

DOING BUSINESS

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with Public Works and Government Services Canada

Transit Pass Program Launched GoC Employees **GETTING ON BOARD**



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Doing Business is the external newsletter of Public Works and Government Services Canada (PWGSC).

This newsletter is also accessible electronically at www.pwgsc.gc.ca/db to keep clients and interested parties informed of all facets of departmental activities.

If you would like to receive a copy of *Doing Business* on a regular basis, fill out the postage-paid response card or make a subscription request via the Internet at www.pwgsc.gc.ca/db/text/subscribe-e.html

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ISSN 1201-7450



PWGSC welcomes new Associate Deputy Minister



François Guimont joined PWGSC as Associate Deputy Minister in January 2005, and has since delivered strong leadership and vision for the Government of Canada's largest provider of procurement, real property, information technology, translation and consulting services.

Mr. Guimont started his career in the Federal Public Service in 1982 in Yellowknife, with what is now Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC).

From 1988 to 1999 he held a number of positions at Environment Canada, dealing with both policy development and operational responsibilities.

Before coming to PWGSC, Mr. Guimont was Deputy Commissioner of Canada Customs and Revenue Agency (now the Canada Revenue Agency). Prior to that, he served at the Privy Council Office as Assistant Secretary to the Cabinet, Economic and Regional Development Policy.



PWGSC a key player in Budget 2005

Budget 2005 fundamentally improved the business of government by identifying nearly \$11 billion in cumulative savings over the next five years to be reinvested in priorities that matter most to Canadians. Public Works and Government Services Canada (PWGSC) will work with all departments and agencies to generate more than \$3.4 billion of these savings — more than a quarter of the Government's target.

The savings will be achieved through smarter buying and better management of our office space, two initiatives that are part of PWGSC's major transformation agenda — *The Way Forward*. It is a wide-ranging strategy to deliver services smarter, faster and more cost-efficiently, while reinforcing some of the fundamental tenets of good government.

This issue of *Doing Business* highlights some of our *Way Forward* goals, with many already underway in key areas such as real property, procurement and information technology. We are:

- making more efficient use of office space by bringing the amount of total average space per government employee more in line with private sector practices (page 4).
- stimulating small and medium-sized businesses by making it easier and less expensive to access government contracting opportunities (page 6).
- leading the world in 'green procurement' by helping all government departments buy environmentally-responsible goods and services (page 7).
- 'buying smarter' by streamlining and consolidating our procurement activities (page 8).
- increasing our international reputation as a leader in e-government (page 10).
- reducing greenhouse gas emissions by encouraging the use of public transit by federal employees (page 12).

The Way Forward's scope is vast. Our commitment is to transform PWGSC and lead the Government's efforts to modernize how it does business. As our strategy evolves and grows, we will continue to consult with our colleague departments and agencies so that we can achieve the best services for Canadians, at the best value for taxpayers.

Scott Brison
Minister of PWGSC

Standardized office accommodation saves money

As part of an overall plan to reduce the Government of Canada's (GoC) real property costs, PWGSC has strengthened its procedures for delivering federal office accommodation. As the GoC's landlord, the Department accommodates 210,000 public servants in over 5.7 million square metres of owned and leased office space across Canada. Budget 2005 commits the Government of Canada to achieving savings of \$925 million over five years on our real property program.

Through the fit-up standards initiative, PWGSC is minimizing the costs of providing general purpose office space for GoC clients — the federal government's second highest administrative expense after employee compensation. Savings will be redirected to higher priorities like health care and the environment.

Alphonse Cormier, PWGSC's Assistant Deputy Minister for Real Property, says that by providing less customization and rigorously applying universal office accommodation standards, the department will save Canadians money: "We've strengthened financial controls while at the same time maintaining our reputation for excellent service to client departments."

The initiative, launched in June 2004, calls for the consistent application of the standards across all GoC departments. "PWGSC has developed standard models for employee workstations, offices, boardrooms, meeting rooms and kitchenettes," says Mr. Cormier.

"Clients can still expect the same top-notch service," assures PWGSC's John Shearer, Assistant Deputy Minister, Service Integration. "The fit-up standards initiative is a winning

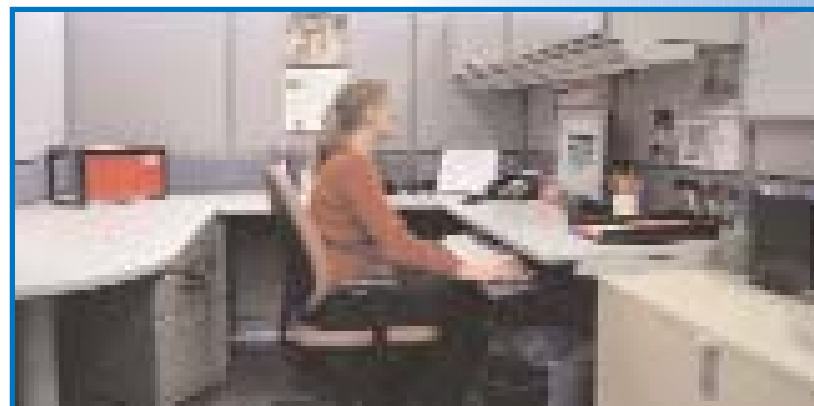
proposition for everyone," he says. "The streamlined process means clients can expect more timely fit-ups, predictable costs, and clearer procedures and accountabilities."

