Annual Report 2004–2005

Public Opinion Research in the Government of Canada





Public Works and Government Services Canada Travaux publics et Services gouvernementaux Canada

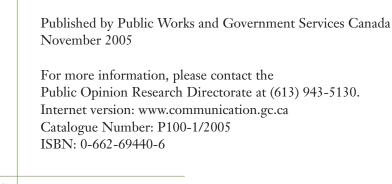


Public Opinion Research in the Government of Canada



Annual Report 2004–2005

Prepared by Public Works and Government Services Canada



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Minister's Message



am pleased to present the Public Opinion Research in the Government of Canada— Annual Report 2004–2005. Public opinion research is a tool departments and agencies use to understand the needs and expectations of Canadians. This helps ensure programs and services are tailored to the needs of Canadians.

In February 2004, the Auditor General of Canada concluded that public opinion research is "well managed" within the Government of Canada. Since then, consistent with *The Way Forward* initiative to deliver services smarter, faster and at a reduced cost, we have made significant strides to ensure that public opinion research in the Government of Canada is conducted in an unbiased and transparent manner, guided by the principles of value for money, good stewardship of public funds, and flexibility.

For example, we have put in place new contracting tools which provide a rigorous competitive process for suppliers across Canada. These new standing offers and supply arrangements enable departments and agencies to obtain public opinion research services in an efficient and effective manner with experienced research firms.

We have implemented an electronic project management and research database to assist all departments and agencies to strengthen their research management and to reduce duplication of effort.

We have taken steps to ensure continued prohibition of the purchase of research that monitors electoral voting intentions and political party image. In addition, our ongoing consultations with Canada's major market research associations resulted in a partnership agreement in May 2004. It introduced the industrymanaged national Survey Registration System requiring the registration of Government of Canada surveys. This system allows the public to verify that a survey is legitimate, to obtain information about the market research industry, or to make a complaint.

A lot of good work has been done this year, but more improvements are on the horizon. In the coming year we will bring together an expert technical advisory panel, including members from government, academia and market research industry to assist in developing appropriate benchmarks of survey quality for Government of Canada research. This initiative will help departments ensure a consistently high level of quality in the research they undertake. The department will also continue to play a key role in providing expert advice to departments on survey quality.

I trust you will find this overview of public opinion research undertaken by the Government of Canada in 2004–2005 both useful and informative.

Scott Brison Minister of Public Works and Government Services

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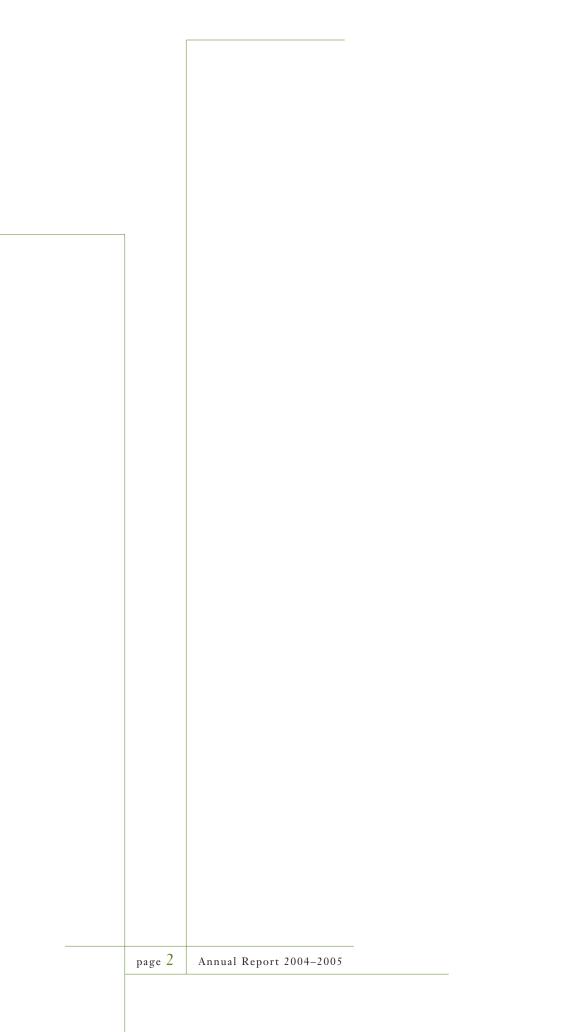


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Overview

As stated in the Government of Canada Communications Policy, public opinion research (POR) offers the Government of Canada a means "to better understand Canadian society and to identify citizen needs and expectations. It is used to assess the public's response to proposals or to possible changes or initiatives; to assess the effectiveness of policies, programs and services; to measure progress in service improvement; to evaluate the effectiveness of communication activities such as advertising; and to plan and evaluate marketing initiatives, among other applications."

Public Works and Government Services Canada (PWGSC) works closely with partners in departments, agencies and other levels of government, striving to find innovative ways to deliver services smarter, faster and at a reduced cost and improve how the Government of Canada does business. The Department is the technical, coordinating and contracting authority for public opinion research in the Government of Canada. Departments and agencies that undertake POR must consult PWGSC's Public Opinion Research Directorate (PORD) at the initial stage of research. The Directorate facilitates POR studies by assisting departments and agencies

throughout the process, helping to ensure their objectives are met in a cost-effective manner. Directorate staff works with colleagues at the Communication Procurement Directorate (CPD), which provides a mandatory common service as the Government of Canada's contracting authority for POR.

This is the fourth Annual Report on Public Opinion Research in the Government of Canada. The report provides an overview of research projects coordinated by PWGSC to help departments and agencies fulfill their research needs. It also highlights trends in public opinion research across the Government of Canada. In 2004–2005, 621 POR projects were initiated by the government and coordinated through PWGSC for a contract value of \$29 million, using the services of 74 research firms. This report provides an overview of departmental activities in POR, highlighting the most active departments and agencies, and illustrates the activities of the research firms used by the Government of Canada for both custom and syndicated research.*

*This report outlines public opinion research projects and contracts coordinated through PWGSC. Figures presented in the report are based on contract values, not expenditures.

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Public Opinion Research in the Government of Canada

Public opinion research in the Government of Canada is the planned gathering of information by or for a govern-ment institution, on opinions, attitudes, perceptions, judgments, feelings, reactions or views including those of employees of government institutions. The information may be related to a broad range of activities, such as research for policy, marketing, communications and advertising, program evaluation, quality of service/ customer satisfaction studies, and product development.

