


First Progress Report on

La Relève: A Commitment to Action

OVERVIEW March 1998



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Note

The use of the term *La Relève* throughout this document refers to the following acronym:

Leadership
Action

Renewal
Energy
Learning
Expertise
Values
Excellence

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About the *La Relève* Task Force

The *La Relève* Task Force was established in January 1997 to bring focus to the renewal of human resources management in the Public Service of Canada by

- Leading the preparation of *La Relève* plans by every department within the public service and supporting their review
- Overseeing the development and implementation of corporate projects and other corporate initiatives identified in the departmental plans
- Co-ordinating the overall communications plan, including communications on specific initiatives

To make *La Relève* information available to all public servants and to gather their input, the task force created communications networks across the country, including departmental spokespersons and internal communicators.

We involved over 15,000 public servants from all departments and regions in dialogue. In partnership with a number of groups, particularly the federal regional councils, we held some 24 major conferences across Canada. Human Resources Development Canada, for example, sponsored Workforce of the Future conferences for over 600 administrative and technical support employees in Vancouver, Winnipeg, Toronto, the National Capital Region, Montreal and Halifax.

As well, the task force has briefed parliamentarians, representatives of universities, professional associations, provinces, foreign countries and the media. *La Relève* documents are widely available in print, on the *La Relève* intranet site, through the Internet, and on a CD-ROM, which is currently being updated.

Preface

The vision for renewing the public service was set out in the *Fourth Annual Report to the Prime Minister on the Public Service of Canada*. That vision called for *La Relève* — the challenge of building a modern and vibrant institution, able to use fully the talents of its people to meet the needs of Canada and Canadians now and in the future. Since then, public servants have responded to the call to get involved and to take responsibility for renewal.

In October 1997, the deputy minister community published *La Relève: A Commitment to Action*, which reaffirmed the commitment of deputy ministers to bring about change. It took stock of what had been done to date and charted a broad course of action to renew the public service over the next three years.

This document, prepared by the *La Relève* Task Force in co-operation with the key stakeholders, outlines what the public service has done in the past year to meet the commitment to action. It highlights achievements in mobilizing the public service to focus, as never before, on people issues. It analyses the main issues that have emerged, what has been learned, and the implications for future action. It outlines the progress made by departments, functional communities and federal regional councils as well as the advances made by central agencies on broader initiatives and collective action. Finally, it articulates the emerging goals for continuing the process of change that *La Relève* has initiated and suggests how to maintain the momentum.

Submissions by departments, functional communities and federal regional councils are contained in a separate publication entitled *First Progress Report on La Relève: A Commitment to Action — Detailed Reports*.

Renewal has begun in earnest and will not stop. The first of many steps has been taken toward making things work better, toward creating a bias for action. The challenge will be to help this action grow and to keep moving from commitment, through action, to concrete results.

The *La Relève* Task Force would like to thank the many public servants who have answered the call to action, both at the corporate level and in their departmental work units. We have achieved a great deal and have discovered that, together, we can continue to build a more modern and vibrant public service for the future.

Peter Harrison, PhD
Associate Deputy Minister and
Head, *La Relève* Task Force

I

Rebuilding the Public Service

The “Quiet Crisis”

As a result of the challenges posed by globalization, the advent of the information society and changing attitudes toward traditional hierarchical structures, both public and private sector institutions are coming under serious pressure and most are undergoing significant change. The Public Service of Canada is no exception. To continue to perform well the public service is constantly required to adapt to the changes under way in Canadian society and in the world at large.

- As knowledge and skills progressively stand out as a key to the success of nations, the public service is rapidly evolving as a knowledge-based service sector.
- As issues become more complex and interrelated, mutual trust and working in partnership with other levels of government and other sectors are necessary to meet the needs of citizens.
- As citizens become increasingly reluctant to accept without question the prescriptions of public officials and demand a greater say in shaping policies and programs that affect them, the public service is required to become increasingly more inclusive and more solicitous of citizen input.

In the *Speech from the Throne to Open the First Session Thirty-Sixth Parliament of Canada* on September 23, 1997, the government indicated its support for the public service and its commitment to continued renewal:

“The Government wishes to recognize the important role of a professional, non-partisan public service in a well-performing civil society. Canada is served well by its public service. Canada is served well by its public service, and the effort and dedication it exhibits in meeting the needs of citizens and in building partnerships among governments and other sectors of society. The Government will continue to renew the Public Service of Canada to ensure its members have the skills and dedication to continue serving Canadians well.”

The Challenge of *La Relève*

One of the key challenges for the public service, in preparing for the future, is to acquire, develop and retain the people who can make this evolution a reality. The *Fourth Annual Report to the Prime Minister on the Public Service of Canada* (February 1997) observed, “There are indications that this could be the most difficult challenge that the Public Service of Canada will face over the coming years.”

The Fourth Annual Report identified a “quiet crisis” in the Public Service of Canada. This has arisen for a number of reasons — the loss of talent through many years of downsizing; a demographic skew after years of limited recruitment; constant criticism of the public sector which seriously affected morale; many years of pay freezes; and increasing interest by the private sector in acquiring the skills possessed by public servants. It was also evident that the corrective action necessary to offset these pressures had not been taken. Hence the need for *La Relève*.

“La Relève is

- *A challenge* to rebuild a modern and vibrant institution able to use fully the talents of its people
- *A commitment* by each and every public servant to do everything in their power to provide for a modern and vibrant organization now and in the future
- *A duty*, as guardians of the institution, to pass on to our successors an organization of qualified and committed staff ready to face the challenges of their time”

As the Fourth Annual Report indicated, *La Relève* is based on “a bias for action” because “the responsibility to act rests first with the Public Service. Public servants must take charge and do all in their power to remedy the situation.” Significant progress has been made in the past year. Public servants in all departments and at all levels are now working at building a modern and vibrant public service for the future.

The Spirit of *La Relève*

Focusing on people

There has been a growing realization that people, their skills, knowledge and dedication are “mission critical” in serving citizens and supporting democratic institutions. It has become increasingly evident that as much effort and attention needs to be given to human resources management as to the development and delivery of legislation and programs.

Over the past 12 months, *La Relève* has given rise to an unprecedented focus on people issues in the Public Service of Canada.

La Relève has given rise to an unprecedented focus on people issues in the Public Service of Canada.

