



Public Service Commission  
of Canada

Commission de la fonction publique  
du Canada

# Casual employment: Sources and practices

A study by the  
Public Service Commission of Canada

October 2010



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## Highlights

Like many other large organizations, the federal public service depends on the help of a contingent workforce to provide ongoing services to Canadians. This workforce includes temporary help agency employees, casual workers, students and term employees. It enables sub-delegated managers in the public service to meet their short-term employment needs in a flexible and effective manner. In 1993, an amendment to the *Public Service Employment Act* introduced casual employment as a temporary staffing option.

Our study had the following objectives: to identify and describe sources of casual workers, to determine the influencing factors and underlying reasons for the reliance on casual workers and to describe any noteworthy practices associated with casual hiring.

We selected four organizations for the study, two of which were large-sized (2 000 or more employees) and two were medium-sized (350–1 999 employees).

As part of the study, we reviewed documentation on casual employment in other public service jurisdictions. We found that the definition of casual worker differs from one jurisdiction to another. In general, however, casual workers are hired on a temporary basis, with limited job protection, and usually are not entitled to employment benefits.

We also found that, in the organizations studied, sub-delegated managers hire casual workers primarily because it is a quick means of securing temporary staff to meet short-term and unexpected operational requirements. Other reasons for the use of casual employment included filling a gap due to unexpected extended absence of staff, the need for specialist skills and for projects with defined end dates.

Our study identified three main sources of candidates for casual work: former employees of temporary help services agencies, particularly in the National Capital Region; former public service employees, including retirees; and former students who no longer meet the requirements of a student employment program. The common factor among these three sources is that the person hired for casual employment had previous experience working in the public service.

# Introduction

## The Public Service Commission's role in staffing

The Public Service Commission of Canada (PSC) is an independent agency reporting to Parliament. It is mandated to safeguard the integrity of the public service staffing system as well as the political neutrality of the public service. The PSC recruits qualified Canadians to the public service and develops policies to ensure that appointments respect the core appointment values of merit and non-partisanship, as well as the guiding values of fairness, access, transparency and representativeness.

In its oversight role, the PSC conducts audits, studies, evaluations and investigations to ensure the effectiveness of the public service staffing system and to make improvements where necessary. Staffing studies are intended to enhance our understanding of the staffing system, draw our attention to potential staffing issues and identify lessons learned and best practices. Studies are largely exploratory in nature, drawing on a range of methodologies to examine topics of interest.

## Issue of study

Like many other large organizations, the federal public service depends on the help of a contingent workforce to provide ongoing services to Canadians. This workforce includes temporary help agency employees, casual workers, students and term employees. The workforce enables sub-delegated managers in the public service to meet their short-term employment needs in a flexible and effective manner.

In 1993, an amendment to the *Public Service Employment Act* (PSEA) introduced casual employment as a temporary staffing option. Casual workers are excluded from the provisions of the PSEA, including the application of merit. They do not have employee status under the Act and can be hired only for a limited period: not more than 90 working days in one calendar year in a given organization, or, in the case of the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer, for a maximum period of 165 working days in one calendar year for the purposes of a federal election, by-election or referendum. Casual workers are also restricted from applying to internal staffing processes open only to term and indeterminate employees.

Although the nature of casual work is temporary, a high proportion of casual workers are subsequently appointed to term or indeterminate positions under the PSEA. In 2007, the PSC published a study examining this tendency, entitled *To what extent do casuals become employed under the Public Service Employment Act?* The study found that, for the period from April 1995 to March 2005, an average of 41% of new casual hires were subsequently employed under the PSEA. The study was recently updated for the 2008-2009 PSC Annual Report to examine casual employment occurring between 2000-2001 and 2007-2008. Over this period, on average, 48% of casual workers were subsequently appointed. The update found the percentage of casual workers subsequently appointed to be greater in the National Capital Region (57%) than in the other regions (42%).



In 2007, the PSC published another study called *New indeterminate employees: Who are they?* covering the period from April 1, 1998, to March 31, 2006. The study found that more than 80% of the new indeterminate employees had prior public service experience, with the majority (75%) having previously worked as casual workers or term employees, or both. A more recent update of the study for fiscal years 2000-2001 through 2008-2009 found that 69% of new indeterminate employees had prior public service experience as casual workers or term employees, or both. Another 8% of new indeterminate appointees had prior experience in the public service as students or trainees or were employed in federal government organizations not subject to the PSEA.

While we recognize the need for temporary workers to meet short-term requirements or to bring in special expertise, casual workers are excluded from all provisions of the PSEA, including merit. In subsequent appointments of casual workers to indeterminate positions, these workers have an advantage over other candidates because of the knowledge and experience they acquired while they were employed as casual workers. In addition, casual workers tend to be drawn from local pools, impacting on the values of access and representativeness.

## Study purpose and objectives

Given the potential for casual workers being subsequently appointed to a position within organizations under the PSEA, the PSC is interested in finding out the purposes(s) for employing casual workers and how candidates are identified for initial hiring as casual workers.

The study covered the period from April 1, 2007, to March 31, 2008, and included the following areas of interest / parameters:

- Identification of the sources of casual employment labour markets;
- Determination of the main drivers and underlying reasons for the use of casual employment; and
- Description of noteworthy practices associated with casual hiring.