Public opinion research provides information to:

- assist the development of programs, services and communications products;
- assess policy initiatives and plans;
- design delivery methods for government programs and services;
- measure the demands and expectations of the Canadian population and stakeholders, such as businesses; and
- evaluate programs and services to ensure value for public money spent.

The Government of Canada Communications Policy provides a framework within which public opinion research must be conducted. It mandates that federal institutions identified in Schedules 1, 1.1 and 2 of the *Financial Administration Act* (FAA)—including all Government of Canada departments and agencies—comply with its requirements. Other institutions, such as Crown corporations and those that have the authority to undertake their own contracting under Section 41 (1) and Section 41 (2) of the FAA, are exempt. Therefore, this report focuses on the POR activity of the institutions included in the Policy, as PWGSC coordinated their projects and issued their contracts in public opinion research.

When appropriate, the Government of Canada Communications Policy encourages departments and agencies to use POR in support of operations, from designing programs and services to ensuring that goals and expectations are met. Departments and agencies conducting research assign a POR coordinator, who is responsible for overseeing the organization's research projects and acting as a liaison with PWGSC. POR coordinators generally initiate contact with PWGSC at the earliest stage of research to seek the advice of its POR advisors.

To ensure coherent, cost-effective management of public opinion research throughout the government, institutions must:

- coordinate the planning and implementation of public opinion research initiatives with the PORD of PWGSC;
- contract public opinion research services through the CPD of PWGSC;
- ensure that the principles of fair information practices are respected;
- ensure the quality and value of research they commission or produce;
- provide copies of final reports to the PORD, which, in turn, deposits them with the Library of Parliament and Library and Archives Canada in written or electronic form;
- share results with other federal institutions; and
- release final results to the public on request.

Renewal of Public Opinion Research in the Government of Canada

In February 2004, the Auditor General of Canada noted that public opinion research (POR) in the Government of Canada is "well managed". She tabled an audit report on POR and found that, overall, public opinion research in the Government of Canada is "managed transparently, with roles and responsibilities clearly defined." In light of the audit and in line with Public Works and Government Services Canada's continuing effort to improve the management function of public opinion research, several important changes were implemented in 2004–2005:

- reform of the contracting process to be consistent with the Department's *The Way Forward* approach of using standing offers to the maximum extent possible;
- introduction of a new contract clause specifically excluding information related to electoral voting intentions and political party image;
- the requirement that institutions ensure the principles of fair information practices embodied in the *Privacy Act*, as well as the new *Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act*, are adhered to when conducting POR;

- the requirement that departments and agencies submit a rationale and a purpose of research to better document their projects;
- the requirement that institutions pre-test and evaluate all major campaigns (those with media buys of \$400,000 or more), use the Advertising Campaign Evaluation Tool (ACET) for consistency in evaluating campaigns, and confer with PWGSC when planning to conduct this research;
- renewed efforts to ensure final reports are deposited in the public domain; and
- introduction and promotion of the Research Information Management System (RIMS) database to government organizations.

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Renewal of POR Procurement Instruments

In May 2004, following PWGSC consultations with industry associations and departments, the Communication Procurement Directorate introduced a new series of standing offers and supply arrangements for POR. These tools enable increased competition among suppliers for projects, improved transparency in the supplier selection process, and a faster and more effective means for federal departments and agencies to access the services of proven research suppliers at competitive prices.

To ensure unified and seamless service to departments and agencies, the Communication Procurement Directorate works with the Public Opinion Research Directorate of PWGSC. All contracts for public opinion research must go through the Public Opinion Research Directorate prior to contracting by Communication Procurement Directorate, the sole contracting authority for public opinion research by the Government of Canada.

A listing of standing offers and supply arrangements in place for 2004–2007 can be found in Appendix Four.

Public Opinion Research Directorate

The responsibility to coordinate public opinion research for federal institutions, agencies, boards, councils, commissions and other bodies identified in Schedules 1, 1.2 and 2 of the *Financial Administration Act* rests with the Public Opinion Research Directorate.

PORD has been given the mandate to provide a mandatory common service to coordinate public opinion research. It also provides guidance and offers advice and information sessions to assist departments in achieving their research objectives, and in meeting their accountability to ensure the value and quality of the research they undertake.

With the growing need for public opinion research, the Government of Canada aims to obtain *value for money*, by avoiding duplication of effort, and transparency by creating a repository of completed work. In 2004–2005, just over 350 final public opinion research reports were received from departments and agencies and put in the public domain via the Library of Parliament and Library and Archives Canada.

Two units within the PORD aid departments and agencies with their research needs. They also facilitate procurement of services, share best practices and research results, and coordinate work across departments.

 Advisory Services offers advice to help government organizations conduct research to make informed decisions. They work closely with research coordinators in departments and agencies, guiding them through the required steps leading to the process of acquiring POR services. The assistance they offer on research design, legal and policy issues, industry standards, procurement methods and how to achieve value for money on each project is uniquely tailored to the needs and objectives of departments. Following the review of a project, the assigned advisor issues a project registration number and submits the project for contracting to the Communication Procurement Directorate. In 2004–2005, the advisors reviewed, coordinated and registered 621 POR projects.

Knowledge Transfer fosters partnerships and the sharing of public opinion research across the Government of Canada. The unit develops and manages the on-line RIMS database, produces a variety of research guides and on-line resources, and organizes seminars and information-sharing meetings for the interdepartmental community of practice. It also promotes the sharing of research reports through Library and Archives Canada and the Library of Parliament.

In 2004–2005, PWGSC's Public Opinion Research Directorate offered the government POR community several new tools and resources to help public service practitioners in designing and conducting public opinion research projects.

Electronic Management and Database

The RIMS database offers a streamlined Web-based system to manage research project submissions. It enables users to share information on research projects, to identify partnership opportunities on horizontal issues and to reduce duplication of effort. The database has been tested widely since 2003 and was launched on the CommNET, a government Intranet site, in March 2005, making it available to all departments. Departmental research coordinators are able to submit research details for new projects, track project progress and prepare reports on departmental activities. Training sessions were held in the spring of 2005.

Resources and Publications

Public Opinion Research in the Government of Canada: An Orientation Guide (revised edition) reflects the amended 2004 Communications Policy of the Government of Canada as it relates to POR. The guide defines public opinion research and includes an outline of procedures to be followed for acquiring research as well as a checklist of key elements or documents required to ensure proper documentation in the research process. It also offers a stepby-step guide to the public opinion research process along with best practices information.