Having recognized the challenges we face as an institution, a commitment has been made to act in the best interests of current and future employees. Supporting people in their personal development and professional experience, and taking measures to ensure a flow of talent

are key roles of effective leaders. It is recognized that the way we deal with and support the people we have is the most important signal to the ones we wish to attract. *La Relève* has also highlighted that central to focusing on our people is the modernization of our human resources management system. We must also address the demographic challenges posed by years of attrition and retrenchment.

Restoring hope

There is a particular need which permeates all levels of the public service and all workplaces. It is the need to know that the public service has an important role to play in Canada's future. This need is expressed in many ways — a call for recognition, a call for civility and dignity, a demand for attention to individual circumstances, a wish to be dealt with fairly, and so on. It is in fact a call for a reason to hope and a thirst for the leadership which will give expression to hope, no matter what difficulties lie ahead.

There is a well-spring of professionalism, dedication and pride in the Public Service of Canada which has often been obscured beneath layers of anxiety and uncertainty. While change and reform are required in the mechanisms and regulations we use to manage ourselves, the most important change required is attitudinal.

The many activities under *La Relève* — at the corporate, departmental, functional community and regional levels — provide

hope for the future. *La Relève* has begun to tap into the

The many activities
under *La Relève* provide
hope for the future.

professionalism, dedication and pride of the public service and to give voice both to real concerns and positive ideas for change. It has mobilized a large number of public servants who welcome the occasion, once again, to reaffirm who they are; to probe their

identity, role and values; and to propose imaginative ways of supporting the major national institution for which they work.

Renewing pride in public service

A major factor in restoring hope is the search for a common identity as public servants. The massive reorganization and right-sizing of government, no matter how effective in meeting fiscal and efficiency objectives, have had significant human costs. One result has been that many public servants now identify more with their profession and their local workplace than they do with their departments and with the public service as a whole. Their pride is attached to that with which they can identify.

This is a phenomenon which appears at all levels.

- Those involved in the communications function, human resources specialists, scientific groups, administrative support staff and middle managers, to name a few, recognize the benefits of addressing a common cause.
- Assistant deputy ministers seek to operate, and to be supported, as a community and as a corporate resource.
- The deputy minister (DM) community has long been a community, and is so supported.

At the central agency “corporate” level there has been significant progress. This has been complemented by the emergence of a fuller sense of the “corporation”: the DMs collectively as a community, together with groups of departments, functional communities and regions, are taking ownership, showing joint leadership, and working together where there are common interests and concerns.

Many creative actions to support people are coming from these groups. This is partly due to the opportunity of working outside the vertical lines of authority and accountability, but it also reflects the binding power of the concept of “corporate community.”

This sense of community is nourished by the overarching commitment of public servants to the service of elected representatives and Canadians as citizens/clients.

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| <p>By building on the strength of community that exists among various</p> <hr style="width: 30%; margin: 10px 0;"/> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">We have begun a process of rebuilding a common identity and sense of community.</p> <hr style="width: 30%; margin: 10px 0;"/> | <p>functional and regional groups, a common sense of identity is being rebuilt a small amount at a time. An overall sense of community, which simply would not be possible if attempted at the level of the institution, is slowly beginning to re-emerge.</p> |
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Taking charge

While it is not in the tradition of professionals to admit to a lack of control over their own situation, the extent to which individuals have been looking to others to “fix things” is remarkable. There has been a general view that those in higher authority, particularly the next level up, should have all the answers and are the only ones who have the capacity to set things right.

Action on *La Relève* has highlighted the need for public servants at all levels to take charge of their own future, and for the institution to support individuals in doing this, even though some of the most

pressing issues are someone else's to solve. Beyond this there is an important challenge to leadership throughout the public service (for leaders are at all levels and in all workplaces). As *La Relève* has emphasized, a simple shift from the question "What will someone else do for me?" to "As a leader, what can I do to support those who look to me?" is what is required.

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| <p>_____</p> <p>Action on <i>La Relève</i> has highlighted the need for public servants, at all levels, to take charge of their own future and for the institution to support individuals in doing this.</p> <p>_____</p> | |
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One key outcome of *La Relève* has been the realization, yet again, that many of the flexibilities needed to make this shift are already there. For example, the report *Valuing Our People*, resulting from discussions with over 600 administrative and support staff across the country, outlines 75 practical things which can be done to prepare the Workforce of the Future. Managers already have the flexibility to deal with over two thirds of these recommendations. Examples include recommendations to involve employees in developing action plans in each workplace, to improve public accountability by giving clients report cards to complete on the service they receive, to use plain language to communicate with the public, to have managers support the achievement of employees' annual training plans, to allow local offices to customize reward and recognition programs to meet their needs, and to introduce joint union-management training sessions.

La Relève has taught us not to ask permission to exercise the power and authority that we already have. To do so only deprives employees of achieving greater success. The public service, and particularly its most senior members, is responsible for communicating to leaders at all levels how to use and delegate their flexible authorities and for changing those authorities when appropriate.

A bias for action

Through *La Relève* we have learned that public servants do not want to just hear about change — they want to see how it affects them positively as individuals. There is impatience with rhetoric that is not accompanied by action. There is a growing belief that doing nothing is not an alternative, and would in any case be irresponsible. There is enthusiastic support for the *La Relève* bias for action — for trying new things, keeping those which work and discarding those which do not.

Expanding the circle

It is evident from experience that while commitment from the top is a necessary condition for things to happen, it is by no means sufficient. While top-down action is important, it is equally important to have input, commitment and buy-in at all levels.

To expand the circle of those committed to making a difference,

The challenge has been to expand the circle and foster an understanding of

La Relève throughout the public service.

La Relève has consciously put the emphasis on departments, functional communities, regions, specific workplaces, and particular interests throughout the public service, especially in critical support areas. Action to address the issues of the emerging workplace need to be tailored to the dimensions of that workplace.

One size does not fit all. The context and needs of public servants in one region are not those in another and some of the preoccupations in the regions differ from those in national headquarters. Many of the lessons learned in changing the way we serve citizens such as consultation and the creation of partnerships can be applied effectively to managing the public service.

Dialogue and communication

Actions are important, but so too is the method of communication. Efforts to involve others and to expand the circle of understanding and commitment require an immense effort at informing and listening to those who might potentially be part of the circle.