## Background

Until 1993, Exclusion Approval Orders were used to set aside the merit provisions of the PSEA, permitting certain departments and agencies to hire term employees for a period of less than six months, under specific circumstances. In 1993, an amendment to the PSEA introduced casual employment and allowed it to be excluded from the provisions of the PSEA, particularly the merit requirement. The intent was to make it easier for organizations to meet short-term operational needs. Departments and agencies were allowed to hire casual workers for up to 125 days in any year.

When the new PSEA came into force in 2005, it reduced the permitted period of employment for casual workers to a maximum of 90 working days in one calendar year in a given organization. The Act made an exception for the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer, where casuals can be

employed for up to 165 working days in one calendar year during a federal election, by-election or referendum.<sup>1</sup>

A casual worker is not eligible to be considered for appointment under any internal appointment process. Since the merit requirement does not apply, selection processes are not normally held to recruit casual workers. The result is that the source of casual workers remains undefined and unregulated.

In its 2008-2009 Annual Report, the PSC indicated that, on March 31, 2009, organizations having a signed Appointment Delegation and Accountability Instrument with the PSC employed a total of 7 162 casual workers. This represented 3.5% of the total workforce (204 265) and reflected a decrease of 4.2% in the population of casual workers when compared to the previous fiscal year.

For its 2008-2009 Annual Report, the PSC updated its October 2007 study, *New indeterminate employees: Who are they?* The original study covered the period from April 1, 1998, to March 31, 2006; the updated study covered the period from April 1, 2008, to March 31, 2009. The updated study found that the proportion of recruits with prior experience as casual workers increased from 29% in the initial study period to 34% in 2008-2009. This increase suggests an advantage for some candidates who have acquired work experience as casual workers within the federal public service.

Also for its 2008-2009 Annual Report, the PSC updated its October 2007 study entitled *To what extent do casuals become employed under the Public Service Employment Act?* The original study found that, for the period from April 1995 to March 2005, an average of 41% of new casual hires were subsequently employed under the PSEA. A study update examined the casual employment spells occurring between 2000-2001 and 2007-2008.

**Figure 1** shows the percentage of casual employment spells with subsequent appointment under the PSEA for the fiscal years 2000-2001 through 2007-2008. Over this period, on average, 48% of casual workers were subsequently appointed. Over two-thirds (69%) of these appointments were to indeterminate positions. The percentage of casual workers subsequently appointed was found to be greater in the National Capital Region (57%) than in the other regions (42%). The time to appointment under the PSEA was less than one year; this was unchanged from the original study covering fiscal years 1995-1996 through 2004-2005.

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<sup>1</sup> *Public Service Employment Act* (2003, c. 22), ss. 12, 13, section 50.1.

**Figure 1: Percentage of casual employment spells with subsequent appointment under the *Public Service Employment Act***



**Source:** Job-Based Analytical Information System (JAIS), Public Service Commission of Canada

The top four occupational groups to which the former casual workers and term employees were appointed as indeterminate employees were Clerical and Regulatory, Administrative Services, Economics, Sociology and Statistics, and General Labour and Trades. For more details, see **Appendix 1**.

## Roles and responsibilities

A number of key players are involved in the hiring of casual workers.

**Public Service Commission.** Under the PSEA, the PSC has the authority to make appointments to or from within the public service. The Act enables the PSC to delegate this authority to deputy heads through a written agreement called an Appointment Delegation and Accountability Instrument (ADAI), signed by both parties.

**Departments and agencies.** Included in the ADAI is a list outlining the appointment and appointment-related authorities the PSC may delegate to deputy heads, which includes the authority to hire casual workers. In accordance with the PSEA, deputy heads may then sub-delegate the authority to hire casual workers to any person within their organization. Sub-delegated managers play a central role in the hiring of casual workers.

Human resources (HR) practitioners typically guide sub-delegated managers throughout the hiring process. The guidance includes ensuring that managers give due consideration to the organization's HR planning. HR practitioners may also perform a challenge function to ensure that the process respects the appointment values and upholds the deputy head's accountability.

**Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat (TBS).** TBS supports the Treasury Board in its role as the employer responsible for determining and regulating pay, hours of work, leave provisions and other terms and conditions of employment for casual workers. These are set out in the TBS Terms and Conditions of Employment. Also, to support deputy heads and persons within their organizations responsible for administering the terms and conditions of employment, TBS provides the necessary direction, guidelines and training related to the applicable policies and associated policy instruments.

# Methodology

## Approach

The study combined quantitative and qualitative methods to identify and analyze casual hirings in four organizations during the period from April 1, 2007, to March 31, 2008.

The organizations were selected for the study on the basis of three criteria:

- Their use and frequency of casual hiring in relation to the total average employee population;
- Their size (medium to large) in terms of employee population; and
- Whether the Public Service Commission had recently audited or studied the organizations, or was planning to do so in the near future.