- The Public Opinion Research Section of CommNET, an E-Resource Intranet site for Government of Canada communicators, was redeveloped and now contains more information for departments and agencies, including:
 - access to the RIMS database;
 - an outline of the research project summary departments and agencies provide to PWGSC;
 - a bilingual list of about 3,000 Government of Canada public opinion research reports produced since 1994, available for public access at Library and Archives Canada and the Library of Parliament; and
 - many other useful resources and publications.
- *The Research Corner* newsletter, introduced in July 2004 for departmental research coordinators, highlights new practices, joint government–industry initiatives and recent projects by government departments and agencies, and presents readers with other issues of interest to the community. Two eight-page, bilingual editions were produced in print and on-line.

Continuing Good Relations with Industry

Efforts at strengthening positive relations with industry associations and the Government of Canada, represented by PWGSC, have resulted in a productive working relationship between the Marketing Research and Intelligence Association (MRIA), l'Association de l'industrie de la recherche marketing et sociale and the government. Since 2003, when industry-government meetings began, the relationship has evolved and continues to deal with issues of mutual interest, such as enhancements to the contracting process. It jointly created and instituted a requirement, beginning in May 2004, for Government of Canada surveys to be registered with the Marketing Research and Intelligence Association Survey Registration System. This industry-managed national system, in place for several years, enables the public to confirm the legitimacy of a survey, obtain information about the industry or register a complaint. Government of Canada surveys contracted through the new POR standing offers and supply arrangements are registered with the Survey Registration System.

POR Community of Practice

The Directorate continued to coordinate and participate in meetings with the community of practice and other interdepartmental working groups. The community, which includes members from about 30 departments and agencies, met regularly to share information and address issues of mutual concern. These included: survey quality and response rates, procurement issues, emerging research techniques, new survey software, joint initiatives and partnerships, new legislation and policy requirements.

Performance Measurement

In 2004–2005, the PORD conducted a client satisfaction survey to capture departmental perceptions and awareness levels of policies and regulations guiding POR procedures.* The survey also addressed issues related to the quality and usefulness of advice, information sharing and knowledge transfer. The Web-based quantitative survey included satisfaction measures of timeliness and accessibility, as well as performance measures relating to fairness, quality of information and competence. The usefulness of POR publications, network meetings, the information products, and research seminars were also assessed.

The survey indicated that departmental clients value two fundamental service characteristics: respect for the hectic nature of the work (the time required to provide advice or address concerns, and ease of reaching PORD advisors) and subject matter expertise (competence of the staff, usefulness of the advice provided and consistency of information or advice from project to project). Ninety-eight clients from departments and agencies were invited to fill out the questionnaire. Results obtained will assist the Directorate in improving its services to departments and agencies, namely by developing more educational initiatives, such as information exchange events.

*All PORD research clients during fiscal year 2003–2004 were invited by email to participate in an on-line survey of client satisfaction with PORD services. The response rate to the survey was 53%. For more detailed information about the report, please contact the Public Opinion Research Directorate at: (613) 943-5130.

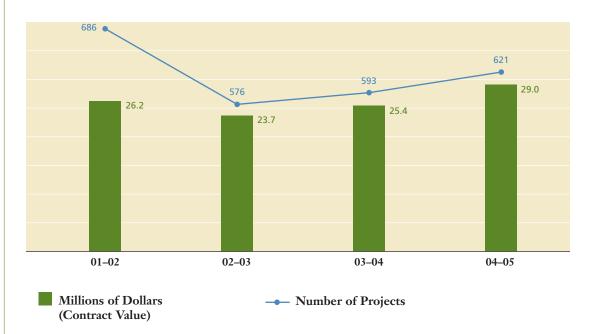
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Public Opinion Research in 2004-2005 in the Government of Canada

This chapter features an overview of the projects and contract values associated with public opinion research (POR) in the Government of Canada for 2004–2005.

It provides information on POR trends, methodologies, types of research, and outlines the differences between custom and syndicated research.

Projects Coordinated through the Public Opinion Research Directorate from 2001 to 2005



The importance of public opinion research in government operations is reflected by its usage by the Government of Canada and its departments and agencies. The dollar value of POR contracted for and coordinated through the Public Opinion Research Directorate in 2004–2005 was \$29 million, up from \$25.4 million in the previous year. The 2004–2005 activity of 621 projects was also greater than the previous year, when 593 projects were undertaken.

Top Departments and Agencies for All Coordinated Public Opinion Research by Contract Value

Department/Agency	Contract Value (Thousands of dollars)	Number of Projects
Health Canada	6,248	106
Human Resources and Skills Development Canada	2,033	36
Natural Resources Canada	1,701	39
Foreign Affairs Canada and International Trade Canada*	1,415	21
Canadian Heritage	1,392	37
Canada Revenue Agency	1,261	26
Industry Canada	1,216	34
Public Works and Government Services Canada	1,195	24
Finance Canada	1,051	17
Social Development Canada	1,047	24

*In 2004–2005, the departments of Foreign Affairs Canada and International Trade Canada contracted for POR as a single research unit, hence the contract values are reported together.

Health Canada has led all departments in the use of public opinion research for several years. This trend continued in 2004–2005. The value of contracts awarded on behalf of Health Canada accounted for 22 percent of the total value of contracted research, and 17 percent of the total projects for the Government of Canada last year. Human Resources and Skills Development Canada ranks second in value of contracts, with 36 POR projects possessing a value less than one-third of Health Canada's. Eight departments and agencies had research requirements in the \$1 million to \$2 million range.

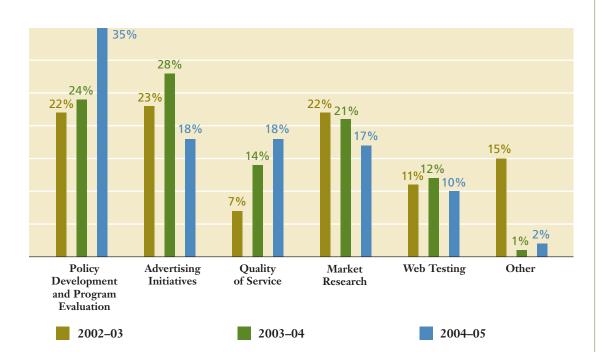
Highlights of the research undertaken by these departments appear in Chapter 4.

