

Canadian Intergovernmental Conference Secretariat

2012-13

Departmental Performance Report

The Honourable Denis Lebel
*Minister of Infrastructure, Communities and
Intergovernmental Affairs;
Minister of the Economic Development Agency of
Canada for the Regions of Quebec; and
President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada*

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Minister's Message

The Canadian Intergovernmental Conference Secretariat (CICS) is an impartial intergovernmental organization that plays an essential and constructive role in the Canadian federation. Its mandate consists of providing the administrative support required for the planning and holding of federal–provincial–territorial and provincial–territorial conferences of first ministers, ministers and deputy ministers across Canada.



In fiscal year 2012-13, CICS provided services to 73 senior-level meetings, including 49 federal–provincial–territorial conferences and 24 provincial–territorial conferences. As a key partner in facilitating these meetings, CICS has the responsibility to respond to the evolving needs of its clients while at the same time ensuring efficiency of its services. This past year, the agency continued to invest in new technologies both for its delivery of services and for its day-to-day management. I am pleased to see the addition of videoconferencing to its repertoire of services. In addition, the organization made internal changes to its structure to allow a more flexible, efficient approach in resource usage.

CICS is committed to maintaining its leading-edge role as a service provider for conferences, and to remaining the first choice for governments in organizing senior level intergovernmental meetings. All governments benefit from significant economies of scale by using CICS services. This is all the more relevant in the current fiscal environment.

As the President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, I am pleased to table the Secretariat's Departmental Performance Report for 2012-13, which highlights its accomplishments over the past fiscal year.

The Honourable Denis Lebel
Minister of Infrastructure, Communities and Intergovernmental Affairs
Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec
President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada

Section I: Organizational Overview

Raison d'être

The Canadian Intergovernmental Conference Secretariat (CICS) was established pursuant to an agreement reached at the May 1973 First Ministers' Conference and was designated a department of the federal government by an Order-in-Council dated November 29, 1973. Its one program mandate is to provide administrative services for the planning and conduct of First Ministers', Ministers' and Deputy Ministers' federal-provincial-territorial and provincial-territorial conferences.

CICS is an agency of the federal and provincial governments and, as such, acts as a neutral intergovernmental body. Its budget is supported by both orders of government and its staff includes federal and provincial/territorial public servants. The Secretary reports to all governments annually. The operations are reviewed by federal and provincial senior officials designated by their respective First Ministers. CICS reports to Parliament through the President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada.

Responsibilities

The mandate of the Secretariat is to serve federal, provincial and territorial governments in the planning and conduct of senior level intergovernmental conferences held across Canada. The primary objective of CICS is to relieve client departments in virtually every major sector of intergovernmental activity of the numerous technical and administrative tasks associated with the planning and conduct of multilateral conferences, thereby enabling them to concentrate on substantive policy issues. CICS provides continuous, effective, impartial administrative services to these meetings

Benefits for Canadians

The planning and conduct of multilateral meetings of First Ministers, Ministers and Deputy Ministers is a critical component of the workings of the Canadian federation. By skillfully and professionally planning and delivering of services at these meetings, CICS allows governments to discuss important issues without getting distracted by process. The risk of error and omission is significantly mitigated by tapping into the Secretariat's experience and impartiality.

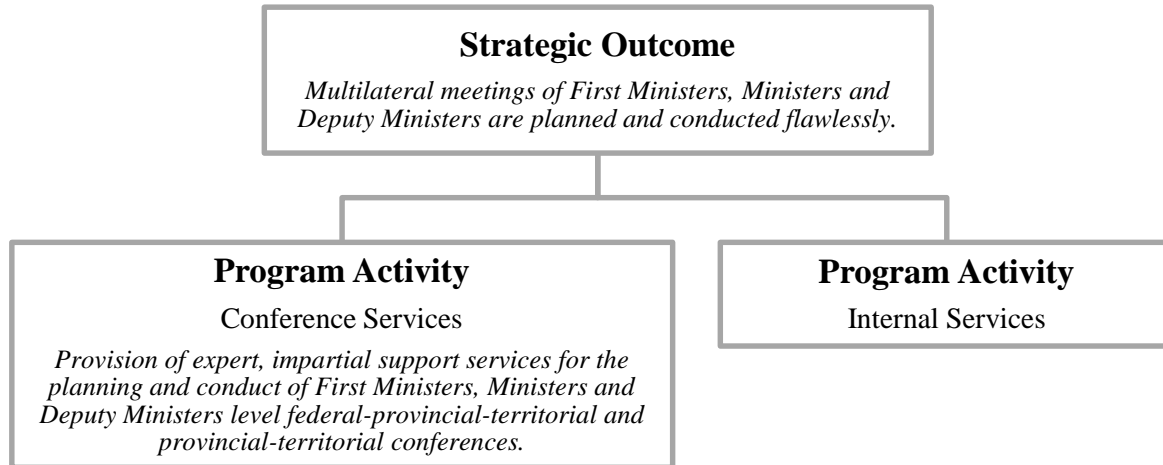
The interests of all Canadians are represented by their elected governments participating in these intergovernmental conferences.