"We've updated the standards to reflect a mid-range quality level — something that our government clients can be satisfied with, but reflects the new funding restrictions we're operating with," says Brian Seaby, PWGSC's Director General, Accommodation and Portfolio Management.

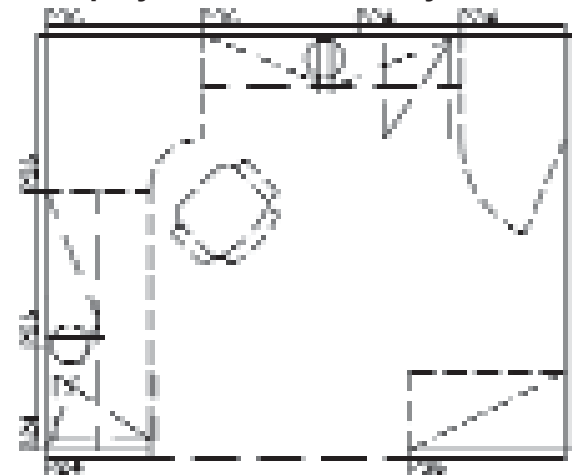
"This initiative is about providing a consistent and equitable service," says Mr. Seaby. "It sends a real and positive message about Government prudence and probity with taxpayer money."

For more information about accommodation services, contact John Shearer at john.shearer@pwgsc.gc.ca or (819) 956-2871.

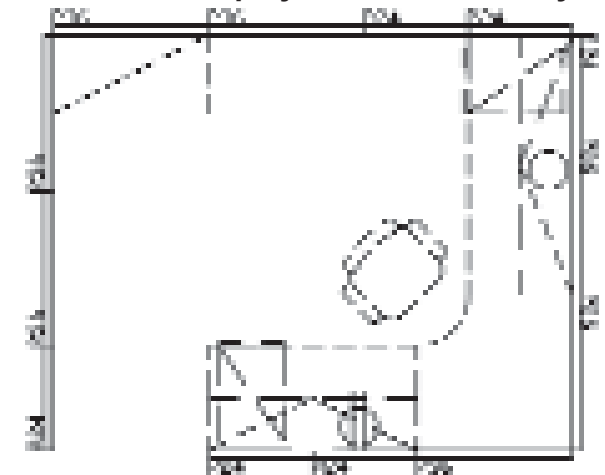
For more information about the fit-up standards initiative, contact Brian Seaby at brian.seaby@pwgsc.gc.ca or (819) 956-6304.