Comparison of Custom and Syndicated Research

Custom public opinion research is work commissioned for a specific department or agency. The commissioning organization holds the intellectual property rights on reports and other materials generated by the project, which are made available to other departments and the public through the Library of Parliament and Library and Archives Canada. Results of custom research required by the Government of Canada are in the public domain and accessible to all Canadians. Custom research accounts for most of the POR work undertaken by the Government of Canada.

Syndicated research studies are developed by research firms, which sell subscriptions to the studies to private and public sector clients. These off-the-shelf products often contain trend information on a variety of topics. Copyright and management of the studies' content rest entirely with the market research firms. Subscribers are prohibited from distributing the information to any other non-subscribing parties, including government departments. Syndicated research is sometimes the most cost-efficient option for meeting departmental research needs, because the costs of research are shared by the subscribers.

In 2004–2005, the Government of Canada contracted \$25.3 million (460 projects) in custom research, accounting for approximately 87 percent of the total contract value of all public opinion research for the fiscal year. Syndicated studies represented \$3.8 million (161 projects).



Type of Research as a Percentage of Total Contract Value of Coordinated Custom Research from 2002 to 2005

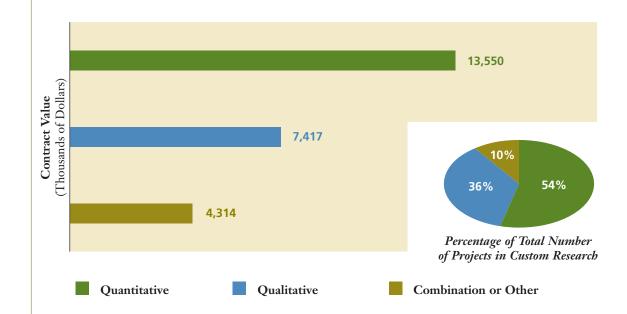
Policy Development and Program Evaluation represented the largest segment of all custom research with 35 percent of the total contract value for custom research. In 2003–2004, research in this field accounted for 24 percent of all custom research. Advertising Initiatives, which include advertising tracking and testing as well as communications product testing, and Market Research dropped in

2004–2005 compared with the previous year, when they respectively accounted for 28 percent and 21 percent of custom research contract values. Research contracted to measure the effectiveness of Web sites also dropped to 10 percent from 12 percent in the previous year. Research contracted to measure quality of service increased from 14 percent in 2003-2004 to 18 percent last year.

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Percentage of Projects and Total Contract Value Based on Research Methodology for Coordinated Custom Research

Research Methodologies Used



Quantitative research refers to information obtained about some members of a population through structured techniques, such as a survey, aiming to draw conclusions for the total target population. More than half of the work undertaken fell into this distinct category, increasing from 47 percent in 2003–2004 to 54 percent in 2004–2005.

Qualitative research refers to information obtained from some members of a population through unstructured or semi-structured techniques, such as focus groups or interviews. A qualitative approach is typically used when the research needed is exploratory, in-depth, or about very complex issues. Qualitative research allows for freeflowing or semi-structured discussions which are more effective in meeting research objectives in such cases, rather than using an inflexible questionnaire with rigid response categories for each question. As an exploratory approach, no projection of results to the population can be made from this type of research. Thirty-six percent of the research conducted in 2004–2005 fell in this category, down from 41 percent the previous year.

Some projects consisted of a combination of quantitative and qualitative research that, along with the "Other" category, accounted for the remaining 10 percent. "Other" includes research projects, such as POR design (i.e., questionnaire design) and analysis.

Highlights Of Key Public Opinion Research Projects

For this report, the 10 departments and agencies that were most active in public opinion research were invited to present a brief overview of work conducted in the fiscal year. Their contributions follow.

Health Canada

The 2004–2005 year was again an exciting and productive time for public opinion research within both Health Canada and the Public Health Agency of Canada. A combination of qualitative and quantitative research was conducted to support various health promotion and disease prevention activities (i.e., the healthy living/sport participation campaign, the anti-tobacco campaign and development of the air quality index). Research also informed the health care reform process and key regulatory decision-making. In addition, several significant surveys were successfully undertaken among First Nation and Inuit populations on issues such as immunization, oral health and healthy pregnancies.

One particularly interesting study this year gathered baseline indicators of Canadians' views, knowledge and perceptions regarding influenza. It was designed to support the efforts of officials from the Public Health Agency and Health Canada to increase citizen awareness and understanding of the implications of pandemic influenza and the steps Canadians can take to protect themselves.

In a telephone survey of over 4,000 Canadians, respondents were presented with a series of paired forced choices, and asked to indicate which piece of information they felt was most important to know during a pandemic. Seven different types of information were tested and the two most important were considered to be "how to protect yourself" (71 percent) and "how to prevent the disease from spreading" (68 percent). These research results will be used to guide the development of the *Influenza A* pandemic communication plan, including the development of the key messages.

It is expected that the upcoming year will be equally busy, as health remains a top public priority. Some issues to be explored in the next fiscal year include the value of direct mail, seniors' issues, and research to support the development of the new food guide.

Human Resources and Skills Development Canada

Public opinion research provides valuable insights on public awareness and attitudes relating to policies, programs and communications for the federal government's human capital development agenda.

Access to post-secondary education is a central component of the government's skills and learning agenda, and Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) has a number of initiatives designed to alleviate the financial burden of pursuing post-secondary education.

A qualitative-quantitative study was launched on issues related to the Canada Learning Bond (CLB) and the Canada Education Savings Grant (CESG) this past year to establish baseline levels of awareness and attitudes toward saving for education among the general public and among low- to middle-income parents, as well as to explore potential communications approaches. Proposed brochures on the CLB, CESG and the Registered Education Savings Plan (RESP) were also tested.

Again this year, HRSDC conducted its annual tracking survey on attitudes toward Employment Insurance (EI). The Department has been conducting this survey since 1998. The survey tracks fundamental attitudes toward the EI system and measures the public's awareness levels and areas of concern for reform. Findings surrounding several key issues have shown little change over the tracking history. Over the past four years, Canadians have continued to support keeping a reserve within EI, and general perceptions of the EI program have essentially not changed in three years. Similarly, there has been little change in Canadians' opinions about whether the EI program encourages dependence or whether it provides a bridge to a new job. Other key indicators reveal the continuation of two noticeable trends: since 1998, the public has increasingly perceived the EI program to be fair, and the public's level of economic optimism has increased over the past four years.