As an institution dedicated to supporting events that give rise to, and support the spirit of cooperation and negotiation among governments, CICS seeks to execute its role to maximum effect, producing an environment conducive to rational discourse and optimal decision-making, to the benefit of all Canadians.

Federal, provincial and territorial governments greatly benefit from significant cost efficiencies and economies of scale through the use of CICS. This is particularly relevant in the current fiscal environment.

Strategic Outcome and Program Alignment Architecture

CICS is a micro agency with a single program mandate. Its Program Activity Architecture is presented below.



Organizational Priorities

Priority	Type	Strategic Outcome
Maintain and enhance partnerships with clients.	Ongoing	Multilateral meetings of First Ministers, Ministers and Deputy Ministers are planned and conducted flawlessly.
Summary of Progress		
<p>What progress has been made towards this priority?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As part of its new comprehensive marketing strategy, promotional materials were designed and purchased to showcase the modernized visual representation of the organization as well as its updated service delivery tools. These included banners and digital signage for use on conference site. The Annual Report to Governments was refreshed to ensure it continues to serve its purpose as a meaningful communication tool with our partners. Through improved dialogue with our clients, service offerings are now being expanded and tailored to meet their specific needs, thereby opening the door to a variety of service models and greater flexibility for the future. As an integral part of its strategic planning exercise, management identified key focus areas for the achievement of this priority over the next three years and developed action plans for specific areas including the creation of a Knowledge Exchange Forum for our clients as well as strengthening the way we assess service offerings and use client feedback. 		

Priority	Type	Strategic Outcome
Select and adopt new instruments in order to continue to improve CICS' delivery model so that it remains viable and relevant to clients.	Ongoing	Multilateral meetings of First Ministers, Ministers and Deputy Ministers are planned and conducted flawlessly.
Summary of Progress		
What progress has been made towards this priority?		
Significant initiatives were successfully undertaken including:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The purchase of mobile video-conferencing equipment followed by training of staff. Consequently, as of January 2013, CICS successfully completed Phase 1 of its video-conferencing project and is now equipped to offer video-conferencing services at its face-to-face meetings held across the country. • The purchase of equipment to enable CICS to offer conference delegates a secure WiFi connection in the main meeting room at all its events. • The addition of scanners to its mobile equipment inventory, allowing for the removal of obsolete fax machines. • Continuous refinement of its on-line registration system and secure document retrieval system. These tools are now being used by an increasing number of clients. • Conference managers were equipped with tablets to test and explore their potential for use on conference site. 		
Delegate surveys indicated a 90% satisfaction rate with technology provided to them on-site.		

Priority	Type	Strategic Outcome
Strengthen internal management practices by means of modernizing activities, enhancing stewardship and pursuing shared services opportunities.	Ongoing	Multilateral meetings of First Ministers, Ministers and Deputy Ministers are planned and conducted flawlessly.
Summary of Progress		
What progress has been made towards this priority?		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New procedures and guidance were established to enhance budgeting and financial systems. • Business intelligence technologies were developed to support management decisions. • Work to implement new performance management tools was started and will continue over the next few years to ensure efficient use of resources; • To explore the use of new technologies, to enhance communication, service delivery and improve management practices, the following was achieved: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ As of January 2013, CICS was ready to offer videoconferencing services; ○ CICS managers were asked to use tablets to attend meetings; and ○ WiFi was provided for the whole of CICS and in main conference rooms on conference sites. • Discussions and exchanges have begun to explore shared financial services. As well, CICS was well represented to play a leadership role in the Financial Management Transformation initiative. • CICS has reduced by 14% its internal expenses by reducing telecommunication costs, total number of printers and finding several other cost efficiencies. 		