A key test for *La Relève* has been to communicate its intentions and objectives, and the actions taken in response to feedback. Over the course of the past year, we made some observations.

- No one method of communication (even of the modern electronic kind) is sufficient in and of itself.
- If the effort is not made to engage in dialogue and to seek input through discussion, the other methods of communication will have limited impact and little will change.

- Changes are needed: in the mind-set that taking the time to engage in dialogue detracts from the prime objective of production and output; and in the results-oriented culture which shuns the notion that we need to invest in people.

Managers and leaders throughout the public service are learning

Giving employees voice is one of the cornerstones in rebuilding the institution.

that the investment of time and effort in giving employees voice, in dialogue and in listening, is one of the key cornerstones in rebuilding the institution.

Supporting learning and development

As the world of work changes, and as a premium is placed on the competencies to operate in ever more complex and ambiguous environments, acquiring and retaining the necessary abilities and skills will become an even greater challenge both for individuals and for the institution.

La Relève has effectively put a spotlight on the issue of learning.

La Relève has put a spotlight on the issue of learning.

It is extremely encouraging that it is precisely on the issue of investing in people that consensus is emerging, particularly in the area of learning and development, and where the more innovative activities are taking place.

Training related to operations and business activities is no longer the principal focus. The focus is shifting to one which

- Encompasses the more holistic needs of individuals, teams and entire organizations

- Supports the acquisition of on-the-job experience through a variety of assignments and different challenges and learning that is experience-based and outside the classroom
- Supports implementation of many different development and bridging programs throughout the system, which provide an immediate and direct response to a real need

Much has been written about learning organizations and lifelong learning. The response to *La Relève* throughout the public service suggests that significant strides are being made in this direction. If the approach to learning is imbedded at the level of the workplace and based on real learning opportunities of immediate relevance to individuals, the flexibility needed to adapt to ever changing challenges can only be enhanced.

Fostering Leadership

We have learned through dialogue around *La Relève* that the rebuilding and repositioning of the Public Service of Canada requires the fostering and support of leaders who can function successfully in an increasingly complex and interdependent world. The message is strong and clear from all levels in the public service: there is a deep thirst for the kind of leadership that will help us flourish in the new environment.

Traditional hierarchical leadership, both in the private and public

sectors, is less effective than ever, and in many instances simply does not work. It is being replaced by values-based leadership which emphasizes trust, collaboration, inclusiveness and power sharing.

Values-based leadership emphasizes trust, collaboration, inclusiveness and power sharing.

Effective public service leaders must combine integrity with loyalty, be committed to the public interest, and believe strongly in the rule of law in support of democratic institutions. They need a sense of giving to their country and contributing to its future.

The public service is enhancing the measures necessary to foster the kind of effective leaders needed at all levels. At the corporate level, several important initiatives are under way. The Accelerated Executive Development Program has been launched and the Collective Management regime for ADMs is being introduced. In addition, the Career Assignment Program and the Management Trainee Program are undergoing significant redesign to align them with the newly defined executive leadership competencies. Departmentally, leadership competencies and development programs are being put in place to strengthen management skills and capacity at all levels.

Conclusion

La Relève is fostering a spirit of rebuilding and renewal in the public service. Centrally and collectively there are some 16 major projects and initiatives under way that support this renewal. In addition, departments, several of the functional communities and the federal council in each region have identified some 1,200 actions in support of *La Relève*.

The following chapter summarizes the progress by central agencies, departments, functional communities and regional councils in implementing *La Relève*. The document, *First Progress Report on La Relève: A Commitment to Action — Detailed Reports*, contains their submissions.

Work is continuing on all these fronts so that we have a public service human resources management framework that is both robust and flexible and that is capable of sustaining the public service for years to come.

All of the projects, initiatives and actions represent the progress to date on the overall corporate agenda. Equally, all are key in aiding the component elements of the public service to move forward even further in rebuilding and renewing the institution.

II

Progress on *La Relève: A Commitment to Action*

Introduction

Progress in meeting the *La Relève* challenge cannot be measured

The *La Relève* challenge is to address the link between people issues and the requirements of our mandates.

simply as the sum of the individual plans and reports from central agencies, departments, functional communities and federal regional councils. What has emerged is that the most effective way to address

human resources management issues is through a corporate and collective approach which emphasizes horizontal partnerships, collaboration and good communications. This chapter represents our progress on the overall broad *La Relève* agenda.

Departmental, Functional Community and Regional Council Initiatives

As the October 1997 document *La Relève: A Commitment to Action* noted, the central drivers for *La Relève* exist in the action plans of the departments, functional communities and federal regional councils. Their original action plans set out over 1,200 departmental initiatives. In addition, seven professional — or functional — communities confirmed and complemented the issues identified by departments and provided information on their own challenges, needs and planned actions. These functional communities included communications, comptrollership, human

resources, information, policy, record keeping and information management, and science and technology. Federal regional councils also contributed their unique perspectives to *La Relève*. The impacts of these initiatives were anticipated to be direct, relatively immediate and highly visible.

In reviewing the original action plans several common themes emerged.

- Culture, Values and Vision
- Organizational Health
- Pride and Recognition
- Demographics and Workforce Composition
- Employment Equity and Official Languages
- Learning and Training
- Development Programs
- Recruitment and Staffing
- Classification
- Communications and Consultation
- Performance Measurement and Accountability
- Regional Mobility and Assignment Programs
- Workforce of the Future

Initiatives are moving from analysis and planning to the initial implementation stage.

The departments, functional communities and regional councils which had submitted *La Relève* action plans early in 1997 were asked to report. They all show progress under these themes. Most initiatives are under

way and are moving from analysis and planning to the initial implementation stage.

Some departments report horizontal sharing or interchange activity on common issues. For instance, six departments have formed a partnership to provide career opportunities for policy officers through assignment rotations. Moreover, most departments are

pursuing opportunities for additional interdepartmental and horizontal sharing, for example, on the development of competency profiles, the conduct of employee surveys, or the undertaking of demographic analyses of employees. Horizontality is also a major concern in the reports of the regional councils. Likewise, functional communities have seized the *La Relève* opportunity to advance progress in areas of common and cross-departmental interests such as interdepartmental mobility programs.