**Table 1** presents more details on the study sample of organizations selected.

**Table 1: Study sample of organizations**

Organization	Total population, 2007-2008	Size*	Casual workers, 2007-2008	Casual workers, % of total population
Canada School of Public Service	789	Medium	276	35.0
Canadian Heritage	2 384	Large	299	12.5
Office of the Chief Electoral Officer	423	Medium	324	74.7
Passport Canada	2 499	Large	693	27.7

**Source:** Audit and Data Services Branch, Public Service Commission of Canada

\*As defined by the Public Service Commission, in the Departmental Staffing Accountability Summary Reports

While the above-referenced organizations have distinct mandates and reported a variety of reasons for hiring casual workers, the primary purpose across all four was to effectively and efficiently meet operational requirements.

For more details on the organizations selected for the study, see **Appendix 2** at the end of this study report.

## Lines of evidence

We obtained data for the study from the following sources:

- **Background literature review.** To establish a context, we first reviewed literature on casual hirings from central federal agencies, provincial governments and governments in other countries. We focused on four areas of interest: the definition of casual employment; sources of casual labour; the legislative framework and factors for hiring casual workers.
- **Interviews.** We interviewed 25 human resources (HR) practitioners in the four organizations under study. These individuals were selected by the organizations as they were familiar with the referral practices for casuals within their organizations. **Table 2** presents a breakdown of interviews by organization.

**Table 2: Number of human resources practitioners interviewed, by organization**

Organization	Number of HR practitioners
Canada School of Public Service	3
Canadian Heritage	10
Office of the Chief Electoral Officer	5
Passport Canada	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>

**Source:** Audit and Data Services Branch, Public Service Commission of Canada

- **Document review.** We reviewed documentation on casual employment from each of the organizations studied. We found little information on their use of casual hiring, but were able to examine guidelines, tracking sheets, staffing forms and other relevant material.
- **Questionnaire.** We sent a fact-finding questionnaire to all sub-delegated managers currently working in the four selected organizations. The aim was to determine how candidates for casual employment were referred and why each organization used casual workers. We also sought to identify any noteworthy practices associated with casual hiring. Out of 262 sub-delegated managers invited to participate, 117 completed the questionnaire, representing an overall response rate of 45%. Most of the respondents were based in the National Capital Region (80%); virtually all (97%) had sub-delegated authority for more than one year.

For more details about the study methodology, see **Appendix 3** at the end of this report.

# Study findings

## Literature review

### *Management of casual employment varies in other public services*

We reviewed literature from the following seven public services, to determine whether they use casual workers to address their operational needs:

- Australia;
- British Columbia;
- Canada;
- France;
- New Zealand;
- United Kingdom (U.K.); and
- The United States of America (U.S.A.).

We initially searched for documentation posted on each jurisdiction's Web site, followed by a request for additional information, as required.

Our literature review revealed the following:

- Each jurisdiction has a different definition of what constitutes a casual worker. In general, however, casual workers are hired for temporary durations and do not have the job protection or entitlement to employment benefits that permanent employees have.
- The public service jurisdictions reviewed use casual workers for the same purposes: to fill short-term labour gaps, hire individuals with specialized skills and staff projects with defined time frames.
- Across the seven public services examined, there is considerable variation in the legislation, policies and terms and conditions of employment applicable to casual workers. For instance, a casual work assignment can last no more than 90 working days in one calendar year in Canada (165 working days in the case of the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer); in contrast, it can last 12 months (and may be extended up to 24 months in exceptional circumstances) in the U.K. and U.S.A.
- None of the jurisdictions has a centralized strategy for hiring casual workers.
- Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the U.S.A. sometimes advertise casual job opportunities through their government Web sites.
- Australia maintains a registry of casual workers and retirees who can be offered employment on short notice.
- The United States Postal Service maintains an inventory of casual workers.

# Factors influencing the reliance on casual workers

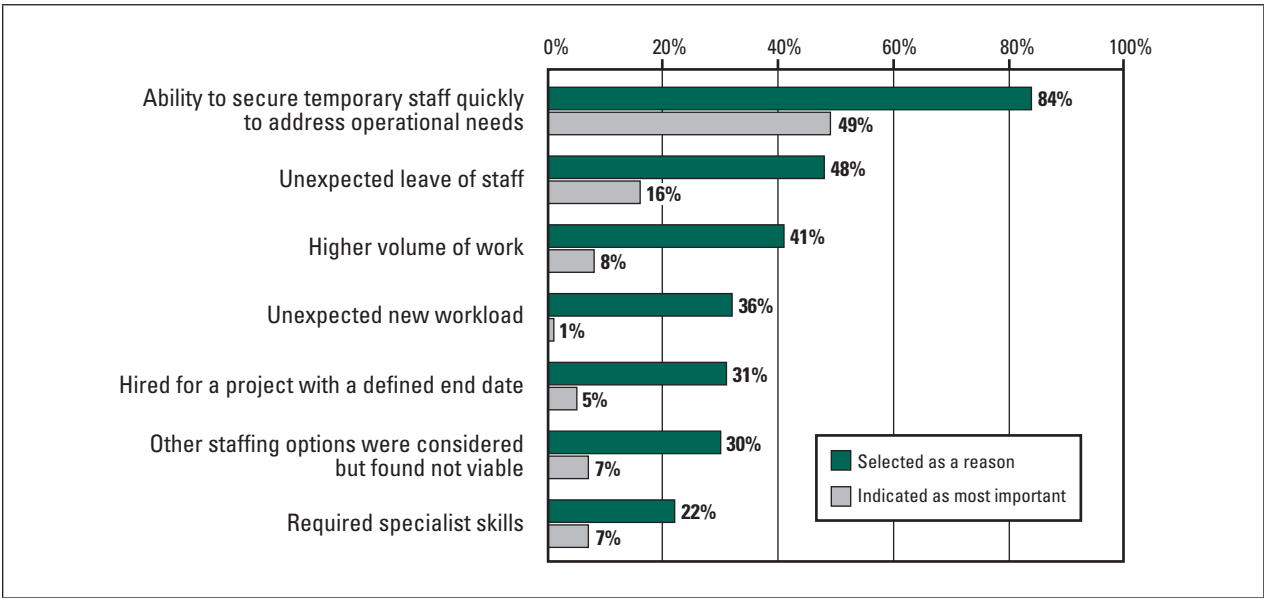
## Organizations use casual workers to address short-term and unexpected operational requirements

