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Workplace and Workforce Task Force

Compendium of Practical Approaches

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Table of Contents

PART I - Summary

Lessons Learned

Workplace and Workforce Task Force	
Summary of Consultation Process	5

PART II - Compendium

Bilingualism

Co-operation and Collaboration to Meet Language Training Needs	13
Peer Support	14
Exchanges and Assignments	14
Management Participation	15
Building on Other Resources and Programs	15
Using Champions and Departmental Committees	18
Language and Culture	18
Role of Employees in Language Training	19

Diversity

Education and Awareness	23
Proactive Development and Recruitment	25
Networks and Committees	28
Management Engagement	30

Communications

New Technology	33
Internal Communications	33
Networks	35
Professional Development and Learning	37

Leadership and Public Service Renewal

Leadership and Public Service Renewal	39
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Lessons Learned

Workplace and Workforce Task Force

Summary of Consultation Process

In August 2008, the Clerk of the Privy Council and Secretary to the Cabinet, Mr. Kevin Lynch asked me to conduct a one-person task force on behalf of the Deputy Ministers community to explore ideas and practical approaches in three main areas that impact on our workplace environment and our effectiveness as the Public Service of Canada. These areas include creating and promoting an effectively bilingual Public Service throughout Canada, improving lines of communication, and promoting diversity.

These issues are not new to the Public Service. In fact, a great deal of work has been done and continues to be done on these files by various departments and agencies. Practical approaches are being implemented within current policy frameworks that have been proven successful and that are having a positive impact in the workplace. However, knowledge of these practices is often limited to the departments and regions in which they are occurring. I have discovered that there is no lack of initiative, commitment and passion in our regions and in the National Capital Region. People throughout the Public Service are trying new and innovative approaches in addressing these issues and many more.

In a series of 16 consultations held between March and June 2009 across all regions of the country – with 214 public servants at all levels, from 38 departments and agencies – in addition to many discussions with my fellow Deputies, I have had an opportunity to hear employees speak with passion and commitment about the kind of public service in which they want to work and what they are doing to create that workplace. These conversations led me to draw some conclusions, which I have generally called “lessons learned”. These conclusions or lessons learned constitute the first part of this document. In the second part, a Compendium of Practical Approaches, you will find a list of the approaches that they shared with me. What was striking is that most of the practical approaches and ideas go beyond the specifics of diversity, bilingualism and communication. They speak to good management practices and underscore important approaches that leaders at all levels are taking to create an

effective and productive public service, one that espouses the values of bilingualism, diversity and good communication. The brief descriptions of those approaches will, I hope, spark your interest in learning more about how they are operating and their positive results.

1. We are Adopting Innovative Approaches

We know that cultural change is not an overnight proposition – it takes time and commitment at all levels and requires the building of trust and strong evidence of senior management support for trying new ways to fulfill responsibilities. As an example, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) has begun holding webcasts with senior managers and employees across the country to discuss good practices, exchange ideas, and demonstrate that initiative and innovation can make a difference.

“Fisheries and Oceans Canada mobilizes employment equity champions from all regions through three-day interactive mini-conferences, and holds two-day sessions with all managers responsible for recruitment to increase recruitment in the four employment equity groups.”

We need to deliberately build diversity within our departments and we need to name diversity as a core value. One participant suggested that we need a shift in perspective within the Public Service – from one of obligation and numbers to one of opportunity to capitalize on diverse perspectives. That opportunity requires a shared responsibility between management and employees. It is demonstrated in the visible personal commitment to change in all regions, led by individuals at all levels, who have vision and perseverance.

2. Leadership is Key

While many of the approaches explored in the consultations were employee-driven, there is a strong recognition that when senior management supports initiatives within their respective departments, results are achieved, whether it is in creating an effectively bilingual workplace or hiring and developing members of equity groups, therefore, promoting diversity. One participant from the Department of National Defence (DND) drew the

distinction between leadership and management: Managers do things right; leaders do the right thing. Leadership is influencing human behaviour.

“Natural Resources Canada established the first wiki in the Public Service in 2007 as a cultural change initiative, not a technology initiative or communications initiative. It has resulted in a more dynamic way for employees to work together and share information.”

All participants recognized that leadership can arise from any level within the organization. They emphasized the need to encourage initiatives and do the right thing. Senior management must support new initiatives that contribute to changing the culture – building trust in the professionalism of our staff. We need to encourage and support staff, send clear signals and recognize positive practices.

3. Managers Matter

It is not only senior managers who lead. Public service managers have a unique role – they are positioned between senior management and the front lines and are integral to our success or failure. They lead the implementation of government policy and programs, they recruit our next generation of public servants, and they motivate and coach them in the performance of their roles. Managers are also the recruitment pool for senior management positions. They set the tone for the future evolution of the Public Service.

“As part of their approach to improving performance management, the National Managers Community developed one-day workshops entitled *Coaching Practices for Managers*. Volunteer managers are now delivering them throughout the country.”

