expectations and the appropriate PSR recruitment levels, including regional opportunities, and proactive communication/marketing to departments seeking their commitment to the use of the PSR program;

- assessment of term usage and its impact on the program's strategy;
- development of public service-wide brand to promote the public service as a career and specific marketing and promotion activities for target areas or occupational groups; co-ordination of recruitment efforts and government visibility on campus; establishment of inventories;
- investment in technology to provide tools to hiring managers and human resource advisors and streamline the recruitment process; and
- development of a performance measurement framework and tools.

The PSR program redesign will include an appropriate performance measurement framework and reporting requirements. The Commission will report to Parliament through its Performance Report and Annual Report.



## About the Audit

### Objective

The purpose of our audit was to determine the extent to which the Post-Secondary Recruitment program will enable the government to renew its professional and management work force and to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the program.

### Scope

We focussed on how the Public Service Commission of Canada and the Treasury Board Secretariat centrally administer recruitment activities. We examined how the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Fisheries and Oceans and Statistics Canada identified their human resource requirements and made use of the program. In particular, we examined the Management Trainee Program, Foreign Service Development Program, Financial Officer Recruitment and Development program, and the Accelerated Economist Training Program.

### Criteria

Our audit criteria are based on the best practices of public and private sectors in recruitment and selection.

We expected the following:

- Renewal requirements that are stated and are consistent with the government's strategic direction.
- Decisions to develop or acquire human resources that are co-ordinated in a timely manner between central agencies and the senior officials of departments.
- Analyses that are conducted over a five-year forecasted period with respect to
  - the current and available professional and management work force and its feeder groups;
  - future renewal requirements of the professional and management work force and its feeder groups, including competencies; and
  - work force gaps by demographic cohort (difference between requirements and available work force).
- Effective and efficient recruitment strategies that are targeted to fill short- and long-term renewal requirements.
- Recruitment strategies that reflect corporate public service staffing values (e.g., competency, non-partisanship and a representative work force) and provide a realistic view of the working environment in general.
- Policies, systems and management practices that are in place. Roles, responsibilities and accountabilities that are identified for recruitment and selection decisions. Related recruitment costs that are identified and used in decision making for recruitment.
- Best recruitment practices that are shared to facilitate recruitment performance improvement.
- Analyses of acceptance and retention rates that are conducted and used to improve recruitment strategies.
- Selection and assessment tools that are analyzed for biases and barriers to ensure that objectivity and transparency are maintained throughout the selection process.

- Regular assessment that is done of recruitment strategies and programs against expected forecast requirements and related costs.
- Reporting that is conducted on recruitment strategy, programs and results against expectations.

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## Appendix A

### List of Occupational Groups for the Scientific and Professional, and Administrative and Foreign Service Categories

Occupational groups for the Scientific and Professional category		Occupational groups for the Administrative and Foreign Service category	
AC	Actuarial Science	AS	Administrative Services
AG	Agriculture	CO	Commerce
AR	Architecture and Town Planning	CS	Computer Systems Administration
AU	Auditing	FI	Financial Administration
BI	Biological Sciences	FS	Foreign Service
CH	Chemistry	IS	Information Services
DE	Dentistry	MM	Management Trainee
DS	Defence Scientific Service	OM	Organization and Methods
ES	Economics, Sociology and Statistics	PE	Personnel Administration
ED	Education	PG	Purchasing and Supply
EN	Engineering and Land Survey	PM	Program Administration
FO	Forestry	TR	Translation
HR	Historical Research	WP	Welfare Programs
HE	Home Economics		
LA	Law		
LS	Library Science		
MA	Mathematics		
MD	Medicine		
MT	Meteorology		
ND	Nutrition and Dietetics		
NU	Nursing		
OP	Occupational and Physical Therapy		
PH	Pharmacy		
PC	Physical Sciences		
PS	Psychology		
SE	Scientific Research		
SG	Scientific Regulation and Patent		
SW	Social Work		
UT	University Teaching		
VM	Veterinary Medicine		

**Source:** Treasury Board Secretariat's Employment Statistics for the Federal Public Service

## Appendix B

### Summary of the Report of COSO's Subcommittee on Recruitment, July 2000

Most departments believe that they are facing a significant recruitment challenge over the next five years, as they prepare for the retirement of an aging work force. Some departments are conducting leading-edge recruitment, and others know they have to act. Departments need to play a more corporate role in sharing innovative approaches to develop more strategic recruitment practices for the future.

While departments expect to make increasing use of the Post-Secondary Recruitment program, the program accounts for only one percent of new appointments each year in the professional categories. The Management Trainee Program and other corporate initiatives exist and are used, but it is not clear that these are linked to concrete, strategic human resources plans.

The subcommittee recommended that public service leaders do the following:

- offer permanent jobs, where appropriate, to qualified new recruits and assess their potential during the probationary period, instead of using term assignments to determine their suitability;
- make human resource planning an integral part of business planning and align recruitment with future business direction;
- inform the President of the Public Service Commission of any barriers to recruitment that need to be eliminated; and
- challenge departmental corporate services to support innovative approaches.

The subcommittee also recommended that human resource specialists do the following:

- ensure that recruitment managers have the support to effectively recruit, orient and retain new employees; and
- provide strategic advice and guidance on how to recruit the right people for the right place at the right time.

The subcommittee mentioned that the Public Service Commission and the Treasury Board Secretariat have made an important contribution to moving forward on recruitment, and they are committed to going even further. The central agencies submitted an action plan, Meeting the Recruitment Challenge. The action plan sets out recruitment priorities, including the following:

- There will be more use of the Post-Secondary Recruitment program and attention to current occupational shortages.
- A pool of generic positions will be created into which young professionals can be hired.
- Workplace-of-choice efforts will centre on promoting the public service among potential recruits, especially on university campuses.
- Strategic planning will help to clarify recruitment needs for the next three to five years, with specific business cases for key recruitment challenges. Over time, this initiative will lead to recruitment planning as an integral part of doing business for all managers.

Here are some of the short-term deliverables from the central agencies' action plan:

- For strategic planning, recruitment forecasts will be submitted by April 2001 and April 2002.
- For market analysis, research and review to support forecasting/demographic modelling and work force studies will be ongoing in 2001 and 2002.
- For information on progress, results and accountability, a Post-Secondary Recruitment Partnership Agreement will be signed with departments in 2001 and 2002.

On February 2000 the Clerk of the Privy Council requested deputy ministers to provide information on their department's plan for recruitment. The following reflects some main points of the executive summary:

- It is not clear from the replies received that the sense of urgency has reached the level of hiring managers.
- Most departments are in the planning phase of recruitment and are developing recruitment strategies. There is little information on the specifics of what is planned.
- There is less clarity on what needs to be done for general recruitment across the public service.
- Several departments signalled the need to move to “overstocking” (recruiting more employees than actually needed to prevent major recruitment in the future) for a specified period of time to bring in and develop successors and help address the workload.
- A one-size-fits-all employment package will not meet the diverse needs of functional communities and regions.
- Some departments are experienced recruiters and would be a source of practical expertise.