The fact-finding questionnaire asked sub-delegated managers to select from a list all their reasons for hiring casual workers and to identify which of the reasons was most important (see **Figure 2**). The most frequently cited reason for hiring casual workers was the ability to secure temporary staff quickly to address operational needs (84%); this was also identified as the most important reason (49%). Our interviews with human resources (HR) practitioners support these findings.

Two of the organizations we studied operate on a cost recovery basis for some of their services. In our initial meetings with senior management and HR practitioners within these organizations, they identified cost recovery as a main reason for hiring casual workers.

Some factors were more frequently cited by sub-delegated managers in the National Capital Region (NCR). These included the need for specialist skills (mentioned by 27% of respondents in the NCR, compared with 5% in other regions) and the need to complete a project with a defined end date (mentioned by 36% of respondents in the NCR, compared with 16% in the other regions).

**Figure 2: Reasons why sub-delegated managers hire casual workers**



**Source:** Audit and Data Services Branch, Public Service Commission of Canada

About half of the questionnaire respondents (both in the regions and the NCR) indicated that their reliance on casual workers has stayed the same during the past two years (56%), and a similar percentage felt it would continue to stay the same over the next two years (50%). Only a small number (about 15%) of respondents in both the regions and the NCR expected their reliance on casual workers to increase within the next two years.



## Sources of casual workers

### *Sub-delegated managers mainly hire casual workers who have previous public service work experience*

Our study determined that sub-delegated managers find candidates for casual employment mainly among people who have worked in the public service as:

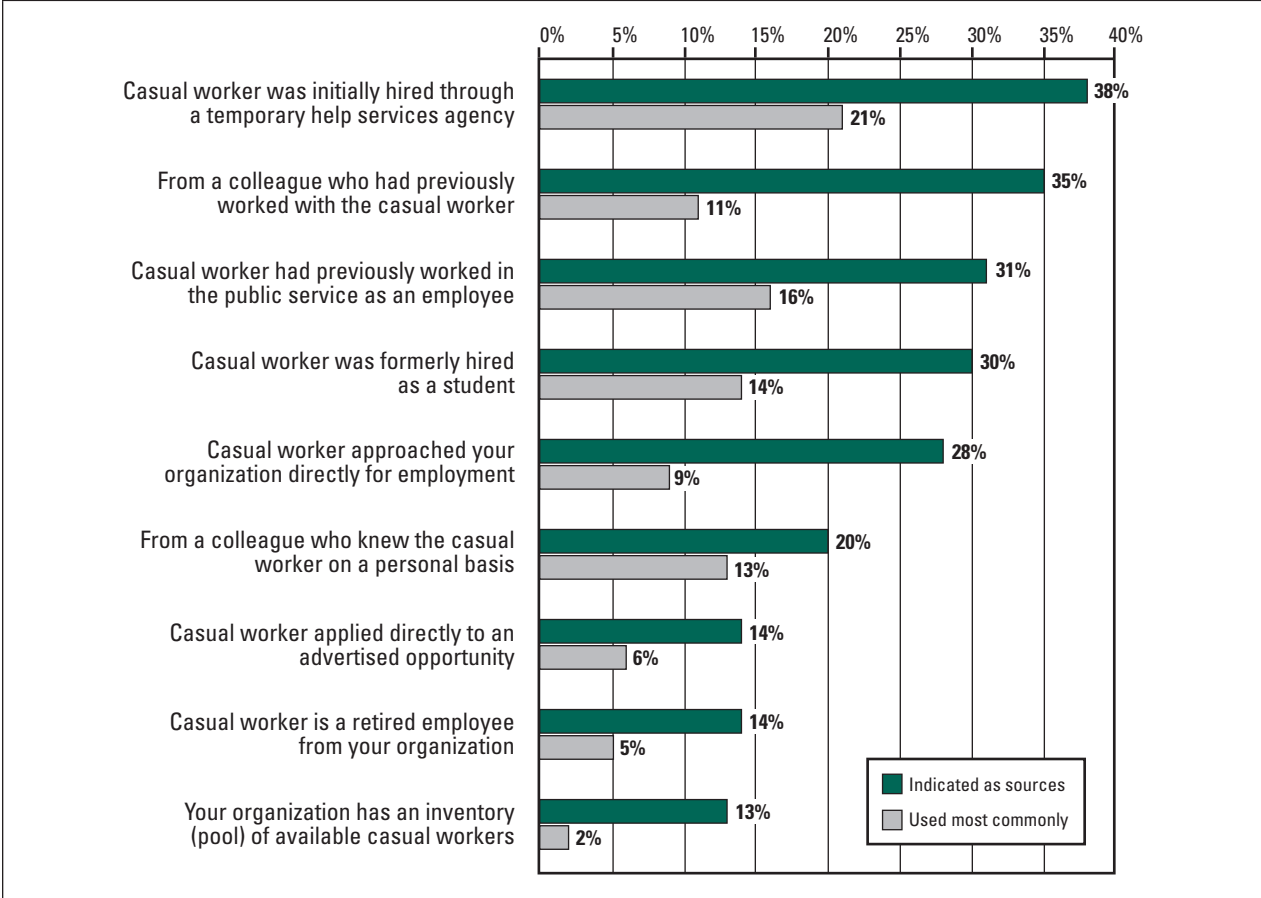
- Former temporary help services agency employees (particularly in the NCR);
- Former employees of the public service (the primary source identified by sub-delegated managers in the other regions); and
- Former student workers (primarily in the other regions).