Risk Analysis

The Canadian Intergovernmental Conference Secretariat (CICS) is an organization whose sole program is to serve senior level intergovernmental conference activities undertaken by 14 governments and their respective departments. The Secretariat reports to all governments annually, and thus, must ensure that its services not only remain pertinent, impartial, confidential and equitable to all clients but, more importantly, that they are perceived as such in an environment that can be highly political. In the last few years, all orders of government have been faced with budget reductions and more recently they have been encouraged to modernize and transform intergovernmental business. Although these factors have led to a decline in face-to-face meetings, they have also introduced new and efficient methods of collaboration. As a result, CICS has seized the opportunity to adapt its service delivery model to incorporate new technologies which allow all partners and clients to benefit from efficiencies and attain their objectives.

The Secretariat has identified four key risks that may impact its ability to achieve expected results: Security Risk, Financial Management Risk, Human Capital Risk; and Change Management Risk. The following table describes each risk along with the response strategies used during the last fiscal year.

Risk	Risk Response Strategy	Link to Program Alignment Architecture	Link to Organizational Priorities
<p>1-Security Risk</p> <p>There is a risk that security measures are not fully implemented, resulting in compromised classified information.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CICS has been managing this risk through personnel security screening and training, having secured IT networks, offering IT tools for secure document transportation and following up on incident reports. • Although this risk was not identified in the 2012-13 RPP, greater importance was recently placed on security measures in order to instill a culture of risk aversion throughout the agency. 	<p>Conference Services and Internal Services.</p>	<p>Select and adopt new instruments.</p> <p>Strengthen internal management practices.</p>
<p>2-Financial Management Risk</p> <p>As a result of rising operational costs, fiscal restraints, increased stakeholder expectations and the complexity of restructuring the Conference Services division, there is a risk that sufficient resources may not be available to maintain appropriate service levels for client groups.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CICS has successfully reduced exposure to this risk by implementing rigorous forecasting, budgeting and internal controls. • This risk was identified in the 2012-13 RPP in a way that focused on the management of budget reductions. • The risk response provided in the 2012-13 RPP consisted of investing in new technologies in order to attain greater efficiencies in operations. In order to further reduce the likelihood of the risk, CICS implemented stronger internal controls. 	<p>Conference Services and Internal Services.</p>	<p>Strengthen internal management practices.</p>

Risk	Risk Response Strategy	Link to Program Alignment Architecture	Link to Organizational Priorities
<p>3-Human Capital Risk</p> <p>Due to the retirements and turnover of key personnel, there is a risk that CICS will be unable to sustain an experienced and professional workforce which may have an impact on program delivery.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CICS has responded to this risk through succession planning and the updating of internal manuals that capture corporate knowledge. In addition, experienced personnel are continuing to mentor new employees in order to ensure knowledge transfer and departing employees are being offered alternative work arrangements to help stagger departure dates and lessen the impact of staff turnover. • This risk was identified in the 2012-13 RPP and significant weight was placed on the retention of corporate memory. • The mitigation strategies identified in the 2012-13 RPP were successfully implemented and built upon in order to ensure we sustained a knowledgeable and professional workforce. 	<p>Conference Services and Internal Services.</p>	<p>Strengthen internal management practices.</p>
<p>4-Change Management Risk</p> <p>There is a risk that the organization’s transformation agenda and internal restructuring may not be well understood or communicated to employees, resulting in lost opportunities for staff engagement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CICS has responded to this risk by developing a tailored implementation strategy and communications plan. • Even though this risk was not specifically identified in the 2012-13 RPP, it was addressed in other corporate documents. CICS plans to continue building an environment that fosters employee commitment to the organization. 	<p>Conference Services and Internal Services.</p>	<p>Strengthen internal management practices.</p>

Summary of Performance

Financial Resources – Total Departmental (\$ millions)

Total Budgetary Expenditures (Main Estimates) 2012–13	Planned Spending 2012–13	Total Authorities (available for use) 2012–13	Actual Spending (authorities used) 2012–13	Difference (Planned vs. Actual Spending)
6.6	6.6	6.9	5.2	1.4

Human Resources (Full-Time Equivalents— FTEs)

Planned 2012–13	Actual 2012–13	Difference 2012–13
36	29	7

Performance Summary Table for Strategic Outcome, Program and Internal Services (\$ millions)

Strategic Outcome: Multilateral meetings of First Ministers, Ministers and Deputy Ministers are planned and conducted flawlessly.