Other public opinion research included qualitative research on the Service Canada initiative, and research toward the development of the Workplace Skills Strategy. The Department is planning research on skills development, learning, post-secondary education, workplace issues, and employment benefits and support measures.

Natural Resources Canada

In 2004–2005, Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) used public opinion research to inform and support the wide range of activities undertaken by the Department in its role as the promoter of sustainable use and development of natural resources, energy, minerals, metals, forests and earth sciences.

A large share of this research supported policy and program development and communications activities in the areas of the environment, energy efficiency and climate change. In partnership with Environment Canada, this included baseline and tracking studies with Canadians related to:

- understanding climate change and its impacts;
- awareness and support for the Kyoto Protocol; and
- attitudes toward energy efficiency, conservation and the One Tonne Challenge (OTC).

NRCan used public opinion research to open new areas of understanding (e.g., perceptions of fuel cell and hydrogen technologies), hear views on key policy issues (e.g., British Columbians on the offshore oil and gas moratorium) and better understand key client groups and partners (e.g., Canadian drivers on fuel efficiency as a car purchase consideration, car dealership employees, and managers of the *Fuel Consumption Guide* and labelling program). The Department used the standard Government of Canada Advertising Campaign Evaluation Tool to measure the impact of the major TV, radio and print campaign for the One Tonne Challenge, featuring Rick Mercer and Pierre Lebeau. The results of two national surveys indicated the campaign was a success in reaching and informing Canadians about the OTC and its messages.

NRCan invested in subscription and syndicated research to enhance the public's understanding of environmental issues and allow cost-effective investigation of opinions among special audiences such as the business community and Northern Canadians, and on key issues, including comparative research into Canadian and American attitudes about energy and sustainable development.

Web site development and evaluation continued to account for a significant share of the NRCan research program, with a number of projects aimed at maximizing Canadians' access to resources and services in a range of priority areas, such as the Government of Canada's climate change and One-Tonne Challenge Web sites (the latter included usability testing of the online Greenhouse Gas Emissions Calculator for Canadians), *The Atlas of Canada*, the main Web site for the Office of Energy Efficiency, and the Science and Technology for Canadians Portal site.

Foreign Affairs Canada and International Trade Canada

Foreign Affairs Canada and International Trade Canada use public opinion research extensively to track Canadian attitudes about international issues, such as security, diplomacy and development. Views on the relationship between Canada and the United States are monitored closely, as are opinions on multilateral and bilateral organizations and agreements. The departments carry out this work through syndicated, omnibus and custom public opinion research that is augmented by surveys that are available to the departments without cost.

An important research project this year was a study on international trade that involved focus groups in key cities across Canada as well as surveys of decision makers. The objective was to investigate views on trade and social values to determine the extent to which social values match current trade policy. As well, the departments needed to better understand the environment in which trade communicators operate.

The study showed that Canadians generally do not understand the trade process, but are aware that it shapes the world in a fundamental way. Also, decision makers generally approve of current trade policy and the directions taken by the departments. These findings will influence communication approaches. Decision makers strongly support trade diversification, especially in the Pacific Rim and China together with new and emerging markets. There is a desire for new multilateral and bilateral trade agreements to protect Canadian investments abroad, and decision makers want greater access to market intelligence. The majority favours regulating foreign investment in Canada.

The participants in the study from the general public held reservations about trading with countries with poor human rights, labour and environmental records, but they recognized that trade in such places boosted the economies in those countries and improved the standard of living.

Participants see trade as increasingly important to Canada over the next decade, with strong support for trade diversification. This is driven in part by the view that the United States is too quick to employ trade barriers. Participants believe diversification will help Canada become a bigger influence internationally. There is a concern, however, that foreign investment threatens Canadian sovereignty across a wide range of industrial sectors.

The findings influence current departmental trade objectives and contribute to a better understanding of public attitudes.

Canadian Heritage

Last year, Canadian Heritage's public opinion research was marked by participation in several horizontal initiatives, including interdepartmental projects such as the National Survey on the Quality of Life in Canadian Communities and the Healthy Living Initiative, as well as syndicated studies, including a survey of Aboriginal people living on reserves; Understanding Diversity, a survey conducted among multi-ethnic Canadians; North of 60, a survey of Canadians living in the North; and Reconnecting Government with Youth, a study carried out among young Canadians. These horizontal initiatives enabled the Department to share costs, as well as new knowledge about matters of common interest concerning specific target groups.

This year, public opinion research activities will be carried out in connection with major initiatives in which Canada will take part, such as the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Games and Expo 2008 in Saragossa, Spain. Canadian Heritage is planning to continue its research efforts to support Aboriginal cultures and languages. There are also plans to conduct a comprehensive study related to magazines among Canadians. Lastly, the Department will continue to communicate an accurate account of the use of new media and their effects on Canadian cultural content and copyright.

The months of preparation that went into the national survey entitled Reading and Buying Books for Pleasure paid off, since the survey produced a wealth of data that enabled the Department to determine the importance of books in the lives of Canadians. The results showed that reading books for pleasure is popular in Canada. The base sample (representative of the Canadian population) consisted of 1,579 Canadians aged 16 and up. An oversample of 384 respondents from official language minority communities was added to the base sample. This allowed Canadian Heritage to measure the differences in habits and attitudes between Canadians from majority and minority official language communities. In addition, the Department was able to make observations about books as tools for cultural development.

Canada Revenue Agency

The Canada Revenue Agency's (CRA) public opinion research investments relate to the programs and services it offers the public. In 2004–2005, the CRA concluded its fifth large-scale survey of high-level opinion indicators. Given the changes to the CRA's structure and operational mandate, the annual survey was reviewed and redesigned to reflect new organizational realities and needs. Part of the redesign process included research into the public's experiences with, and expectations of, the CRA. The new CRA Corporate Annual Survey is scheduled for launch in early fiscal year 2005–2006.

In 2004–2005, the CRA evaluated new on-line service offerings, including View My Return and My Business Account, and the usability of its Web site. The CRA also undertook research to update its understanding of entrepreneurs and homeowners' perceptions, as well as motivations and attitudes toward participating in the underground economy in the home renovation sector.