Two groups were mentioned most often as sources for casual workers, although by differing proportions of respondents in the NCR and the other regions. Individuals formerly employed through a temporary help services agency were mentioned by 38% of sub-delegated managers overall (43% in the NCR versus 21% in the other regions). Individuals who had previously worked with a colleague were mentioned by 35% of sub-delegated managers overall (40% in the NCR versus 16% in the other regions). On the other hand, individuals who directly approached the organization seeking employment were mentioned by 47% of respondents in the regions versus 22% in the NCR. Our interviews with HR practitioners confirmed these findings.

The results of the fact-finding questionnaire (that were further supported by interviews with HR practitioners), showed a fairly strong reliance by sub-delegated managers (particularly in the NCR) on temporary help services agencies as a source for casual workers. As the Public Service Commission (PSC) continues to be concerned about the recruitment of permanent employees from the ranks of a temporary workforce, it will examine, from a sample of organizations subject to the *Public Service Employment Act*, the subsequent appointments of individuals originally hired through temporary help services agencies. Findings will be released in a PSC report expected to be published in 2010.

**Figure 3** shows total questionnaire responses regarding the ways in which sub-delegated managers became aware of potential casual workers, as well as the way identified by the managers as being the most common.

**Figure 3: Sources of casual workers**



**Source:** Audit and Data Services Branch, Public Service Commission of Canada

**Figure 3** suggests that sub-delegated managers prefer hiring casual workers who have had some previous employment within the federal public service. In fact, almost 70% of the questionnaire respondents identified this as the most common source of casual workers. Further, 13% of the respondents mentioned hiring casual workers who were known personally by a colleague — a practice that raises concern about the possibility of favouritism.

As presented in the previous **Figure 2**, questionnaire respondents indicated two main reasons for hiring casual workers: to quickly fill short-term and unexpected vacancies and to acquire workers with specialized skills. **Figure 3** shows the most common sources of casual workers. As previously noted, there is a strong likelihood that persons hired as casual workers will eventually be appointed to the public service because of the experience they gained from their casual employment. These factors together raise concerns about respect for the appointment values of fairness, access, transparency and representativeness.

The challenge for these sub-delegated managers appears to be the requirement to have quick access to a pool of casual workers, without continuously relying on the same exclusive labour market sources.

## Noteworthy practices in the hiring of casual workers

We asked the organizations' HR practitioners and sub-delegated managers for examples of noteworthy practices concerning the hiring of casual workers. Most of the sub-delegated managers who responded (96 of 117, or 82%) said that they were not aware of any noteworthy practices related to the hiring of casual workers.

We also asked for suggestions on improving how casual workers are hired in the federal public service. We received responses from 31 sub-delegated managers (27%). The suggestion most commonly mentioned was to create an inventory or a pool of qualified people (16 mentions, or 52% of all responses).

One organization reported that an area within it hires casual workers who have specific qualifications for a particular job. However, this area of the organization operates on a cost recovery basis and demand for the specialized service is often unpredictable, cyclical and short-term in nature. As a result, it is not feasible to hire workers on an indeterminate basis. Therefore, the organization advertises casual and term opportunities to meet service demands (see **Exhibit 1**).

### Exhibit 1: Advertising casual and term opportunities

The federal government advertises casual and term job opportunities on jobs.gc.ca, the Public Service Commission of Canada's recruitment portal (external advertised processes, open to the general public). Individuals with the necessary qualifications are placed in a pre-qualified pool. Sub-delegated managers can then refer to the list when looking to fill casual or term opportunities to meet service demands.

Another organization also said that it uses an external advertised process to create a pool of casual workers that sub-delegated managers can quickly access to meet operational needs.