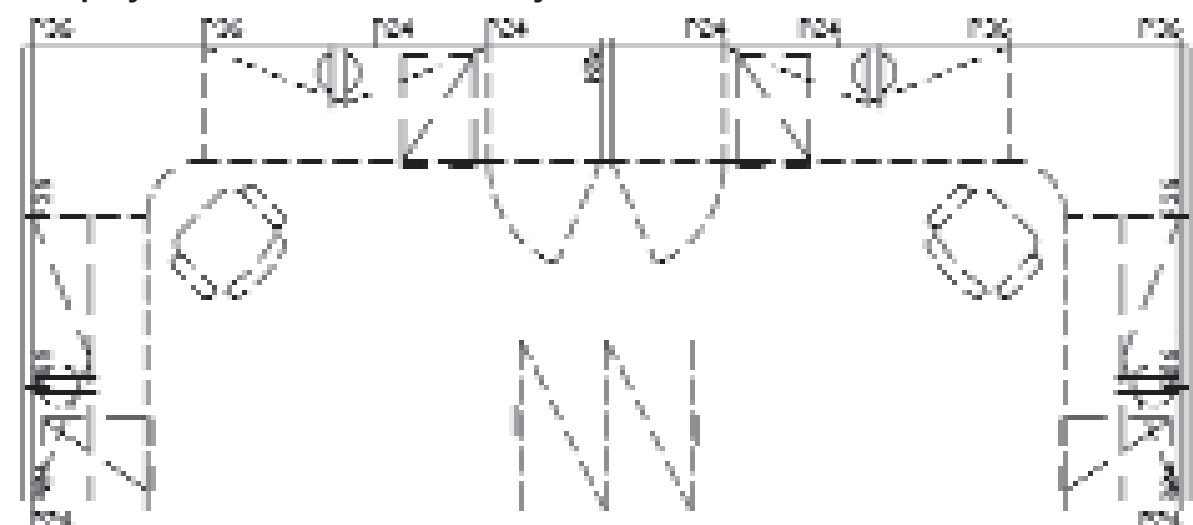
Employee Workstation Layout



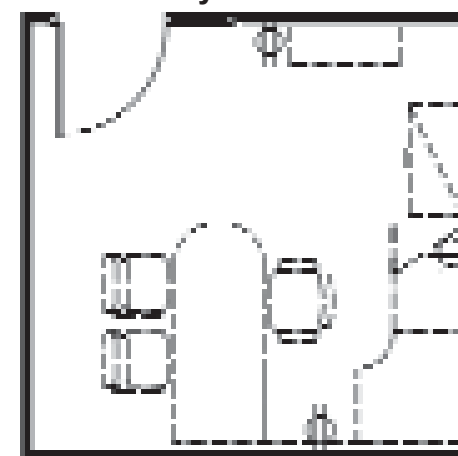
Alternate Employee Workstation Layout



Employee Workstation Cluster Layout



Director Layout



Senior Departmental Representative



Government employees may visit <http://publiservice.pwgsc.gc.ca/fitup/text/index-e.html> for more examples.

No subscription fees means **EQUAL ACCESS** to federal opportunities

Doing business with the Government of Canada (GoC) just got easier.

As of April 1, 2005, suppliers seeking federal government contracting opportunities no longer have to pay subscription fees for basic access to the Government Electronic Tendering Service (GETS) — the GoC's vehicle for advertising procurement opportunities to potential bidders, provided through the MERX Web site at www.MERX.com.

Absolving the fees demonstrates the GoC's commitment to supporting Canadian small business and entrepreneurship, says PWGSC Minister Scott Brison — himself, a former entrepreneur. "I strongly believe that electronic access to government procurement opportunities needs to be open and less onerous for business — particularly small and medium-sized Canadian businesses," says Minister Brison.

Eliminating the fees is meant to encourage growth among this sector of Canadian business — one that is helping position Canada as a leader in the global economy. With fees eliminated, all suppliers can access thousands of federal opportunities, valued at billions of dollars each year, free of charge.

Improving GETS is just one aspect of PWGSC's 'smarter buying' strategy to improve the way it purchases government goods and services. The ultimate goal? A faster, simpler and more cost-efficient purchasing system.

More about GETS

GETS is an important element of the GoC's overall vision to develop Canada as a world leader in electronic commerce. Along with the Government of Canada Marketplace, it is a key component of the federal Electronic Supply Chain Program.

Federal procurement opportunities advertised on GETS include most goods and services over \$25,000, construction over \$100,000 and printing over \$10,000. At any given time, it typically lists 1,500 opportunities.

For more information please contact the Contracts Canada Information Centre at ncr.contractscanada@pwgsc.gc.ca, or by telephone at (819) 956-3440 or 1-800-811-1148.

Buying Green



The department that spends about \$10 billion a year on everything from flu vaccines to helicopters, also helps lead the world in 'green' procurement — the environmentally-responsible purchasing of goods and services.

By selecting green products — such as energy-efficient office equipment, recycled paper and alternative fuel vehicles — PWGSC is helping the Government of Canada (GoC) reduce its energy consumption, greenhouse gas emissions and waste generation. And as the largest public sector buyer in Canada, it has the purchasing clout to influence industry too — giving suppliers real incentives to produce environmentally-friendly products and develop new green technologies.

"Our far-reaching scope means there is much potential for green opportunities," said PWGSC's Jane Billings, then Assistant Deputy Minister for Acquisitions. "We want to strike a balance between value for money and green procurement."

Ms. Billings recently hosted a forum in Ottawa called 'Taking the Lead in Greening Government', bringing together about sixty government buyers and private sector suppliers to discuss current trends and future directions.

PWGSC's Roy John of the Canadian General Standards Board, described how PWGSC is saving money and the environment by purchasing remanufactured toner cartridges for use in printers and copiers. The remanufacturing process involves cleaning and repairing used cartridge shells, adding new toner and reintroducing them to the marketplace. "If they weren't reused, the shells would otherwise end up in landfills contaminating air and groundwater," said Mr. John, - emphasizing that recycled cartridges can cost as little as half the price of new ones.

Linda Jellicoe, a PWGSC Supply Team Leader who oversees the purchasing of printers, photocopiers and fax machines, explained how she incorporates environmental checks and balances directly into the procurement process. "When evaluating a product for best value for dollar, we also consider its environmental impact from a 'whole life' perspective," said Ms. Jellicoe. "All stages in the life of a product — from initial resource extraction to manufacturing and packaging, through to final disposal — produce environmental impacts." Ms. Jellicoe's team developed a selection process that attributes price percentage discounts to products offered by suppliers with

environmentally responsible programs in place. She said that eventually, products with green strong points — such as EnergyStar registration, double-sided printing capabilities, and hardware take-back or recycling programs — will be mandatory.

At the forum, the Department of National Defence's Brigadier General Peter J. Holt encouraged the ongoing evolution of green purchasing practices. "We're more environmentally-friendly and innovative in how we do business than many other countries," said General Holt, who oversees his department's green procurement policy development. "It's absolutely essential to find better ways to do things and be more sustainable."