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| <p>Functional communities have made impressive strides.</p> | <p>time. Many, in co-operation with their respective central agencies, are pushing the limits of authority and developing new or expanded innovative tools.</p> |
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All the communities situate their progress on *La Relève* as part of a continuing effort to understand and clarify their changing roles in an evolving public sector environment. Some also touch on the changing and expanded nature of their community.

The regional councils note common progress in certain activities.

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| <p>There is significant movement in regions on establishing interdepartmental or intergovernmental exchanges of personnel.</p> | <p>There is significant movement in establishing interdepartmental or intergovernmental exchanges of personnel and knowledge; interdepartmental training initiatives; and regional human resources committees dedicated in whole or in part to <i>La Relève</i> initiatives.</p> |
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First Progress Report on La Relève: A Commitment to Action — Detailed Reports documents the progress the departments, functional communities and federal regional councils have made in addressing the *La Relève* challenge.

Central Agency Projects and Collective Support Initiatives

The term central agency projects refers to actions and projects undertaken on a public service-wide basis to ensure that the human resources management framework is able to support *La Relève* priorities and that public service-wide human resources programs are positioned for the benefit of everyone. These projects are by and large the responsibility of the key central agencies — the Treasury Board Secretariat, the Public Service Commission, the Canadian Centre for Management Development and the Privy Council Office. Collective support initiatives are those activities which involve collaborative action among a grouping of departments, or by a collection of departments and central agencies. They bring together key stakeholders on human resources issues which cannot be addressed individually by departments, either because the initiatives encompass more than a single department or because departments lack the necessary tools or statutory authorities.

In the October 1997 report *La Relève: A Commitment to Action*,

La Relève: A Commitment To Action represents the collective commitment by deputy ministers to make *La Relève* happen.

deputy ministers set out their collective responsibility for making *La Relève* happen. That report included an agenda comprising eight major corporate

projects, and another eight areas which required collective action by two or more of the stakeholders.

The report established the foundation for important work on adjusting the public service human resources framework and for investments in the workforce. This included human resources management issues such as classification and staffing reform; recruitment, retention and employment equity; and workplace health. Notable progress has been made on all of these fronts.

Classification and staffing reform

Matching people and their skills with the work to be done is an

Matching people and skills with the work to be done is an enormous and ongoing challenge for any large, complex organization.

enormous and continuous challenge for any large, complex organization. Both an effective and fair work classification system and a robust merit-based staffing process for selecting the most competent individuals for the work to be

performed are essential to a well-functioning, politically neutral and professional public service.

The size and complexity of the Public Service of Canada, including its multitude of different business lines, has meant that over time the classification process has become cumbersome, complicated, and a barrier to flexible career development and mobility. Equally, the staffing process has become time-consuming, inflexible, rules-bound, even litigious. It is not surprising, therefore, that the reform of both the classification and staffing systems in the public service has been the subject of numerous examinations over the years.

La Relève has highlighted the need to move more expeditiously in these areas. Without reform in these key human resources management support systems, much of what departments and functional groups need to do in order to support people and provide them with enhanced opportunities for career advancement will be impeded.

The Universal Classification Standard. At the corporate level, implementation of a single, gender-neutral job evaluation system based on public service values is well under way in concert with departments, employees and employee organizations. This Universal Classification Standard (UCS), when completed, will provide a simplified, more transparent and broader-based system for evaluating work.

Treasury Board ministers endorsed UCS on November 6, 1997 and provided funding for departments to complete work description writing and evaluation. Work descriptions for functional streams of work also are under way by several interdepartmental committees. And the Treasury Board Secretariat (TBS) has completed the first two in a series of departmental readiness guides to assist departments in establishing work plans and to support consistency across the public service. At the departmental level, preparations for the UCS implementation are advancing and conversion is on track for 1999.

To sustain this momentum, investment in technology is necessary, specifically in automated work descriptions. The TBS has established an intranet site which will contain standard, interdepartmental sample work descriptions and communications information.

Mobility through intergroup deployments. One key element of mobility has already been put in place through the decision by the Public Service Commission (PSC) to allow what is known as intergroup deployments. This means that within certain guidelines, and with an individual's consent, an

Gaining different kinds of experiences and responsibilities is a major part of career development.

employee may be deployed to a different occupational group at a comparable level. The new regulation came into effect in July 1997 and covers 74 occupational groups. It helps managers meet their

business needs, especially in responding to emergencies. For employees, the regulation opens up a broader range of career possibilities, promotes opportunities for re-skilling and acquiring new competencies, particularly for underrepresented groups as well as surplus or other priority employees affected by downsizing. The regulation also supports continuous learning by employees.

Broader staffing reform. Broader reform of staffing means

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| <p>Reform means streamlining staffing, and providing managers with more authority and responsibility.</p> | <p>streamlining departmental staffing operations and providing managers with more staffing authority and responsibility,</p> |
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consistent with the public interest. Departments will manage their internal staffing up to the Executive (EX) level and be responsible for results. The PSC will become more of a facilitator, assisting departments with their new responsibilities and will take on a more effective oversight role. At the EX level the process will be streamlined and performance standards put in place to enhance service to departments.

Over fiscal year 1998–99, the PSC will be seeking to maximize the flexibility and efficiency of the staffing and recourse systems within the existing legislative framework, to increase mobility between departments and with other sectors, and to more effectively safeguard public service values.

This approach to staffing reform is being implemented in three broad phases, the first of which is now under way. The next two are scheduled to be completed within fiscal year 1998–99.

The three phases are

1. Delegation of additional staffing authorities and removal of many conditions currently attached to delegated staffing
2. Customized approaches with departments and appropriate accountability frameworks
3. Reform of the staffing policy and regulatory framework

In phase one, many conditions have been removed from existing delegation agreements with departments, such as prescriptions regarding areas of selection. And the PSC has delegated new authorities to departments, for example the appointment of casual employees. All deputy ministers and public service union leaders, at both the national and component levels, have been invited to consultations on further development of new staffing systems.

The PSC has also proposed a new approach to recourse, emphasizing alternative dispute resolution and distinguishing between promotion of the public interest and protection of individual rights. It is working with the other central agencies, the Personnel Renewal Council, and the federal regional councils to upgrade the skills and competencies of the human resources community so that members can take on the more strategic role required of them by staffing reform.