The combined results of the questionnaire and interviews with HR practitioners showed that the four organizations preferred to address short-term operational needs (e.g. peak periods, seasonal workloads, unexpected extended absence of staff) by creating pools or inventories of candidates for casual employment opportunities.

In interviews, HR practitioners mentioned other noteworthy practices that they found useful relating to the use of casual employment:

- Periodic tracking and monitoring of casual hirings within the organization to better develop staffing strategies and HR plans;
- Development of guidelines on the use of casual employment to better inform sub-delegated managers of their roles and responsibilities in the hiring process;
- In-house training for sub-delegated managers on the use of casual hiring;

- Maintenance of lists of previously hired casual workers and retirees; and
- Use of a signed impartiality statement to reflect fairness and attest to the absence of personal favouritism in the hiring of casual workers (see **Exhibit 2**).

## **Exhibit 2: Example of an impartiality statement**

I declare the following:

I am not related to the person being hired.

My association (if any) with this person has not influenced my decision and does not constitute a real or perceived conflict of interest.

The process leading to the hiring of this person is free from political or bureaucratic influence and does not give rise to nepotism or preferential treatment.

[Signature of hiring manager]

## Concluding remarks

In 1993, an amendment to the *Public Service Employment Act* (PSEA) introduced casual employment as a staffing option that sub-delegated managers could use to effectively and efficiently address short-term and unexpected operational requirements. Our study confirmed that sub-delegated managers are using this staffing option primarily for its intended purposes.

The study also found that casual workers hired by sub-delegated managers tend mainly to be previous employees of temporary help services agencies or individuals who were former public service employees (students, retirees, etc.).

While we recognize the need for temporary workers to meet short-term requirements or to bring in special expertise, casual workers are excluded from all provisions of the PSEA, including merit. In subsequent appointments of casual workers to indeterminate positions, these workers have an advantage over other candidates because of the knowledge and experience they acquired while they were employed as a casual worker. In addition, casuals tend to be drawn from local pools, impacting on the values of access and representativeness.

The study revealed that there will be an ongoing short-term need for casual workers. Sub-delegated managers appear to face the challenge of quickly accessing a pool of qualified candidates for casual employment without relying exclusively on the same labour market sources.

As suggested by sub-delegated managers and human resources practitioners, a way of meeting the challenge would be through advertising casual work opportunities. This approach would create a pool of candidates that sub-delegated managers could draw from as needed.

## Study team

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# Appendices

## Appendix 1 – New indeterminate employees with prior experience as casual workers – from fiscal years 2000-2001 to 2008-2009

The following reflects the number of new indeterminate employees with previous experience as casual workers and the occupational groups to which they were appointed.

Occupational group	Number of new indeterminate employees (former casual workers)
Ships' Crews (SC)	650
General Labour and Trades (GL)	1 831
Drafting and Illustration (DD)	64
General Services (GS)	1 288
Information Services (IS)	1 207
Administrative Services (AS)	4 608
Data Processing (DA)	87
Secretarial, Stenographic and Typing (ST)	672
Heating, Power and Stationary Plant Operations (HP)	90
Engineering and Scientific Support (EG)	1 436
Ship Repair (SR)	329
Clerical and Regulatory (CR)	11 958
Biological Sciences (BI)	598
Education (ED)	209
Physical Sciences (PC)	551
Economics, Sociology and Statistics (ES)	1 907
Social Science Support (SI)	658
Chemistry (CH)	123

**Source:** Job-Based Analytical Information System (JAIS), Public Service Commission of Canada

## Appendix 2 – Overview of the four study sample organizations

### *Canada School of Public Service*

Canada School of Public Service (CSPS) was launched on April 1, 2004, through the enactment of the *Canada School of Public Service Act* and under the provisions of the *Public Service Modernization Act*.

CSPS is the result of combining three organizations that previously provided public service-wide learning, training and development: Language Training Canada, Training and Development Canada and the Canadian Centre for Management Development. It is part of the Treasury Board of Canada portfolio. While it is a national institution that operates across the country, approximately 86% of CSPS's almost 800 employees reside in the National Capital Region.

CSPS has a broad legislated mandate to build excellence and accountability in the public service. It achieves this mandate by helping to ensure that public servants have the necessary knowledge, skills and competencies to do their jobs effectively; by assisting deputy heads in meeting the learning needs of their organization and by pursuing excellence in public management and administration.

While CSPS receives appropriated funds for some foundational learning (notably, training required under the *Policy on Learning, Training and Development*), approximately 40% of its operating budget is based on revenues generated from fees charged to departments and agencies for learning products and services. Over the two years leading up to the period covered by the study, the revenue generated by CSPS more than doubled. This cost recovery environment and the rapid growth in revenue has seen an increased reliance on casual employment for the delivery of its learning services.

### *Canadian Heritage*

The Department of Canadian Heritage (PCH) was created in 1993, as set out in the *Department of Canadian Heritage Act*, from components of the former departments of Communications, National Health and Welfare, Multiculturalism and Citizenship, Environment and the Secretary of State.

PCH plays a vital role in the cultural, civic and economic life of Canadians. It promotes culture, the arts, heritage, official languages, citizenship and participation, Aboriginal, youth and sport initiatives, to name but a few. It is also responsible for several events such as the organization of national ceremonies and royal visits, Olympic and sporting games, international cultural expositions and many more. Because of the short time requirement for personnel with specialized skills, PCH uses various temporary staffing options such as casual employment to meet its operational objectives.