Finally, the second CRA Web Site User Survey provided demographic and behavioural profiles, measured satisfaction with various aspects of the Web site and explored the relationship between the Agency's telephone and Internet service channels. This large-scale initiative will be an annual project that will help identify and track trends.

Industry Canada

Industry Canada conducted a variety of syndicated and custom public opinion research in 2004–2005, tracking policy issues as well as economic and social trends among the general public, business audiences, academics and other professionals.

The Department continued its extensive research into topics related to the digital revolution, and continued its coordination of an interdepartmental tracking program of public opinion research on issues related to emerging technologies such as biotechnology. Client satisfaction and Web testing studies continued to comprise an important component of the Department's research efforts.

The second Industry Canada Annual Study probed the views of the Canadian public and business audiences regarding Industry Canada priorities and performance, especially as they relate to government efforts to promote innovation and research and development in Canada and among Canadian businesses.

The Department undertook a quantitative research project in 2004–2005 among self-employed individuals with four or fewer employees, including those who had been in business for less than one year. The study also consisted of interviewing trusted third parties—representatives of trade and industry associations, chambers of commerce/boards of trade, lawyers, accountants and other intermediaries who aid self-employed entrepreneurs. The survey found that entrepreneurs are concerned about financing for their businesses, and agree that there is a role for government in assisting small business. Survey participants expressed interest in learning more about the government services available to them.

In 2005–2006, Industry Canada intends to expand its research efforts in the business community, including nascent and potential entrepreneurs, and trusted third-party intermediaries.

Public Works and Government Services Canada

Public opinion research plays a critical role in evaluating the services offered by Public Works and Government Services Canada (PWGSC) to other government departments and the Canadian public.

As a common service provider for other government departments, public opinion research at PWGSC focuses mostly on customer satisfaction. Following the creation of the Government Information Services Branch in 2004–2005, PWGSC also used public opinion research to evaluate the services it delivers directly to Canadians, including the Canada Site, Canada Pavilion and Canada Enquiry Centre. Other projects consisted of using research to help forecast emerging trends and issues in government and to obtain input into perceptions and attitudes toward government access channels (in person, telephone, mail and on-line).

One key PWGSC research projectthe largest conducted in 2004–2005—was designed to gauge how the Government of Canada could better provide the public, Canadian businesses and international clients with a coherent Internet presence for delivering information and services. Using focus groups and on-line surveys, the quantitative and qualitative study examined the current behaviour and preferences of Internet users in Canada and the United States for accessing government information and services on-line. The study also looked at reactions to possible models for on-line information and service delivery in the future. The results of the study will help in the development of a strategy to guide on-line service delivery government-wide, beyond the end of the Government On-Line initiative.

Looking ahead, the Department's focus on client satisfaction surveys will continue through the next fiscal year and beyond. Most notably, PWGSC is undertaking a three-year longitudinal study aimed at evaluating and analyzing other government departments' satisfaction with The Way Forward initiative—the Department's plan to transform the way it does business and improve its services. This public opinion research initiative is expected to play a significant role in the ongoing implementation of The Way Forward, helping to further define and chart PWGSC's future.

Finance Canada

Finance Canada's public opinion research activities during 2004–2005 included both qualitative and quantitative analysis of Canadians' views on economic and fiscal issues. Specifically, as in previous years, the Department commissioned polling and focus groups prior to the 2004 Economic and Fiscal Update and again prior to Budget 2005.

The polling component of this ongoing research, featuring sample sizes of 1,800, contains a core tracking section that allows Finance Canada to monitor trends in public opinion on fundamental economic issues over several years (e.g., deficit). Beyond this core section, the Department also seeks the public's views on Government of Canada priorities. For qualitative research, Finance Canada typically sets up 10 focus groups in five cities across Canada to ensure adequate regional representation. This research provides valuable input to the development of policies and proposals for government action. The Department therefore intends to continue doing similar research in advance of future budgets and updates.

Finance Canada researches other issues of interest to the Department as the need arises, for example:

- In the summer of 2004, the Department contracted for polling and focus groups on the retail debt program and on coinage.
- During the winter months, the federal government's transfers to provinces and territories were the subject of focus groups.

Social Development Canada

Public opinion research plays a crucial role in helping Social Development Canada (SDC) fulfill its mission to strengthen Canada's social foundations by supporting the well-being of individuals, families and communities through citizen-focused policies, programs and services. Public opinion research, combined with media analysis and public involvement initiatives, enables the Department to meet the expectations of Canadians.

The 2004 Speech from the Throne included a commitment from the government to create a nationwide early learning and child care program. To that end, SDC conducted a comprehensive national public opinion survey on early learning and child care. The study explored three broad areas: public patterns of usage and satisfaction with child care, specific directions for child care (e.g., attitudes toward regulation, government roles) and awareness of the importance of early childhood development.

A telephone survey was conducted among a representative group of 2,006 adult Canadians. The sample included an oversample of Aboriginal Canadians. A key component of the study was to examine the views of parents and, more specifically, to speak with parents of young children about their experiences with child care. Other public opinion research conducted for the SDC included qualitative research with employers to explore employment issues surrounding people with disabilities and research to test concepts related to SDC's mandate, as well as quantitative research to evaluate the effectiveness of communications products.

Possible future research will involve issues relating to caregivers and their families, poverty (including child poverty) and seniors. Pre- and post-campaign research will also be conducted to test the effectiveness of two planned advertising initiatives: Services for Seniors and Services for Persons with Disabilities.

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Research Firms Rankings

Top Research Firms for All Coordinated Public Opinion Research by Contract Value

Firm	Contract Value (Thousands of dollars)	Number of Projects
EKOS Research Associates	5,315	113
Environics Research Group	4,755	83
Ipsos-Reid	3,960	94
Phase 5 Consulting Group	2,275	40
Decima Research	1,600	37
Phoenix Strategic Perspectives	1,313	30
Les Études de Marché Créatec +	1,231	15
Corporate Research Associates	967	25
The Strategic Counsel	779	11
GPC International	689	10

This fiscal year the Government of Canada used the services of 74 research firms to fulfill its public opinion research needs (both for custom research and syndicated studies). EKOS Research Associates was the most active research supplier to the Government of Canada, both in the number of projects (113) and contract value (\$5.3 million). Environics Research Group was the second most active with 83 projects and an approximate contract value of \$4.8 million. A complete listing of all the firms can be found in Appendix Two.