Phases two and three of staffing reform will run concurrently during 1998. Departments and unions have been invited to contribute to the review of regulations governing staffing and the development of proposals to eliminate or revise those of a prescriptive nature rather than an enabling nature. This work will be done during the first quarter, and the PSC will look to implementing the proposals that are accepted by October 1998. During the development phase, the PSC will sponsor a series of best-practices forums to promote cross-pollination of innovative ideas and to avoid or reduce

duplication of effort. At the same time, it will develop a streamlined but responsible regulatory framework for staffing based on the proposals that come forward.

In parallel with the implementation of the UCS, and in consultation with the Treasury Board Secretariat, departments and unions, the PSC will examine a new definition of promotion based on competencies rather than salary and will examine new standards for employee assessment and selection.

These reforms will have immediate application in other renewal initiatives such as recruitment, diversity, retention and corporate development programs. The new consolidated regulations and policy framework are expected to be in place by April 1999.

Recruitment, retention and employment equity

As departments emerge from an extended period of downsizing and reorganization and begin

There is a heightened need for human resources strategies to enhance the retention of current employees and a return to focused external recruitment in areas where there are skill shortages and gaps.

focusing on their business planning requirements for the next three years, there is a heightened need for human resources strategies to enhance the retention of current employees and to return to external recruitment in areas where there are serious skill shortages. And it is through

recruitment, fundamentally, that demographic imbalances and structural issues relating to employment equity can most effectively be addressed. Initiatives in these areas have already begun.

Progress is being made on ways and means of encouraging and supporting the retention of existing staff, especially through training and development measures, in support of the present and future needs of the public service.

Recruitment in some critical areas is also under way. For example, the PSC is undertaking a targeted program to recruit needed computer science employees for departments.

In addition, demographic analysis of a number of other functional communities, which are considered to be seriously at risk, is being completed on a priority basis to support recruitment strategies specific to the communities' needs. Immediate efforts are focusing on three groups: the Treasury Board Secretariat and the Public Service Commission are examining the EX community; deputy ministers of departments involved in inspection/regulatory activities are proceeding collectively with demographic analysis for this community; and, with in-depth analysis sufficiently complete for the science and technology community, an action plan for recruitment in this group is now being developed.

Finally, to fulfill their mandates, departments require a sound knowledge base on the skills, competencies, and demographics of their workforce. With the assistance of Statistics Canada, work is proceeding with the four largest departments, which constitute over 50 percent of the public service (National Defence, Revenue Canada, Human Resources Development Canada, Public Works and Government Services Canada), to model and test the demographic analysis necessary to support retention, recruitment and employment equity strategies by all departments. This demographic analysis modelling initiative will also help to rebuild the human resources analytical capacity in these departments. The methodology will be shared with the remaining departments, all of which have been asked, over time but at an early date, to undertake a demographic analysis relevant to their situation.

Workplace health

As constant change has become a reality in the workplace, it is important to take stock of the impacts on the workforce in general, and on employees individually.

Many departments and agencies have commenced, or plan to

It is necessary to take stock of the impacts of change on the workforce and on individual employees. Surveys provide a “pulse” of the workforce, upon which change can be benchmarked or measured as organizations continue to evolve.

undertake, employee surveys of one kind or another. These surveys provide departmental managers and employees with the “pulse” of their workforce, upon which change can be

benchmarked or measured, as organizations and the corporation as a whole continue to evolve.

Over the coming months, the Treasury Board Secretariat will be working with Statistics Canada and other departments to design a set of key questions to measure employee perceptions and changing attitudes about the workplace. Subsequently, deputy ministers will examine the need for a government-wide survey or census to build on the individual efforts of departments and agencies.

Compensation and collective bargaining

Despite the dedication and professionalism of public servants, the long period of wage and salary restraint has affected the ability of the public service to retain the knowledge and skills needed in the new world of work.

After six years of wage and salary controls, the government announced in 1996 a return to collective bargaining. As of February 1998, six collective agreements had been completed and ratified. Other collective agreements are being negotiated actively — 20 ongoing sets of negotiations, eight of which are at various stages of third-party assistance.

Compensation is a key factor sustaining employee morale.

In February 1997, the President of the Treasury Board created the Advisory Committee on Senior Level Retention and Compensation. The committee made public its first report on February 12, 1998. The initial recommendations focused on concerns considered most pressing for the management of the executive cadre, namely, the need for continuing cultural and human resources renewal, and competitive compensation. On February 20, the government announced its acceptance of the recommendations. It will be moving on their implementation starting April 1998.

Central to progress will also be the review of compensation policy and structures which must be ready for the Universal Classification Standard implementation.

Pay equity is another important element of the government's compensation policy. Resolving outstanding issues is of importance to many current and former public servants and to the successful achievement of many *La Relève* goals. The employer is committed to pay equity.

Finally, public service pension reform will be another critical element in the government's public service compensation policy. As announced by the President of the Treasury Board on February 27, 1998, the employer will consult with pension plan member representatives on a new joint management approach for the plan. The objective will be to ensure the long-term sustainability and security of the program.

Workforce of the Future

One unique central focus has been the particular emphasis which

The Workforce of the Future report *Valuing our People* has played a key role in determining the follow-up *La Relève* actions needed by the administrative and other support groups.

deputy ministers put on the challenges faced by employees in administrative support functions, through the Workforce of the Future consultations. This exercise, sponsored by Human Resources Development Canada, encompassed over 600 employees from all

regions and departments. They attended workshops held in Vancouver, Winnipeg, Toronto, Montreal, Halifax and the National Capital Region.

The consultation process represented a remarkable degree of openness and enthusiasm. There was consistency in the views expressed across Canada on a number of major themes. The consultations highlighted that public service employees are anxious to understand the future direction of the institution and to play an active role in shaping its future, with a focus on high quality service to the Canadian public. They also revealed that there is a deep thirst for leadership, for vision and for trust. These feelings indicate that there is an opportunity to tap a potential well-spring of enthusiasm for positive change.

The report presented some 75 recommendations — presented as a menu of options for action. The majority of the recommendations can be implemented by managers or departments and agencies. Others are corporate-wide initiatives that require action by central agencies working with departments, agencies and unions.

The resulting report, *Valuing our People*, has played a key role in determining what follow-up actions are needed for *La Relève*.