During the study period, PCH had over 2 300 employees in five regional offices and 22 points of service located across the country. To stimulate international cultural trade, PCH also has five Cultural Trade Development Offices located in strategic areas outside the country.



## *Office of the Chief Electoral Officer*

The Office of the Chief Electoral Officer is more commonly known as Elections Canada.

Elections Canada's responsibilities include ensuring that all voters have access to the electoral process, providing information and education programs to citizens about the electoral system, maintaining the National Register of Electors, enforcing electoral legislation and maintaining readiness to conduct electoral events.

With slightly over 400 employees, Elections Canada is funded by an annual appropriation that provides for the salaries of permanent full-time staff and by the statutory authorities that provide for all other expenditures; this ensures that Elections Canada has the capacity to be ready at all times to conduct an electoral event and is independent from the government and from the influence of political parties. Casual workers are required primarily to support the administration of an electoral event. For instance, during the period covered by this study, Elections Canada prepared for two potential elections, one general election and seven by-elections.

## *Passport Canada*

Passport Canada is a special operating agency, reporting to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, with over 2 400 employees in 33 regional Passport Canada offices and a central directorate in the National Capital Region.

Passport Canada operates under a revolving fund (cost recovery), with revenue generated through user fees (passport applicants). However, on an exceptional basis, the agency does receive funding from the Government of Canada for important projects such as national security initiatives (e.g. re-engineering processes to meet new demands for passport services).

During the period covered by the study, Passport Canada experienced an unprecedented demand for passport services. As a result, much of its focus has been on improving its capacity to process passport applications for Canadians through three main initiatives: the Simplified Passport Renewal Program, a simplified guarantor policy and an increase in processing capacity.

## Appendix 3 – Methodology and definitions

### *Data sources*

The study team performed a quantitative analysis to determine the use of casual employment in the federal public service and to identify appropriate organizations for study.

The study used the Job-Based Analytical Information System to analyze casual hires in the federal public service during the period from April 1, 2007, to March 31, 2008.

The study sought to provide a context for understanding situations that may warrant the hiring of casual workers as well as the possible sources through which candidates for casual employment are identified. The team determined that the sample number of organizations chosen for the study could be kept relatively small yet still yield conclusive findings.

To select sample organizations for the study, the team weighed factors such as whether casual workers represented a significant proportion of the organization's total average employee population and whether the Public Service Commission had audited the organization within recent years or planned to audit it in the foreseeable future. Based on these factors, we selected the following four organizations for inclusion in the study:

- Canada School of Public Service;
- Canadian Heritage;
- Office of the Chief Electoral Officer; and
- Passport Canada.

The qualitative component of the study involved the use of multiple lines of evidence, including a literature review of public services in other jurisdictions, interviews with human resources practitioners from the four organizations in the study sample and an on-line questionnaire administered to sub-delegated managers within the four organizations.

### *Questionnaire*

The study team sent a fact-finding questionnaire to all 262 sub-delegated managers currently working in the four selected organizations. A total of 117 managers participated, resulting in a response rate of 45%. Given a minimal impact of non-response bias, the results from the questionnaire had a confidence interval of 7%, at a 95% confidence level.

**Table 3: Response rate to fact-finding questionnaire, by organization**

Organization	Potential respondents (number)	Responses (number)	Responses (%)
Canada School of Public Service	18	9	50
Canadian Heritage	159	71	45
Office of the Chief Electoral Officer	44	17	39
Passport Canada	41	20	49
<b>Total</b>	<b>262</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>45</b>

## Appendix 4 – Glossary

### **Access** (Accessibilité)

One of the guiding values of the *Public Service Employment Act* requires that Canadians have a reasonable opportunity, in their official language of choice, to apply and to be considered for public service employment.

### **Appointment** (Nomination)

An action taken under the *Public Service Employment Act* to hire or promote someone.

### **Appointment Delegation and Accountability Instrument (ADAI)**

(Instrument de délégation et de responsabilisation en matière de nomination – IDRN)

The formal document by which the Public Service Commission delegates its authorities to deputy heads. It identifies authorities, any conditions related to the delegation and sub-delegation of these authorities and how deputy heads will be held accountable for the exercise of their delegated authorities.

### **Appointment values** (Valeurs de nomination)

Fairness, access, transparency and representativeness.

### **Casual employment** (Emploi occasionnel)

A short-term employment option to hire someone. Under the *Public Service Employment Act* (PSEA), a casual worker cannot work more than 90 working days in one calendar year in a given organization, with the exception of the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer, where, in certain circumstances, the maximum period is 165 working days in one calendar year. The provisions of the PSEA, such as the merit requirement, do not apply to casual workers.

### **Co-operative Education and Internship Program (CO-OP)**

(Programme de stages d'enseignement coopératif et d'internat)

A program designed to provide post-secondary students with relevant and practical work experience in the public service to help them fulfill the requirements of their academic program.

### **Cost recovery** (Recouvrement des coûts)

Setting user fees to cover some or all of the costs incurred in providing a product or service, rather than funding the product or service.