Top Research Firms for Coordinated Custom Research by Contract Value

Firm	Contract Value (Thousands of dollars)	Number of Projects
Environics Research Group	3,940	52
EKOS Research Associates	3,890	62
Ipsos-Reid	3,350	59
Phase 5 Consulting Group	2,275	40
Decima Research	1,572	34
Les Études de Marché Créatec +	1,231	15
Phoenix Strategic Perspectives	1,181	24
Corporate Research Associates	923	21
The Strategic Counsel	779	11
GPC International	665	9

Although EKOS Research Associates undertook the most projects (62), the value of this firm's contracts was slightly lower than the Environics Research Group's, which undertook 52 projects. Ipsos-Reid was second in terms of the number of projects (59), but third based on contract value.

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Top Research Firms for Coordinated Syndicated Studies by Contract Value

Firm	Contract Value (Thousands of dollars)
EKOS Research Associates	1,425
Environics Research Group	815
Ipsos-Reid	610
Phoenix Strategic Perspectives	132
Solutions Research Group	119
D-Code	107
CROP	100
GlobeScan	66
Institute of Public Administration of Canada	64
War Child Canada	48

Government departments and agencies subscribed to syndicated studies undertaken by 22 different research firms during the year. EKOS Research Associates' syndicated studies accounted for 37 percent of the total contract value for the Government of Canada. Some of EKOS' top syndicated studies included *Rethinking Government*, *The Security Monitor*, and *Rethinking the Information Highway*. Environics Research Group was the second-most active, with its top studies including *Focus Canada* and *North of 60 and Remote Community Monitor*. Ipsos-Reid was the third-most active firm for syndicated studies in 2004–2005, with contributions including *Trend Report* and *Reconnecting Government with Youth*.

A thematic listing of syndicated studies is provided in Appendix Three.

Appendix One

Complete Listing of Departments and Agencies by Contract Value

Department/Agency	Contract Value (Thousands of dollars)	Number of Projects
Health Canada	6,248	106
Human Resources and Skills Development Canada	2,033	36
Natural Resources Canada	1,701	39
Foreign Affairs Canada and International Trade Canada	1,415	21
Canadian Heritage	1,392	37
Canada Revenue Agency	1,261	26
Industry Canada	1,216	34
Public Works and Government Services Canada	1,195	24
Finance Canada	1,051	17
Social Development Canada	1,047	24
Transport Canada	892	14
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada	882	14
Environment Canada	844	28
National Defence	713	13
Indian and Northern Affairs Canada	611	19
Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Canada	562	9
Veterans Affairs Canada	560	8
Citizenship and Immigration Canada	521	17
Parks Canada	493	13
Fisheries and Oceans Canada	405	9
Justice Canada, Department of	389	15
Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat	355	8

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Department/Agency	Contract Value	Number of Projects
Public Service Human Resources Management Agency of Canad	DA 329	7
Privy Council Office	316	13
Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency	195	7
Canadian International Development Agency	193	9
Canadian Institutes of Health Research	186	3
Royal Canadian Mounted Police	186	3
National Research Council Canada	184	2
Canadian Space Agency	181	3
Financial Consumer Agency of Canada	154	2
Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions	153	2
Public Service Commission	150	2
Statistics Canada	139	7
Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages	138	4
Passport Office	111	2
Canadian Food Inspection Agency	89	4
Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions	85	1
Western Economic Diversification Canada	83	4
National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy	59	2
Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada	59	2
Canada School of Public Service	48	1
Security Intelligence Review Committee	43	1
Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council	27	1
Correctional Service Canada	24	1
Library and Archives Canada	23	2
Infrastructure Canada	22	1
Communication Security Establishment	21	1
Canada Border Services Agency	21	1
Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commissi	on 20	1
Public Service Staff Relations Board	15	1

Complete Listing of Departments and Agencies by Contract Value (Continued)

Appendix Two

Complete Listing of Research Firms (74) by Contract Value

Firm	Contract Value (Thousands of dollars)	Number of Projects
EKOS Research Associates	5,315	113
Environics Research Group	4,755	83
Ipsos-Reid	3,960	94
Phase 5 Consulting Group	2,275	40
Decima Research	1,600	37
Phoenix Strategic Perspectives	1,313	30
Les Études de Marché Créatec +	1,231	15
Corporate Research Associates	967	25
The Strategic Counsel	779	11
GPC International	689	10
Millward Brown Goldfarb	629	8
Sage Research	556	13
TNS Canadian Facts	544	11
Patterson, Langlois Consultants	479	9
Circum Network	448	9
Western Opinion Research	398	6
Royal Canadian Legion	314	1
GlobeScan	313	11
CROP	234	7
Earnscliffe Strategy Group	216	3
D-Code	206	6
Prairie Research Associates	159	1

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Firm	Contract Value (Thousands of dollars)	Number of Projects
Delta Media	136	6
Solutions Research Group	119	3
Pollara	112	5
Maskery	83	2
The Antima Group	74	3
Institute of Public Administration of Canada	64	2
Aboriginal Research Institute	60	1
Bath & Associates	53	3
Performance Management Network	50	2
Strathmere Associates International	50	2
War Child Canada	48	2
ACNIELSEN	47	3
SQM Group	44	2
Pixelera e-Business Solutions	38	2
Bristol Group	37	1
Public Affairs & Community Enterprises	32	1
Traffic Injury Research Foundation of Canada	32	1
Poirier Communications	30	2
EVP, The Logit Group	25	1
TDV Global	25	1
Orihwa	25	1
Écho Sondage	25	1
Deloitte	25	1
Orbis Partners	24	1
Duxbury, Higgins & Associates	24	1
Decision Partners	24	1

Complete Listing of Research Firms (74) by Contract Value (Continued)

Firm	Contract Value (Thousands of dollars)	Number of Projects
Clear Picture Corporation	23	1
Research Resolutions & Consulting	22	1
IBM Business Consulting Services	22	1
Intoinfo Consulting Group	22	1
Probe Research	22	2
Contentworks	22	1
Goss, Gilroy & Associates	22	1
CoEd Communications	20	1
Research Innovations	18	1
Desjardins Marketing Stratégique	17	1
Canadian Policy Research Networks	16	1
Malatest & Associates	15	1
University of Alberta	15	1
Eos Research & Consulting	15	1
Ad Hoc Marketing	13	1
Canadian Media Research Consortium	11	1
OCETA – Ontario Centre for Environmental Technology Advancement	11	1
PICUS	10	1
Purple Dog Consulting	9	1
One World	6	1
The Omega Network	5	1
DataPath Systems	5	1
American Association of Research Libraries	5	1
ViewStats Research	4	1
CSA Convergence	3	1
Vision Research	3	1

Complete Listing of Research Firms (74) by Contract Value (Continued)

Appendix Three

Thematic Listing of Syndicated Studies in 2004–2005

The Government of Canada subscribed to various syndicated studies that dealt with a variety of issues. Below is a thematic listing of these studies.