Corporate development programs

In order to ensure an internal supply of talent at different levels and

The corporate development programs are designed to meet the needs of the organization as well as to help individuals in their career development. They are complementary to normal career progression and do not replace it.

of different kinds, many public and private sector organizations have put in place a variety of employee development programs. These are designed to meet the needs of the organization as well as to help individuals in their career development. Such programs are

complementary to normal career progression and do not replace it.

Most federal departments have their own internal development programs — some focus on particular professional and business needs, while others are aimed at enhancing overall management skills. Recently a number of bridging programs have been put in place by departments to help employees in those support functions which are changing or disappearing to acquire the skills and knowledge that permit them to transfer to different functions in higher demand.

Responding to the high level of demand expected over the coming years for experienced individuals at the senior executive levels, deputy ministers determined that priority attention needed to be given corporately to supporting qualified high potential executives in acquiring the learning and experience needed to manage and lead in an ever more complex environment. In January 1997, the Public Service Commission, on behalf of the public service, launched two new programs: the Accelerated Executive Development Program (AEXDP) and the Assistant Deputy Minister Pre-Qualified Pool (ADM PQP). Over 15 percent of the Executive (EX) Group applied for the two programs (460 applicants altogether). Within six months,

more than half of the 20 retained candidates in the ADM PQP were placed, and most of the 51 successful AEXDP candidates had begun their “stretch” assignments.

Allowing applicants to self-identify — a new approach for development programs — enlarged the field of candidates. The programs featured a thorough and rigorous set of specially-developed assessment tools based on 14 public service leadership competencies, and substantial participation by deputy ministers in the selection processes. The demographic profile of the applicants allowed for a good representation among the retained applicants.

The AEXDP learning component was developed by the Canadian Centre for Management Development (CCMD) in close collaboration with the PSC. It utilizes modern executive learning approaches and is composed of personal learning plans, corporate and tailored elements and individual coaching and mentoring.

The second round of the ADM PQP was launched in January 1998 (with EX equivalents included), and the next AEXDP is expected to be launched in the fall of 1998.

In addition, a collective management regime for assistant deputy ministers (ADMs) was introduced in July 1997, as a way of providing for better development of ADMs as a community to ensure they are prepared to respond to the challenges of the future.

A committee of deputy ministers provided guidance to the TBS and the PSC on the architecture, design and development of corporate development programs for EX feeder groups. They developed clear policy direction for the redesign of the Career Assignment Program (CAP), and improvements to the

Development programs for EX feeder groups are being updated.

Management Trainee Program (MTP), which includes their alignment with the design of the two new EX programs and redesign by the CCMD of the learning components.

Future corporate development will focus on an evaluation framework with input from participants, refining bridging mechanisms for entry into the EX Group, and determining if expanded programs or substreams will adequately respond to the needs of specialist communities.

Learning

There is considerable change in the approach to training and development in the public service, an approach that invests in the employees' future and values experimentation and innovation as being critical to the fulfilment of the public service mission. To achieve that objective, the public service is overcoming learning barriers,

The public service is moving toward a culture that views investment in training and development of employees as mission critical.

learning from best practices, moving to make learning portable using methodologies to facilitate the learning process, and developing an infrastructure which supports the development and sharing of new ideas.

Accomplishments to date include the sharing of training resource centres with departments in seven of 10 regions, with work continuing in the remaining three regions. The PSC launched the Internet-based Learning Resource Network for

The Internet-based Learning Resource Network has been launched for departmental sharing of information on learning and education.

departmental sharing of information on learning and education, including learning products, and networking and accessing tools in support of career management.

The Canadian Centre for Management Development, whose research plan targets citizen-centred service delivery, uses a network of workshops of senior federal, provincial and local government officials and invited experts to identify issues, research priorities and action plans to accelerate progress in this area. Another network, on the theme of Revitalizing the Public Service: A Governance Vision for the Public Service, brings together an international network of renowned researchers with a network of senior public officials to conduct research and provide a learning experience for future leaders of the public service. Yet another initiative included the launching of regular meetings of public service leaders to generate learning and share strategic intelligence, and the establishment of ADM networks in fields of science, compliance and regulation and alternate service delivery.

Learning advisory panels of senior public servants have been

Learning advisory panels have been created for communities of middle managers, comptrollership, human resources and communications.

established to provide strategic direction and advice on learning needs and activities for the communities of middle managers, comptrollership, human resources and communications. The Advisory Committee on Information Management is playing a similar

role for the information technology community.

There are several activities and initiatives that have been identified as requiring particular action or attention. The PSC plans to organize a round table and a “virtual conference” for middle managers on their broader responsibilities and roles as public servants. The feasibility of developing a TBS Web site to disseminate information concerning bench marking on best practices will be assessed.

Career mobility

Greater flexibility to permit easier movement of employees between

Greater flexibility to permit easier movement of employees between jobs, departments, locations, levels of government and sectors of the economy, is essential to modernizing the public service.

jobs, departments, locations, levels of government and sectors of the economy is essential to modernizing the public service. All relevant policies are being reviewed in terms of their mobility provisions, and various

models that facilitate mobility are being examined. A significant development for career mobility within the public service are the PSC regulations permitting intergroup deployment outlined earlier.

Mobility between departments and between regions are priority issues for the PSC regional directors and the federal regional councils. As noted in many of the departmental, functional community and regional council progress reports, considerable work is being done by these bodies to increase interdepartmental mobility.

To facilitate and increase movement between governments and between economic sectors, the federal government has signed agreements with Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland, New Brunswick, Alberta, and the Northwest Territories. Consultations with the other provinces and Yukon Territory are under way and are expected to be finalized soon.

In addition, a tripartite initiative of the CCMD, the PCO, and the PSC was completed to revitalize the Visiting Fellows Program for Federal Executives with Canadian Universities. All universities have been surveyed to catalogue potential opportunities, and five candidates for assignments have been identified for the first year.

Under the Interchange Canada program, departments have authority for exchanges below the EX Group, with other governments and with the private and parapublic sectors. The TBS and the PSC are considering expanding Interchange Canada to include international assignments.

As well, some departments and functional communities have instituted increased mobility initiatives, particularly intradepartmental or portfolio assignments. Some, like Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Environment Canada, Veterans Affairs and the science and technology and communications communities, have instituted broader programs aimed at interdepartmental, intergovernmental or extragovernmental assignments.