Budget 2005 delivered on the GoC's commitment to greening its operations and contributing to its sustainable development agenda.

You may visit the Green Procurement Network at <http://publiservice.gc.ca/partners/green/>

For more information about PWGSC's green procurement activities contact Christine Cowan, Domestic Policy Manager, at christine.cowan@pwgsc.gc.ca or (819) 956-6497.

The future of federal procurement



The Honourable Walt Lastewka
Parliamentary Secretary, PWGSC

Each year, the Government of Canada (GoC) buys about \$13 billion of goods and services to support the delivery of its programs and services. Early in 2004, PWGSC's Parliamentary Secretary, the Honourable Walt Lastewka, began a government-wide review of procurement to improve the system based on respect for taxpayer dollars, good management and cost-efficiency. Budget 2005 commits the GoC to achieving savings of \$2.5 billion over 5 years on the procurement of goods and services.

Here, Mr. Lastewka shares his insights into the far-reaching benefits of improving the procurement system for the Government and Canadians. His final report's recommendations — a copy of which can be found at www.pwgsc.gc.ca/prtf — were reflected in the 2005 federal budget.

It has been said that your examination was the most fundamental review of federal procurement in decades. What did you cover?

This was the most comprehensive review of federal procurement in over 40 years. With the support of an expert interdepartmental task force, we studied data and best practices from within government, the private sector, academia and other jurisdictions. We looked at the myriad of legislation, policies, regulations and trade agreements that impact on procurement to fully understand their effects. For example, we interviewed 17 major companies and 13 trade associations; analyzed 176 Procurement Review Committee cases; scrutinized 112 audit reports; and reviewed 4 countries and 10 provinces for best practices in procurement.

Who specifically did you consult with, and what feedback did you receive?

We embarked on extensive consultations and discussions across the country with suppliers and other stakeholders to get their input on our proposals, like our plans to take a 'corporate approach' to purchasing. We also invited the public's input on our proposals.

The response was by and large positive — stakeholders told us we were on the right track.

What do you mean by a 'corporate approach' to procurement?

During our review, we found that what we do now, we do well. But we also found an outmoded system — one that fragments purchasing across Government with each department often buying the same thing individually. It was clear to us that a more coordinated 'corporate' approach was needed — one that would leverage the Government's buying power and organize common purchases across departments.

With a corporate approach, federal purchasing will be more efficient, consistent and systematic. It will reap cost savings through economies of scale and strategic long-term planning. In fact, we anticipate that net savings of \$2.5 billion government-wide will be realized over five years.

What about transparency and accountability? How are you ensuring the procurement process remains fair?

Streamlining and coordinating all federal procurement will automatically make the system even more accountable. But we're also developing publicly available 'commodity management plans' that will define the best approach to buying many common goods and services. And to help with this process, we'll be creating 'Commodity Councils' with representation from suppliers and supplier associations to provide market advice.

How will these changes affect small businesses?

We're acutely aware of the importance of small business to Canada's economy, and we're taking a number of specific measures to support them. We're

Facts and Figures

In 2003, the Government of Canada issued 415,965 contracts and amendments worth more than \$13 billion in goods, services and construction.

Every year, federal procurement accounts for about one third of the total federal discretionary budget.

establishing a special office of small business as an entry point for them to do business with Government. We will also require, where appropriate, that they be included in major contracts. And as we've done in the past, we will continue to use tools such as Regional Standing Offers to ensure that small businesses right across the country have access to Government opportunities. The effect of all these changes will be monitored and any issues that arise will be addressed.

With your review completed, what are the next steps?

While a full transformation won't happen overnight, we are quickly moving ahead with improvements. For example, volume discounts have already resulted in a 16 percent savings on furniture purchases. I expect that early on, suppliers — especially small businesses — are going to see positive changes in their dealings with Government. The system is going to be faster, simpler, and less costly for them. We look forward to working closely with all stakeholders in the coming years to deliver on our goals: better access for small suppliers to Government business, better service to Canadians and better value for taxpayers.



Sharing e-government expertise with the world

Countries as varied as Burkina Faso, Japan, Brunei and France have one thing in common: they all sought Canada's e-government expertise last year.

As the department responsible for Government On-Line (GOL), PWGSC is the primary point of contact for countries seeking e-government know-how. In 2004, its International and Intergovernmental Co-operation Directorate fielded over 150 enquiries from countries wanting to tap into that expertise.

"The demand reflects Canada's leadership status in delivering government services and information to its citizens on-line," says PWGSC's Marc Fillion, an Information Technology Services Branch (ITSB) Manager.

Independent reports ranking Canada as a leading e-government nation often fuel other countries' interests in its best practices. For example, the publication *Accenture* has consistently rated Canada as number one for the past four years.

ITSB experts gave presentations to 40 different foreign delegations and study tours last year. They also participated in annual IM/IT events like GTEC (a national public sector learning and networking event) and the Strategic Information Management Program (wherein Canadian participants share their IM/IT experiences with sponsored developing countries and countries in transition). Other PWGSC branches also gave presentations that included e-government aspects like Acquisitions Branch's on-line tendering systems.