Program	Total Budgetary Expenditures (Main Estimates 2012–13)	Planned Spending			Total Authorities (available for use) 2012–13	Actual Spending (authorities used)			Alignment to Government of Canada Outcomes
		2012–13	2013–14	2014–15		2012–13	2011–12	2010–11	
Conference Services	4.0	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.1	3.4	3.5	3.0	Well-managed and efficient government operationsⁱ
Internal Services	2.6	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.8	1.8	2.1	2.2	N/A
Total	6.6	6.6	6.6	6.6	6.9	5.2	5.6	5.2	

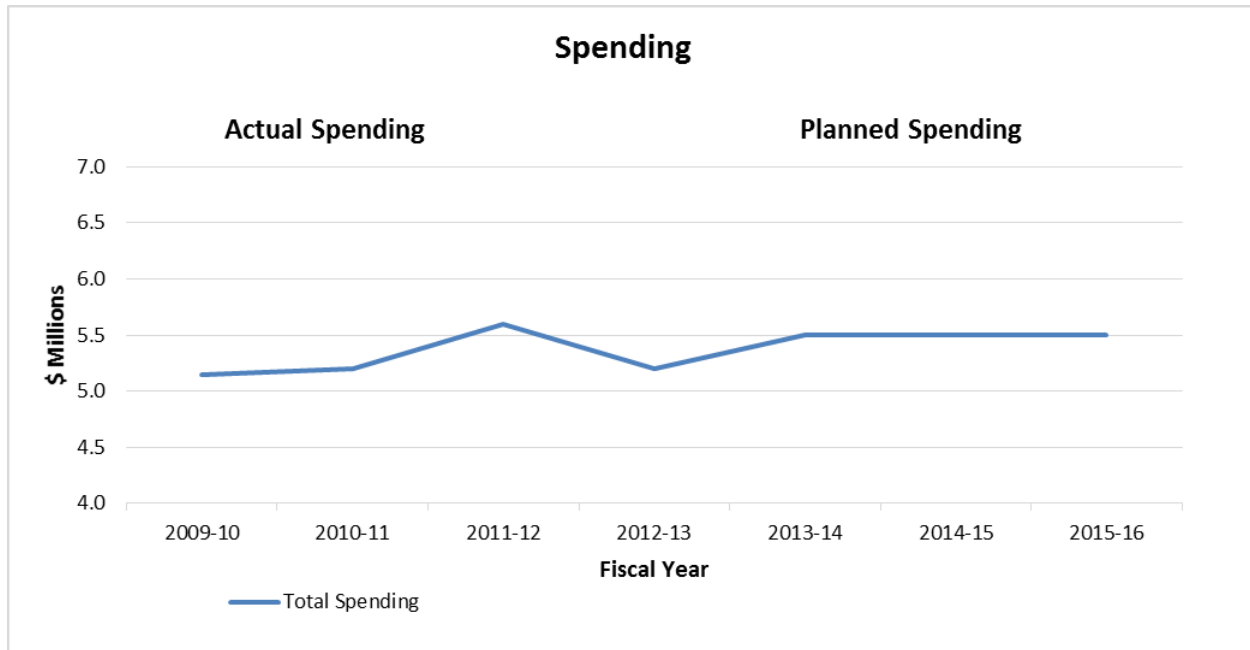
The reduction in spending for 2012-13 is mainly attributed to achieving savings of \$0.5 million for the first year of Budget 2012 implementation. These savings were achieved while our actual spending usually varies according to the number of events and conferences that fluctuate from one year to the next. It is important to note that the CICS does not convene intergovernmental meetings. It is called upon to respond to decisions taken by governments to meet on key national or specific issues. Decisions concerning the location of such meetings, their number in a given fiscal year, their timing and duration, are all factors beyond the control of the Secretariat.

The level of CICS expenditures for each fiscal year is, however, directly affected by these factors. The Secretariat is funded annually at a level sufficient to finance a level of conference activity in the 110-120 range. Over a ten-year period, we were averaging over 100 conferences annually. This is the reason why our planned spending is higher than the actual spending. The economic environment and political situation in recent years has contributed to a decline in intergovernmental activity. In that context, CICS organized and served 73 senior-level meetings in 2012-13.