Pride and recognition in the public service

Fostering pride in the federal public service, both as a profession and

Fostering pride in the federal public service, both as a profession and an institution, is central to renewal efforts.

an institution, is central to renewal efforts as the Public Service of Canada responds to the requirements of its elected leaders and the needs of citizens. This factor is linked directly to human resources investment initiatives, particularly those

related to improving the ability to retain existing staff and attract highly talented recruits. A world-class, professional, and non-partisan Public Service of Canada underlies continued good government in Canada and supports the performance of the Canadian private sector here and around the world.

In July 1997, a committee of deputy ministers assessing the issue of pride recommended a framework grouped around three elements: (1) enhancing pride by public servants in the public service as a profession and institution, (2) making the public and key stakeholder groups more aware of the importance and accomplishments of the

federal public service, and (3) revising corporate and departmental awards and recognition programs to integrate these into the management culture.

In their progress report the deputy ministers noted considerable

Canada is served well by its public service, and the effort and dedication it exhibits in meeting the needs of citizens and in building partnerships among governments and other sectors of society.

achievements on these fronts. For example, the political leadership has become more engaged in promoting the importance of a professional public service to Canada. Senior public service leaders have begun to speak out: some deputy ministers have undertaken interviews with major daily

newspapers to provide information on the role and future of their departments, and the achievements of their employees; several departments have launched showcase displays of their programs and services.

In addition, a large number of departments have reported that they have or are in the process of revitalizing their pride and recognition programs to correspond with the values of *La Relève*. In support of these efforts, the TBS is revising its service-wide policy on awards and recognition.

Looking ahead, the deputy ministers are moving to broaden the

Senior private sector leaders are commenting publicly on their belief in a strong and competent public service and on the valuable role professional public servants play in ensuring the long-term growth and prosperity of the country.

dialogue within the public service, to encourage departments and agencies in their efforts to publicly showcase their roles and successes, and to support private

sector leaders in enhancing the public's knowledge of and pride in the role played by the public service. In this regard the deputy ministers were pleased to note that recently several private sector leaders such as the Vice-Chairman, Royal Bank of Canada; the Chief Executive Officer, Unilever Canada Ltd.; and the Vice-Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, NOVA Corporation, have commented publicly on their belief in a strong and competent public service and on the valuable role professional public servants play in ensuring the long-term growth and prosperity of the country.

Values and ethics

Two important lessons have been learnt to date about the values and ethics of the public service: (1) they are part of everything that the public service does, and (2) the issues and challenges are timeless — there are no end points, only milestones. The Deputy Minister Task Force on the

Values and ethics are part of everything that we do, the issues and the challenges are timeless, and values are at the heart of the renewal of the public service and at the core of taking pride in being a public servant.

Values and Ethics of the Public Service (December 1996) explored a wide range of real and pragmatic issues which raised values and ethics concerns in the minds of many public servants, including issues of responsibility and accountability, the future of the public service employment contract, the place of new public management in government, ethical issues associated with new relations with the private sector and new approaches to people management, including accountability for values. That report began an exploration of these issues, leaving specific recommendations and decisions to come after a period of more in-depth consultation. It examined public service values such as integrity, rule of law, loyalty to the public interest, accountability, respect and fairness. And it concluded that they are

indeed strong. However, it found that there is a sense of malaise, disillusionment and confusion on the part of many public servants, as an overlay on a deep idealism and commitment.

The *Fourth Annual Report to the Prime Minister on the Public Service of Canada* signalled that values were at the heart of the renewal of the public service and *La Relève* itself, and not only should a dialogue on values be encouraged throughout the public service, but the entire approach to *La Relève* should be characterized by the technique of dialogue and by involving everyone.

Deputy ministers, heads of central agencies, and federal regional councils are leading this dialogue. To date, the Deputy Minister Champion on Values and Ethics and others have engaged in a dialogue encompassing over 20 departments, most federal regional councils, heads of agencies, a wide range of CCMD course participants and a number of groups outside the government. In addition, many departments have included consideration of a departmental ethics regime in their internal deliberations, by focusing on real issues to discern their values implications. And to support these efforts, CCMD prepared and the *La Relève* Task Force published the *Discussion Guide on Values and Ethics* in the fall of 1997.

Moreover, as other committees of deputy ministers, such as those on Pride and Recognition and the Workforce of the Future, pursued their work, they confirmed a thirst on the part of public servants to discuss the most basic issues of what the public service stands for and how public servants should deal with one another. For example, the deputy ministers examining the issues of pride and recognition concluded that values are at the core of taking pride in being a public servant, since values are based on the public service mission, provide a sense of meaning, and help to define what the public service is all about.

Progress is proceeding also on other aspects of this issue. The CCMD and the PSC have incorporated values and ethics in their core programs, and many departments have done the same. The TBS and the PSC undertook major exercises to understand the implications of the report for their responsibilities. By the end of 1997, the Treasury Board Secretariat was building values into their seminal work on modern comptrollership, business plans, alternative service delivery and performance management, areas that require greater clarity in regards to the alignment of traditional values and management values such as results, efficiency and innovation.

III

Continuing the Momentum

Much has happened in the year since the identification of the “quiet crisis” and the launch of

The key challenge is to keep moving from commitment, through action, to concrete results.

La Relève — and much remains to be done. The key challenge is to keep moving from commitment, through action, to concrete results. The process of change has begun in earnest and will not stop.

The richness of the experiences by the various communities of the Public Service of Canada and the valuable lessons they have learned is a source of inspiration and guidance throughout the public service, stimulating the innovations required for the future. We have learned many things together — particularly the high cost of losing sight of the people who make up the public service , and of not putting in place appropriate feedback mechanisms. We have also begun to identify the kind of leadership needed to set matters right and the support mechanisms required to foster such leadership.

Where Do We Go From Here?

While the process of change has begun in earnest much also remains to be done. The momentum must be sustained over at least the next three years before we can say that change in the public service has really taken root.

And how will we know whether we are making progress and whether we have succeeded? What goals should we set for ourselves against which to measure *La Relève*?

Modern human resources management

The first goal, underlying all the others, must be the modernization of the public service human resources management framework. This will be an urgent priority over the next two years.