"Mostly, countries are seeking a GOL overview," says Mr. Fillion, who sees many benefits to international knowledge-sharing. "Doing this outreach fosters an interest in our leading technologies that can create opportunities for Canadian business."

Gregory Evanik, Director of the International and Intergovernmental Co-operation Directorate, agrees. "These interactions support Canada's international goals, help

developing countries, promote PWGSC services and expertise internationally, and lay the groundwork for positive trade possibilities in the future."

Because of the overwhelming demand, Mr. Evanik's team applies selection criteria to each official request it receives for a PWGSC presentation or visit. Increasingly, delegations are being encouraged to share their e-government experiences to ensure that the knowledge-sharing isn't just one-way.

"We have to work with other countries to learn from them as much as they learn from us, for mutual improvement," says Mr. Evanik, citing the strong knowledge-sharing relationship that exists between PWGSC and its American counterpart, the United States General Services Administration, as a productive example. "We must constantly push ourselves if we want to stay number one."

“The demand reflects Canada’s leadership status in delivering government services and information to its citizens on-line.”

Marc Fillion,
Information Technology
Services Branch,
PWGSC

As a leader in e-government, PWGSC is proud to share its expertise with other governments from around the world. Pictured here (top to bottom) are some of PWGSC's more recent delegations from France, Malta, China and Finland.



E-Government Studies (2003-2004)

Canada's Rank

Accenture	1st of 22
Conference Board of Canada	2nd of 10
Brown University	3rd of 198
World Economic Forum & INSEAD	6th of 82
United Nations	6th of 190
Economic Intelligence Unit	9th of 60

For more information about PWGSC's international knowledge-sharing activities, contact Gregory Evanik at gregory.evanik@pwgsc.gc.ca or (819) 956-0809.

Transit Pass Program launched

Employees getting on board

PWGSC and its employees have taken another step towards preserving their environment. Along with several other Government of Canada (GoC) departments, it officially launched a successful program that reduces greenhouse gas emissions by encouraging the use of public transit by federal employees.

The Transit Pass Program — a joint initiative between the GoC and two transit companies — is now available to employees within a few National Capital Area (NCA) departments. But plans are moving to roll the Program out to all NCA federal public servants, and compliment existing and future similar programs nationwide.

"I applaud my Department for its leadership role in helping to green government," said Minister Brison. "We're encouraging our employees to do their part too, while enjoying the convenience and savings of the Transit Pass."

Not only do employees save up to 15 percent by purchasing annual — rather than monthly — passes,

they also receive the convenience of automatic monthly payroll deductions or preauthorized bank debits through the Program. Within days of PWGSC Minister Scott Brison officially launching the Program, hundreds of public servants had already signed up.

With transportation being the single largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in Canada, it's a strategic area to target. For every busload of passengers, there are 40 fewer cars on the road at rush hour. By the end of one year, each busload translates to 175 fewer tonnes of emissions.

PWGSC won the honour of being the first to participate in the Program because of its supportive role in the 2003 pilot. This trial run involved 900 employees in four other government departments: Environment Canada, Natural Resources Canada, Transport Canada and Treasury Board Secretariat of Canada, with Transport Canada taking the lead.

A compensation team in PWGSC's Finance, Accounting, Banking and Compensation Branch oversaw the payroll deductions for the pilot, working closely with the departments and bus companies involved. This team will continue to support the Program as it progressively widens to include more public servants.

"It's truly a win-win situation for the environment, employees and the transportation companies involved," said Jean-C. Lapierre, Minister of Transport.

The Program supports a number of GoC initiatives, including the One-Tonne Challenge, and the Federal House in Order Initiative — the GoC's commitment to show leadership by greening its own operations. Ultimately, through the mass reduction of emissions, the Program will also help Canada meet its obligations under the Kyoto Protocol.

For more information about the Transit Pass Program, visit <http://publiservice.gc.ca/services/transit/>



PWGSC Minister Scott Brison was quick to get on board with the Transit Pass Program.

The Program is one example of the many ways the GoC is reducing greenhouse gas emissions and greening its own operations.

PARTNERSHIPS

open new chapter to better service

Now it's easier than ever to get your hands on Government of Canada (GoC) publications. PWGSC's Publishing and Depository Services (PDS) has teamed up with the Ontario Government to make GoC publications more accessible to Canadians.

Both levels of government sell each other's high-demand books on their respective e-commerce Web sites and through their call centres. And now provincial bookstores in Ottawa and Toronto have been turned into one-stop shops for both federal and provincial government publications.

"This is customer focused," says Allan MacDonald, Senior Manager, Publications Ontario. "The public wants information and they don't necessarily know where to go. If you can combine everything within one source — be it provincial or federal — it's that much easier." "Publishing and Depository Services

is always seeking better, more innovative ways of delivering federal government information to Canadians and opportunities to increase in-person service," says Christine Leduc, Acting Director of PDS. "By entering into this partnership with Publications Ontario, we have now added two more retail outlets in downtown locations in Ontario's biggest cities."