Ongoing challenges in government fiscal management have led to a lower number of senior level multilateral intergovernmental meetings serviced by the Secretariat being held over the last number of years. In addition, there have been freezes and reductions in the areas of travel, hospitality and conferences throughout government which have had an impact on the services we provide.

Expenditure Profile

Departmental Spending Trend



CICS's actual spending has remained constant in the last few years since the number of conferences averaged to 70 conferences a year. We do not expect significant variances in the next few years.

Estimates by Vote

For information on the Canadian Intergovernmental Conference Secretariat's organizational Votes and/or statutory expenditures, please see the [Public Accounts of Canada 2013 \(Volume II\)ⁱⁱ](#). An electronic version of the Public Accounts 2013 is available on the Public Works and Government Services Canada website.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

During 2012-13, CICS acknowledged and fulfilled their responsibility with regards to the [Cabinet Directive on the Environmental Assessment of Policy, Plan and Program Proposalsⁱⁱⁱ](#).

Section II: Analysis of Programs by Strategic Outcome

Strategic Outcome

Multilateral meetings of First Ministers, Ministers and Deputy Ministers are planned and conducted flawlessly.

Performance Indicators	Targets	Actual Results
Extent to which senior government officials are satisfied with various CICS services in the planning and conduct of multilateral meetings of First Ministers, Ministers and Deputy Ministers.	90% satisfaction- High degree of stakeholder trust and confidence in CICS' independence and high degree of satisfaction with CICS services.	Survey results of both conference planners and conference delegates confirmed a high level of satisfaction with the quality of services provided by CICS. The overall target of 90% satisfaction was met. The number of government sectors served remained stable while the actual number of conferences increased to 73 from 60 in the previous year.

Program 1: Conference Services

Program Description:

Provision of expert, impartial support services for the planning and conduct of First Ministers, Ministers and Deputy Ministers level federal-provincial-territorial and provincial-territorial conferences.

The CICS does not convene intergovernmental meetings. It is called upon to respond to decisions taken by governments to meet on key issues. Decisions concerning the location of such meetings, their number in a given fiscal year, their timing and duration, are all factors, beyond the control of the Secretariat. The level of CICS expenditures for each fiscal year is, however, directly affected by these factors.

Financial Resources (\$ millions)

Total Budgetary Expenditures (Main Estimates) 2012-13	Planned Spending 2012-13	Total Authorities (available for use) 2012-13	Actual Spending (authorities used) 2012-13	Difference 2012-13
4.0	4.5	4.1	3.4	1.1

Human Resources (Full-Time Equivalents — FTEs)

Planned 2012-13	Actual 2012-13	Difference 2012-13
24	19	5

Performance Results

Expected Results	Performance Indicators	Targets	Actual Results
Flawlessly planned and conducted events.	Survey results, client satisfaction letters, number of client departments utilizing CICS services.	To maintain the highest degree of customer satisfaction.	90% of planners surveyed indicated that they were satisfied or very satisfied with CICS services overall. Similarly, 97% of conference delegates were satisfied or very satisfied with CICS services overall.

Performance Analysis and Lessons Learned

In 2012-13, CICS provided its services to 73 senior-level intergovernmental conferences.

Performance is assessed using internal data and documents as well as two surveys of clients; one an annual sampling of conference planners and the second of conference delegates who attend the events.

Overall satisfaction survey results remain positive and reached the target of 90% or above while some individual features of our service, specifically related to conference planning, scored below target, slightly lower than in previous years. When asked for words to describe the quality of services offered by CICS, planners and delegates alike most often answered with the following words: *professional; efficient; excellent; and cooperative*.

Many additional positive comments were also offered such as:

- *CICS is absolutely phenomenal;*
- *CICS is very useful. They know the protocols and have good communication.*

2012-13 marked a year of change at CICS as major initiatives were undertaken to modernize our services alongside the evolving needs of our clients while at the same time adapting our processes and procedures to find cost efficiencies in service delivery. The fact that satisfaction ratings from our conference delegates remained at a very high level (97%) is encouraging and is indicative that management decisions made to deliver cost efficiencies in no way negatively impacted the level of service provided to delegates on conference site. In addition, the integration of new technologies with our service offerings have been very well received and appreciated by our clients. In the planning process, however, a satisfaction rating of 70 % on “flexibility” and 75% on “client understanding of what services CICS can and cannot provide” may be attributable to the necessary move away from status quo offerings to a more in-depth questioning and analysis of client requests.