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| Modernizing of the human resources management framework is an urgent priority. |
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La Relève has highlighted that the way people are managed will be one of the crucial factors in the performance of the public service of the future. While a great deal has been accomplished in the past year, we have only begun the task of reforming the human resources function. First and foremost there is the challenge of changing our leadership culture so that public service leaders internalize human resources management as a management function. In support of this, the human resources community is focusing on renewing itself, to become a strategic partner with managers.

Various instruments such as 360-degree feedback and employee surveys measure our progress in entrenching this change in management culture.

At the corporate level, central agencies are responding to the challenge of providing leadership. Progress at this level will be measured by the degree to which the necessary reforms to staffing are instituted, the classification system is simplified, the barriers to geographic and organizational mobility are removed, the unique challenges in serving the executive community are addressed, the departmental and collective initiatives are supported, and a proactive approach to external recruitment is encouraged.

All of these steps toward modernizing human resources management are compatible with and supportive of the merit principle. And all are prerequisites to rebuilding and renewing the public service.

Addressing the demographic challenge

A second goal is to ensure the public service more fully reflects the Canadian population it serves.

No institution exists in a steady state, and the public service is no exception. After years of retrenchment, the inevitable has happened, namely, the current demographic skew and increasing gap between the profile of the Canadian population and that of the public service. While the detailed analysis now under way will enable us to define strategies to rectify the situation, even casual observation suggests the extent of the challenge.

- Early concern about the demographic dynamics of the executive group resulted in focused action on leadership development. It became evident, however, that the situation is widespread and differs depending on the department, community or region.
- The challenge involves not just age distributions and skill sets but also how well the public service represents the Canadian population of today. To serve citizens/clients from a variety of ethno-cultural and linguistic backgrounds requires a public service that more accurately reflects the diversity of the public it serves.

La Relève has helped us focus on understanding the demographic profile and evolution of the public service. As the

La Relève has helped us focus on understanding the demographic profile and evolution of the public service.

demographic analysis is completed by departments, recruitment and retention strategies that provide a judicious balance between reskilling current employees

and revitalizing the hiring process will be put in place. This will contribute to the rejuvenation of the public service and make it more representative of the Canadian population as we move to the new millennium.

Service to Canadians and their elected representatives

A third overarching goal is to foster a public service that is

Fostering a public service that is committed to the service of democratic institutions and Canadians as citizens/clients.

committed to servicing democratic institutions and Canadians as citizens/clients. Over the next three years, the public service must make demonstrable progress toward entrenching an orientation to service and

an accountability for results.

A commitment to the service of citizens must be rooted in the basic values of the organization and in the culture and attitudes of leaders and employees. It can be demonstrated in the way the public service engages citizens and stakeholders in the design of service delivery approaches. The openness of the public service to partnerships and horizontal co-operation across boundaries, whether between departments, different jurisdictions or with other sectors also shows a commitment to service.

A commitment to service can be assessed through Canadians' respect for their public service. This commitment can also be measured through the satisfaction of those receiving services — whether the services are accessible, designed to encompass the perspective of citizens, provided in the appropriate language, and administered fairly.

Implementing the recommendations of the Treasury Board's Independent Review Panel on Modernization of Comptrollership will complement and reinforce the commitment to service by promoting an attitude of management by results in the public service.

The work environment

The fourth goal is to build a workplace where employees are enabled and encouraged to perform to the best of their abilities.

In knowledge-based service organizations like the public service, employees are the wealth and the key source of excellence. High performance depends on certain basic workplace factors: clarity in the role of the organization within the public sector; clarity as to where employees fit within the organization and what results are expected of them; an organizational culture supportive of participation, innovation and risk management; delegation of authority to the appropriate level; provision of necessary tools; and a fair regime of rewards and recognition.

Valuing Our People, the report by public servants on the Advisory Committee on the Workplace of the Future, sets out a wide range of examples of how such an environment can be supported.

Employee surveys at the departmental and corporate levels will also measure progress on creating a better work environment in the public service.

Supporting learning and development

A fifth goal is to ensure that the public service has the skills required to support the changing role of government.

As noted in the first chapter of this report, new ways of working demand new skills and competencies. Working in a global village, in the world of information, and in new governance and partnership arrangements places a premium on competencies related to building partnerships, teamwork, and motivating staff and others.

New competencies and skills are required.

La Relève has effectively put a spotlight on the issue of learning. It is precisely on the issue of investing in people that the highest consensus has emerged. The work by the Public Service Commission's various learning advisory panels, the changes by central agencies and departments to their training and development policies and programs as well as work by the functional communities are helping to establish the benchmarks for measuring progress against this goal.

La Relève has put a spotlight on learning and development.

Leadership

The sixth goal is to ensure that public service leaders exercise their roles in a manner which inspires employees at all levels to do their best.

As outlined in the first chapter, we have learned through *La Relève* that rebuilding the Public Service of Canada requires leaders who can function successfully in an increasingly complex and interdependent world.

Leadership is not simply the practice of management and the exercise of power. It is more than setting priorities, organizing work, achieving results, making decisions, issuing orders and allocating budgets. Effective leaders have a sense of direction, they are the servants of their followers, share power with others, foster inclusiveness, value and support their people, lead by example, and have the ability and willingness to learn continually coupled with a capacity for honest self assessment.

Effective leaders in the public service share these qualities, and

Effective leaders value and support their people. They combine integrity and loyalty, are committed to the public interest, believe in the rule of law and support democratically elected representatives.

more. They combine integrity and loyalty, believe in the public interest, support the rule of law, and sustain democratic institutions. They are committed to serving their country.

The public service is fostering effective leadership

at all levels. The 14 management competencies established for assistant deputy ministers and the competency profiles developed by the departments and agencies for various management levels will contribute to addressing this challenge.

Conclusion

La Relève is neither a program nor a project. There is no master

La Relève is neither a
program nor a project,
it is a bias for action.

plan for *La Relève* and no quick fix.

Rather, it is about the positive
impact of a number of small steps to
correct the course we have been on,
learning as we go, making

adjustments wherever we can,
celebrating our successes and, above

all, having a bias for action. There is a growing number of voices
willing to say “Count me in: let’s pull together to make things
work.” And if there are better ways of making things work, we will
try them.

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