The publishing partnership is another example of PWGSC building stronger links with different levels of government to improve services for all Canadians. And the partnership also streamlines operations and increases the visibility of government publications.

It's a practice that sits well with the Ontario Government. "With two levels of government working closely together, we can make access to government information that much

more efficient and convenient," says Mr. MacDonald.

PWGSC plans to approach other provinces with the Ontario model to further improve Canadians' access to information.

For more information on Government of Canada publications, visit our Web site at publications.gc.ca. Or visit one of the two Publications Ontario locations: 161 Elgin Street in Ottawa, or 880 Bay Street in Toronto.

Ontario Government bookstores located in Toronto and Ottawa will help meet the high demand for GoC publications.



Friends of Canadian

Did you know that PWGSC, the Department of National Defence (DND) and thousands of Canadian school children are in a partnership to boost the morale of Canadian Forces (CF) members serving abroad?

Through the Friends of Canadian Peacekeepers Letter Writing Campaign, school children across Canada send personalized postcards with messages and drawings to CF members stationed overseas. The warm wishes aim to boost the morale of the Canadian men and women serving in challenging operations such as those in Afghanistan, Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Golan Heights and other countries. PWGSC and DND employees coordinate the Program on a voluntary basis, and the two departments share the modest printing costs.

“The postcards let Canadians serving abroad know that people are thinking about them back home, and the process itself educates young children about

Canada’s role in peace support operations,” says PWGSC’s Samir Moussa, a project manager who started the initiative in 1994.

After children have sent the cards, a special ceremony is held at their schools. A military representative with previous overseas experience meets with the children, thanks them for supporting the CF, and answers any questions they may have about peace support operations.

“Each year, the number of participating schools and postcards has grown,” says Mr. Moussa. In 2005, he predicts at least 5,000 postcards will reach the troops.

While the Program is often busiest during the holiday season, the campaign and delivery of postcards continues all year round. Mr. Moussa manages the campaign in the National Capital, where ten schools — both public and private — participated this past holiday season.



Peacekeepers

For Mr. Moussa, the look of awe in the children’s eyes as they sing “O Canada” and watch the visiting CF member salute the flag, is especially touching. “It’s a lot of work, but when I go to the schools and see the Program in action, I always feel revived again,” says Mr. Moussa.

PWGSC and CF members have something in common, he says. “We’re both nation builders. We’re both trying to build a better world — at home and abroad.”

You may view more samples of children’s postcards at http://www.forces.gc.ca/site/gallery/postcards/index_e.asp.

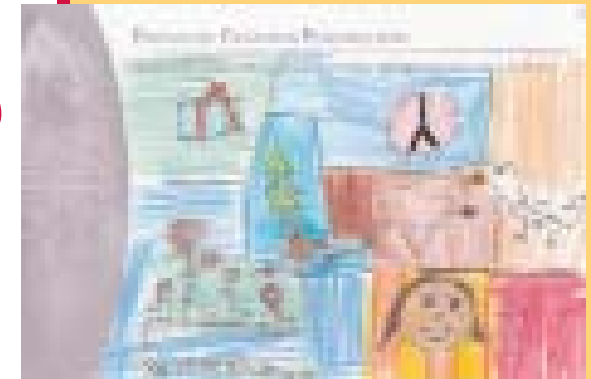
For more information about Friends of Canadian Peacekeepers, contact Samir Moussa at samir.moussa@pwgsc.gc.ca or (613) 991-9986.

Left, an elementary school student of St. Thomas More School in Ottawa shows her postcard to DND’s Major Bourassa and PWGSC’s Samir Moussa.

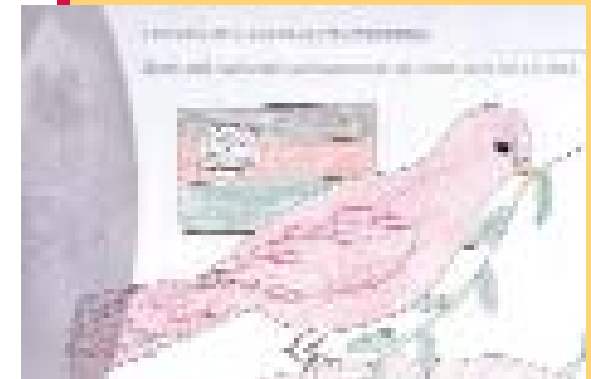
Below, Canadian Peacekeepers in Kabul Afghanistan had this photo taken and sent back to Canada to show their appreciation for the warm wishes they received through the Letter Writing Campaign.



Children across Canada are sending colourful, personalized postcards like these to boost the morale of troops stationed overseas.