Lessons Learned

As we strive to ensure efficient and effective use of resources and also contribute to the transformation of intergovernmental business by making changes to our service delivery model, clear on-going communication and retroaction with our clients becomes even more essential to ensure the Secretariat’s services are fully understood and delivered successfully in the current context.

Program 2: Internal Services

Program Description:

Internal Services are activities and resources that support the needs of programs and other corporate obligations of an organization. These groups are: Management and Oversight Services; Communications Services; Legal Services; Human Resources Management Services; Financial Management Services; Information Management Services; Information Technology Services; Real Property Services; Materiel Services; Acquisition Services; and Travel and Other Administrative Services. Internal Services include only those activities and resources that apply across an organization and not to those provided specifically to a program.

Financial Resources (\$ millions)

Total Budgetary Expenditures (Main Estimates) 2012-13	Planned Spending 2012-13	Total Authorities (available for use) 2012-13	Actual Spending (authorities used) 2012-13	Difference 2012-13
2.6	2.1	2.8	1.8	0.3

Human Resources (Full-Time Equivalents — FTEs)

Planned 2012-13	Actual 2012-13	Difference 2012-13
12	10	2

Performance Analysis and Lessons Learned

Internal Services were reviewed to find new efficiencies: Three positions were eliminated; telecommunications costs were reduced by elimination of hand-set phones; reduction of printers; and a number of other small reductions. Work continues on implementing new policies, directives and procedures to strengthen management practices.

The Secretariat has integrated new technologies successfully throughout the agency in order to enhance communication, develop a more modern array of services and improve management practices.

Most reports to central agencies were compliant with requirements and submitted on time. The Departmental Staffing Accountability Report (DSAR) indicated acceptable performance in all areas, and no key sector required increased attention.

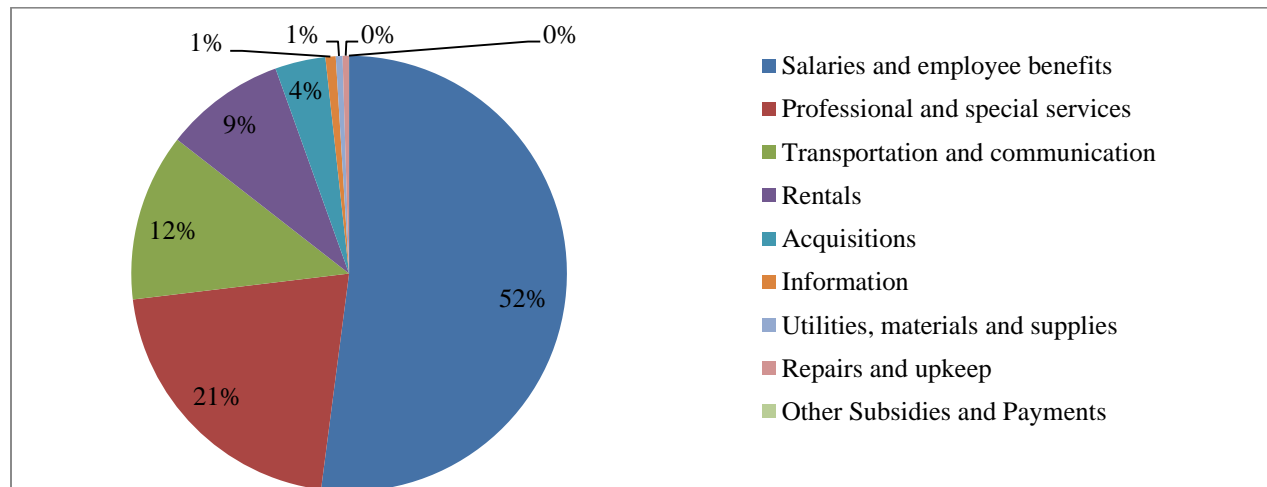
Section III: Supplementary Information

Financial Statements Highlights

Condensed Statement of Operations and Departmental Net Financial Position

Canadian Intergovernmental Conference Secretariat Condensed Statement of Operations and Departmental Net Financial Position (Unaudited) For the Year Ended March 31, 2013 (\$ millions)					
	2012-13 Planned Results	2012-13 Actual	2011-12 Actual	\$ Change (2012-13 Planned vs. Actual)	\$ Change (2012-13 Actual vs. 2011-12 Actual)
Total expenses	5.8	5.8	6.0	0	0.2
Total revenues	0	0	0	0	0
Net cost of operations before government funding and transfers	5.8	5.8	6.0	0	0.2
Departmental net financial position	(0.1)	0	0	(0.1)	0