### **Delegation** (Délégation)

The means by which the Public Service Commission of Canada shares its roles, responsibilities and authority under the *Public Service Employment Act* with deputy heads. The Appointment Delegation and Accountability Instrument sets out the specific authorities, responsibilities and accountabilities of the Commission and the department or agency.

### **Department** (Ministère)

An organization set out in Schedule I of the *Financial Administration Act*. The Public Service Commission of Canada has the exclusive authority to make appointments to departments.

**External appointment process** (Processus de nomination externe)

A process in which persons may be considered, whether or not they are employed in the public service.

**Fairness** (Justice)

One of the guiding values of the *Public Service Employment Act*, requiring that decisions be made objectively and free from political influence or personal favouritism, that policies and practices reflect the just treatment of persons and that persons have the right to be assessed in their official language of choice.

**Federal Student Work Experience Program (FSWEP)**

(Programme fédéral d'expérience de travail étudiant – PFETE)

A program through which federal organizations recruit students. It gives full-time secondary school, CEGEP, college, technical institute and university students opportunities to learn about the federal government and gain valuable experience while developing and improving their employability skills. To be eligible for appointment under the FSWEP, a candidate must be registered as a full-time secondary or post-secondary student in an accredited institution; currently recognized as having full-time status by the academic institution and returning to full-time studies in the next academic term. There are two exceptions: students with full-time status classified by their educational institution as having physical and/or emotional disabilities; and adult students participating in education and retraining programs at the secondary level, operated under the authority of a school administration. Students who are in their final year of academic study and who are not intending to return to full-time studies are eligible to work part-time up until the time they graduate. Managers must ensure that students hired in their final year are not employed under a student employment program beyond their graduation date.

**Fiscal year** (Année financière ou exercice)

April 1 to March 31, for the public service.

**Human resources planning** (Planification des ressources humaines)

A process that identifies an organization's current and future human resources needs and the planned objectives and strategies to meet these needs.

**Inventory** (Répertoire)

A listing of applicants in selection processes that could be used to staff identical or similar positions in one or more organizations. Managers can search the inventory to find applicants that meet the essential and asset criteria.

**Merit** (Mérite)

One of the core values of the *Public Service Employment Act*. An appointment is made on the basis of merit when a person appointed meets the essential qualifications for work to be performed, as established by the deputy head, including official language proficiency. The sub-delegated manager may also take into account any current or future asset qualifications, operational requirements and organizational needs.

**Merit criteria** (Critères de mérite)

Essential qualifications as well as other merit criteria. Essential qualifications are those necessary for the work to be performed; they must be met in order for a person to be appointed. The other merit criteria are asset qualifications, operational requirements or organizational needs established by the deputy head. The manager decides whether the chosen person needs to meet the other criteria.

**Organizations** (Organisations)

In this report, the term “organizations” refers to federal government departments and agencies.

**Organizational needs** (Besoins organisationnels)

Requirements that relate to the organization’s ability to operate or fulfill its mandate. These needs are often defined in the context of the public service as a whole. Employment equity can be an organizational need.

**Personal favouritism in staffing** (Favoritisme personnel en dotation)

An inappropriate action or behaviour by a public servant who, by using knowledge, authority or influence, provides an unfair advantage or preferential treatment to a current employee or to an applicant for employment in the public service, for personal gain (benefit) and contrary to the good of the organization.

**Public service** (Fonction publique)

The departments named in Schedule I of the *Financial Administration Act*, the organizations named in Schedule IV of that Act and the separate agencies named in Schedule V of that Act.

**Research Affiliate Program (RAP)** (Programme des adjoints de recherche – PAR)

A recruitment program specifically designed to give post-secondary students experience in applied research (design, execution, evaluation), when they must attain such knowledge and skills in order to graduate.

**Representativeness** (Représentativité)

One of the guiding values of the *Public Service Employment Act*, requiring that appointment processes be conducted without bias and without creating systemic barriers in order to help achieve a public service that reflects the Canadian population it serves.

**Selection** (Sélection)

The stage at which a manager chooses the person to be hired.

**Student** (Étudiant)

A person who attends a secondary school, CEGEP, college, technical institute or university full-time.

**Student Program** (Programme pour les étudiants)

A student participating in the Federal Student Work Experience Program (FSWEP), the Co-operative Education and Internship Program (COOP), or the Research Affiliate Program (RAP).

**Study (Étude)**

Is normally more descriptive or exploratory in nature than audits and usually concentrates on one or more of the following elements:

- Describing a subject or developing an information base;
- Exploring that subject or information base; and
- Developing a method to assess that subject or information base in the future.

**Sub-delegated manager (Gestionnaire subdélégué)**

A person to whom a deputy/agency head has delegated, in writing, the authority to exercise specific appointment and appointment-related authorities.

**Temporary help (Personnel temporaire)**

Normally contracted through a company or agency to replace employees on short-term leave, to deal with an increase in workload or to meet urgent operational needs; not appointed under the *Public Service Employment Act*; not considered employees.

**Transparency (Transparence)**

A public service value, ensuring open and timely communication with employees and applicants about staffing practices and decisions.