Brianna of Elmridge Catholic School, Ottawa, Ontario



Emilie of Dunrae Gardens Elementary School, Montreal, Québec



Barbara of Elmridge Catholic School, Ottawa, Ontario



Madison of École NDA, Chéticamp, Nova Scotia

PWGSC know-how

Music to the Ears of Canada's most Famous Horses

Canada's world-renowned Musical Ride horses are enjoying a safer and more comfortable home thanks to PWGSC's successful upgrade of the RCMP Remount Detachment in Pakenham, Ontario. The Detachment — a 140-hectare farm set in the lush pastures of the Ottawa Valley — serves as the breeding location for the famous horses.

Since the facility first opened in 1968, the constant impact of horses' hooves on poorly graded paddock soil had created a tightly packed layer of dirt that prevented rainwater from draining. The result was a swampy build-up of mud so deep that the mares could barely walk through it. This was a large concern since breeding mares need as much exercise as possible to ease the birthing process and ensure the safe delivery of foals.

The RCMP sought out PWGSC's expertise to remedy this situation, as well as other facility problems. "Our Real Property team took on the design, construction and management of the project," said Ursula Ruppert, Director General of PWGSC's Real Property Branch. "PWGSC upgraded the paddock drainage capabilities, while ensuring that nearby water sources remained unharmed."



With things moving along smoothly and ahead of schedule, PWGSC then tackled the facility's access road and landscaping.

One of the more noticeable improvements is the Detachment's newly constructed run-in shelter. A facility where horses can easily escape the elements, the new shelter has a modern design far more durable than its predecessor.

"It was a very successful and well-managed project," says Marc Beaudoin, Director of Environmental Management and Technical Standards for the RCMP. "We were quite impressed with PWGSC's ability to coordinate such a large renovation."

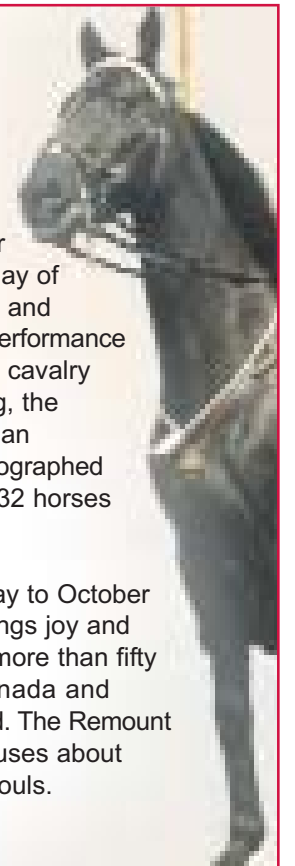
This is just one of many projects that has brought PWGSC and the RCMP together. Last year, a joint PWGSC-RCMP team partnered to construct an RCMP Police Detachment in Nova Scotia. The two departments have also collaborated to secure the collection of on-line information.

"These partnerships build trust and good will," says PWGSC's Henry Sano, A/Director General of Client Services for Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness. "We're happy to contribute our expertise so the RCMP can focus on the safety of Canadians."

For more information, please contact Henry Sano at Henry.Sano@pwgsc.gc.ca or (819) 775-5517.

Since 1887, RCMP officers and their talented horses have thrilled crowds with their entertaining display of complex figures and movements. A performance of synchronized cavalry drills set to song, the Musical Ride is an intricately choreographed ballet involving 32 horses and riders.

Touring from May to October each year, it brings joy and amazement to more than fifty locations in Canada and around the world. The Remount Detachment houses about 80 horses and fous.



PWGSC's upgrade of the RCMP Remount Detachment included a massive excavation project in the areas surrounding the horse paddocks and run-in shelter.



Horse and Rider photos courtesy of RCMP Public Affairs and Information Directorate

The Michelle Comeau Learning Centre

A new era of accessibility

The entryway to the brick and limestone building is wide and gently slopes to automatic, air-powered doors. Inside, the surroundings are easy to differentiate — the colours and textures of the finishing materials contrast with one another where floor meets wall, and stair meets stair. In the elevator, the buttons are a little larger and protrude a little more than in most, and a subtle tone sounds to indicate each passing floor.

These are just some of the Michelle Comeau Learning Centre's design nuances that make it a leading-edge, accessible building — easy to enter and navigate by people with disabilities ranging from blindness to mobility restrictions, yet so aesthetically pleasing that its accessible components are barely recognizable.

At the beginning of the project, PWGSC Project Manager Michael Coll and his team faced a daunting task. They had to transform a gutted, turn-of-the-century heritage building located on Ottawa's Experimental Farm into a state-of-the-art, fully accessible training facility for Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) staff. They employed the latest practice to make buildings accessible: universal design.

"It's about making buildings universally accessible by incorporating accessibility components seamlessly into the design," says Mr. Coll. "There are countless design elements that address all sorts of disabilities at the Michelle Comeau Learning Centre, but they don't jump out at you."

The Michelle Comeau Learning Centre is a state-of-the-art training centre and restored heritage building located on Ottawa's Experimental Farm.



Universal design also represents a new level of inclusiveness — an evolution from previous approaches that segregated accessibility elements through separate entryways and unisex handicapped washrooms. There are no unisex handicapped washrooms at the Centre. Instead, elements that aid accessibility — such as handrails — are built right into all washrooms.