Total expenses were approximately \$5.8 million in 2012-13, a decrease of \$0.2 million (0.03%) from the previous year's total expenses of \$6.0 million. Figure 1 below provides an overview of CICS budgetary expenses. Half of the expenses are for salaries. The expenses for professional and special services are mainly for the following: interpretation, translation services and security personnel. Transportation and communication includes travel costs for the employees who provide the services as well as the transportation of the equipment to conference sites. Rentals are for the audio-visual equipment.



Condensed Statement of Financial Position

Canadian Intergovernmental Conference Secretariat Condensed Statement of Financial Position (Unaudited) As at March 31, 2013 (\$ millions)			
	2012-13	2011-12	\$ Change
Total net liabilities	0.7	1.0	0.3
Total net financial assets	0.4	0.7	0.3
Departmental net debt	0.2	0.2	0
Total non-financial assets	0.2	0.3	0.1
Departmental net financial position	0	0	0

Total liabilities were approximately \$0.7 million as at March 31, 2013, a decrease of \$0.3 million (30%) over the previous year's total liabilities of \$1.0 million. Accounts payable and accrued liabilities are the largest component, representing 64% of total liabilities. The decrease in total net liabilities is mainly due to a decrease accounts payable. The liabilities consists of accounts payable to external parties (\$440,848) that form part of the normal operations, vacation pay and compensatory leave (\$103,159) as well as employee future benefits (\$143,544).

Total financial assets were approximately \$0.4 million as at March 31, 2013, a decrease of \$0.3 million (43%) over the previous year's total net financial assets of \$0.7 million. The decrease in financial assets is mainly due to a decrease of \$0.3 million in the amount due from the Consolidated Revenue Fund. Amounts due from the Consolidated Revenue Fund represent a charge against departmental authorities and are available for use to the organization in future periods without further authorities.

Total non-financial assets were approximately \$0.2 million at the end of 2012-13. Non-financial assets are comprised entirely of tangible capital assets.

Financial Statements

<http://www.scics.gc.ca/english/view.asp?ccid=169^{iv}>

Supplementary Information Tables

- [Greening Government Operations](#)^v
- [Internal Audits and Evaluations](#)^{vi}
- [Sources of Non-Respendable Revenue](#)^{vii}

All electronic supplementary information tables listed in the 2012–13 Departmental Performance Report can be found on the [Canadian Intergovernmental Conference Secretariat's website](#)^{viii}.

Tax Expenditures and Evaluations Report

The tax system can be used to achieve public policy objectives through the application of special measures such as low tax rates, exemptions, deductions, deferrals and credits. The Department of Finance publishes cost estimates and projections for these measures annually in the [Tax Expenditures and Evaluations](#)^{ix} publication. The tax measures presented in the Tax Expenditures and Evaluations publication are the sole responsibility of the Minister of Finance.

Section IV: Other Items of Interest

CICS is an agency of the federal and provincial governments and, as such, acts as a neutral intergovernmental body. The Secretariat produces an annual report to Governments detailing the activities of the agency. It can be found on CICS' website at www.scics.gc.ca.

Organizational Contact Information

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Endnotes

ⁱ <http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/ppg-cpr/descript-eng.aspx#bm04>

ⁱⁱ <http://www.tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca/recgen/cpc-pac/index-eng.html>

ⁱⁱⁱ <http://www.ceaa.gc.ca/default.asp?lang=En&n=B3186435-1>

^{iv} <http://www.scics.gc.ca/english/view.asp?ccid=169>

^v <http://www.scics.gc.ca/english/view.asp?ccid=172>

^{vi} <http://www.scics.gc.ca/english/view.asp?ccid=170>

^{vii} <http://www.scics.gc.ca/english/view.asp?ccid=145>

^{viii} <http://www.scics.gc.ca/english/view.asp?x=198>

^{ix} <http://www.fin.gc.ca/purl/taxexp-eng.asp>