National Public Opinion Overviews

3SC (CROP and Environics Research Group) Canadian Farm Trends Report (Ipsos-Reid) Citizens First (Institute of Public Administration of Canada) Engage Canada: Citizen Regeneration Phase II (D-Code) Focus Canada (Environics Research Group) *Focus 50* (Environics Research Group) Government Service and Satisfaction (Ipsos-Reid) Perspectives Canada (Pollara) Rethinking Citizen Engagement (EKOS Research Associates) Rethinking Government (EKOS Research Associates) The Ipsos Trend Report Canada (Ipsos-Reid)

Regional Reports

Aboriginal People in Manitoba (Probe Research) Atlantic Omnibus Report (Corporate Research Associates) North of 60 and Remote Community Monitor (Environics Research Group) Saskatchewan First Nations High School Student Survey (Western Opinion Research) CROP-Express (CROP)

International Issues

Canada Plus: The Ties that Bind (GPC International) Corporate Social Responsibility Monitor (GlobeScan) Food Issues Monitor (GlobeScan) Global Issues Monitor (GlobeScan) Outlook – A War Child Canada Report on Youth and International Affairs (War Child Canada) Reconnecting Government with Youth (Ipsos-Reid) Rethinking Energy and Sustainable Development (EKOS Research Associates) Rethinking North American Integration (EKOS Research Associates)

Rethinking Work: Understanding the New North American Workforce and Workplace (EKOS Research Associates) World Monitor (Ipsos-Reid)

Health Issues

A Clear Perspective (Probe Research) Food Trends: The Carb Monitor (Ipsos-Reid) Differences and Attitudes about Second Hand Smoke Between Youth and Adult Smokers and Non-Smokers (Environics Research Group) Health Insider (IBM Business Consulting Services) Weight Loss Trends Study (ACNielsen)

High Technology, Innovation and Internet

The Canadian Inter@ctive Reid Report (Ipsos-Reid) Canadian Internet Project (Canadian Media Research Consortium) E-Business in Agriculture (Ipsos-Reid) Fast Forward (Solutions Research Group) Internet Planner (ACNielsen) Rethinking the Information Highway (EKOS Research Associates)

Society

First Nations People On-Reserve (EKOS Research Associates) Rethinking Science and Society (EKOS Research Associates) Understanding Diversity (Solutions Research Group) Understanding Generational Differences in Work Values and Job Satisfaction: Implications for HR Practitioners, Managers and Employers (Canadian Policy Research Networks) Urban Umbrella (Public Affairs and Community Enterprises Consulting)

Security

Public Security Monitor (EKOS Research Associates) Road Safety Monitor (Traffic Injury Research Foundation of Canada)

Business/Economic Issues

Automotive Purchase Considerations in Canada (Decima Research) Corporate Connection (Phoenix Strategic Perspectives) The Canadian Small Medium Enterprises Report (Corporate Research Associates)

Marketing/Communications

Agricultural Communications Review (Ipsos-Reid) Canadian Business Media Relations Review (Ipsos-Reid) Canadian Media Relations Review (Ipsos-Reid) Quarterly Report on Public Affairs Trends (Decima Research)

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Appendix Four

Standing Offers and Supply Arrangements for 2004–2007

Standing Offers 2004–2007

Series A—Qualitative Research

- The Strategic Counsel
- Environics Research Group
- Earnscliffe Strategy Group
- Ipsos-Reid
- Phoenix Strategic Perspectives
- Sage Research
- EKOS Research Associates
- TNS Canadian Facts
- Western Opinion Research
- Patterson Langlois Consultants
- Corporate Research Associates
- Decima Research
- Millward Brown Goldfarb
- Les Études de Marché Créatec +
- Pollara

Series B—Quantitative Research

- Environics Research Group
- The Strategic Counsel
- Ipsos-Reid
- Corporate Research Associates
- Phoenix Strategic Perspectives
- Millward Brown Goldfarb

- Les Études de Marché Créatec +
- Decima Research
- Pollara
- GPC International
- EKOS Research Associates
- TNS Canadian Facts
- Earnscliffe Strategy Group

Series C—Qualitative and/or Quantitative Research

- Environics Research Group
- The Strategic Counsel
- Ipsos-Reid
- Phoenix Strategic Perspectives
- EKOS Research Associates
- TNS Canadian Facts
- Earnscliffe Strategy Group
- Corporate Research Associates
- Decima Research
- Les Études de Marché Créatec +
- Millward Brown Goldfarb
- Pollara

Supply Arrangements 2004–2007

Series A—Qualitative Research

- Earnscliffe Strategy Group
- Environics Research Group
- The Strategic Counsel
- Ipsos-Reid
- Phoenix Strategic Perspectives
- Decima Research
- Les Études de Marché Créatec +
- Sage Research
- TNS Canadian Facts
- EKOS Research Associates
- Millward Brown Goldfarb
- Phase 5 Consulting Groups
- Corporate Research Associates
- Western Opinion Research
- Vision Research
- Patterson Langlois Consultants
- GPC International
- Goldfarb Intelligence Marketing
- Pollara

Series B—Quantitative Research

- Environics Research Group
- Phoenix Strategic Perspectives
- The Strategic Counsel
- Millward Brown Goldfarb
- Decima Research
- Ipsos-Reid
- Les Études de Marché Créatec +

- Pollara
- EKOS Research Associates
- TNS Canadian Facts
- Earnscliffe Strategy Group
- Corporate Research Associates
- GPC International
- Corum Continuum Research
- Léger Marketing

Series C—Qualitative and/or Quantitative Research

- Environics Research Group
- The Strategic Counsel
- Phoenix Strategic Perspectives
- Decima Research
- Ipsos-Reid
- Earnscliffe Strategy Group
- Les Études de Marché Créatec +
- Millward Brown Goldfarb
- EKOS Research Associates
- TNS Canadian Facts
- Corporate Research Associates
- Pollara
- GPC International

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