"Its main entrance, training rooms, office spaces, washrooms, kitchenettes and public spaces are universally accessible by all people, regardless of ability," says Mr. Coll.

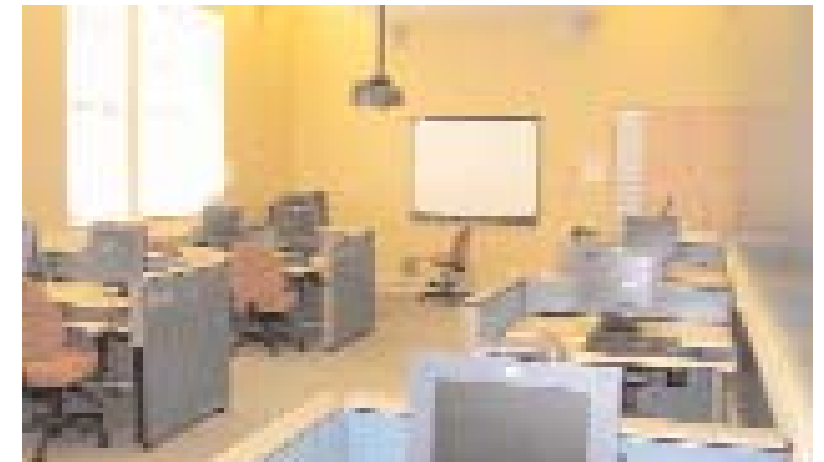
Other details at the Centre include continuous railings lining stairways, easy-to-configure workstations, and low-level coat hangers for wheelchair users. Thought was even given to objects on the walls: fire alarm pull stations are lower so wheelchair users can reach them.

Their accomplishments did not go unrecognized by the City of Ottawa. Mayor Bob Chiarelli presented the City of Ottawa Accessibility by Design Award to PWGSC and the expert project team it assembled. Their efforts to refurbish the 1899 building also resulted in an Ottawa Architectural Conservation Certificate of Merit.

Mayor Chiarelli praised the fully inclusive, universal work environment as, "a remarkable accomplishment," ... adding that it was even more outstanding that the impressive design was completed in a heritage building with difficult architectural challenges.

The project has been honoured with a permanent plaque in Ottawa's City Hall.

For more information, please contact Michael Coll at Michael.Coll@pwgsc.gc.ca or (613) 775-7231.



Ottawa Mayor Bob Chiarelli (far right) presented the design team with the City of Ottawa Accessibility by Design Award during celebrations for the United Nations International Day of Disabled Persons, December 2004.

Michelle Comeau was a former Agriculture and Agri-food Canada Associate Deputy Minister who was renowned for her leadership in championing human resources issues like training and development, and accessibility. The Learning Centre is dedicated to her memory.

Copper connects War Museum to Parliament

The copper that once adorned the top of one of Canada's oldest and most famous architectural landmarks has found a new home inside Canada's newest national museum. Thanks to PWGSC, over 500 square metres of the Library of Parliament's old copper roof now calls the new Canadian War Museum home.

The Library's copper roof — beautifully aged with the patina of 50 years of service — needed to be replaced as part of an extensive and ongoing renovation that began in 2002. Early in the planning phase, PWGSC's Library of Parliament Project Team — realizing that the copper roofing could one day be reused in the right historic context — stored it for safekeeping. When news of the Canadian War

Museum's construction plans surfaced, the Team knew it was exactly the opportunity they were looking for. With the Museum's mission to educate, preserve and remember, the historical copper was a perfect fit.

It now decorates various interior locations of the Museum, including the front lobby and an entire wall of the LeBreton Gallery, which houses the Museum's largest artifacts.

"Reusing the copper from one of our nation's great architectural treasures preserves a link to our past that all Canadians can appreciate for generations to come," said PWGSC Minister Scott Brison of the donation.

"Our prominent use of this copper underlines the symbolic link between the Parliament of Canada and the Canadian War Museum," said Victor Rabinovitch, president and CEO of the Canadian Museum of Civilization Corporation. "Parliamentary

democracy has helped shape our national identity, as has our military engagement throughout history."

"It is with great pleasure that we contribute to an institution dedicated to the preservation of such a key part of our country's cultural legacy," said PWGSC Deputy Minister David Marshall.

The Museum officially opens on May 8, 2005 — the 60th anniversary of the end of the Second World War in Europe. It will feature over 500,000 artifacts and cover more than 5000 years of history.

For more information about the Library of Parliament conservation, rehabilitation and upgrade project, visit www.parliamenthill.gc.ca, or contact Mary Soper, Project Director, at (819) 775-7307.

For more information about the new Canadian War Museum, visit www.warmuseum.ca.



PWGSC Deputy Minister David Marshall (left) commended the donation of the historic Library of Parliament copper to the new Canadian War Museum. The copper adorns various interior locations of the Museum, including an entire wall of a large artifacts room containing war planes (below).