4. Networks are Catalysts for Action

Perhaps one of the most striking observations from my conversations around the country relates to the important role that federal councils play in the regions of Canada. As is illustrated in many of the examples, federal councils are the catalysts in bringing departments together to support the development of the Public Service in the three areas I was looking into and in many other areas.

They act as a convening forum to make things happen at the regional level through a voluntary process which represents the interest of participants and emphasizes the value of working together to accomplish mutual goals. This role of horizontal facilitation was especially important in regions where single departments did not have critical mass to carry out in-house initiatives. The unique role played by federal councils was evident in their ability to assist the process for this taskforce, thereby ensuring that participants were selected in each of the regions.

Similar to federal councils, groups such as the National Managers Community, youth forums, future leaders groups and functional groups facilitated joint learning and development in ways that would not otherwise occur. In many instances, federal councils provide the light infrastructure needed to sponsor and support these networks which have limited financial resources.

“Federal councils are the catalysts to bring departments together in regions where individual departments do not have critical mass to carry-out in-house initiatives like language training, activities with official language groups and targeted recruitment of members of equity groups.”

Not all networks are formal. A Visible Minority Executive Networking Group was established about a year and a half ago as an informal group to provide a forum for visible minority executives to network and enhance the representation of visible minorities in the executive cadre of government. There is no formal structure and networking events are coordinated by volunteers.

Networks are key instruments in ensuring communication and providing support for the adoption of innovative practical approaches. It is happening organically in regions, but is a greater challenge in Ottawa. It is interesting that the model built by the federal councils is now inspiring public servants in the National Capital Region (NCR) to create an umbrella of networks, and to bring together existing networks and functional communities in the NCR to support collaboration, co-operation and engagement on public service renewal.

5. We Have the Structure and Tools We Need

In order to have an effectively bilingual and diverse public service, there is no need to create new policies, tools or programs. What we need exists; the tools and supports are there. Senior management and employees are using these tools and working in partnership where needed. We need to foster an environment where managers understand that building the public service is their responsibility and in which they are given the latitude and support to take on initiatives that will serve that objective.

“Service Canada has a program that allows PM-05 to EX-01 managers from the Québec and Ontario regions who are nearing the completion of their language training or maintaining their level of proficiency to work in the other region to experience full second-language immersion on a team from their respective business lines.”

The recently announced changes to the human resources governance structure offer an opportunity to Deputy Ministers who are accountable for people management in their departments and agencies. By using the flexibility afforded in carrying out those responsibilities, we can capitalize on the tremendous desire for responsibility and change evident in my discussions with public servants.

The Public Service Renewal 2009-2010 Action Plan highlights that employee engagement in renewal, the active involvement of Deputy Heads and managers at all levels, and the implementation of practical approaches to create a more diverse and representative workforce will be essential.

6. Diversity is More Than We Think it is

Diversity is bigger than employment numbers of equity group members – it is about capitalizing on the richness of different and new perspectives based on generational, gender, geographic, cultural and ethnic representation. In every session, participants illustrated connections between diversity, official languages and leadership development in general. The new generation of public servants doesn't see diversity as an issue, but as a fact of life and evidence of the changing demographics. Building a public service strong in diversity and official languages is, to them, about development and support for employees, and about responsibility – it is the

logical thing to do. They want an open dialogue, an opportunity to challenge the status quo, and support for development growth. We need to create opportunities for people to tell their stories in ways that can inform and influence managers.

For example, with our diverse populations in Toronto, Vancouver and Montréal, participants stressed the value of an open and honest dialogue with respect to diversity – meaning diversity of perspective that comes from culture, gender, experiences and geographic locations. Many departments have encouraged this conversation. For example, at the Canadian Food Inspection Agency and Public Works and Government Services Canada, they have created regional Employment Equity (EE) councils and forums chaired by senior managers. These forums allow employees to share viewpoints and organize initiatives that support EE and diversity. It was underlined by all participants that it is this kind of action and commitment to culture change that counts.

“Canada Revenue Agency found it difficult to attract Aboriginals with accounting knowledge, so they established a targeted recruitment program that provides an apprenticeship program for Aboriginal employees.”

Visible minority community representation is still an issue at senior management levels, and there are examples of departments taking action. Participants provided examples of approaches to recruitment of Aboriginal peoples and visible minorities that encouraged proactive connection with communities, approaches to ensure bias-free decision making in selection processes, leadership development programs, and affinity groups that offer safe environments to explore challenges and solutions. Justice Canada uses a program called the *Objective Eye*, developed by Citizenship and Immigration Canada, which is about recognizing, then reducing bias in staffing processes. It has two components. The first is a learning component, an online course from the Canada School of Public Service, through *Campusdirect*, that helps managers to become more aware of and in tune with the bias that exist. The second component is a pool of trained/available board members. Departments and managers can go to this list, read peoples' qualifications and invite them to sit on competition boards to ensure diversity representation.

7. Creativity and Innovation Must be Liberated

As the practical approaches point out, public servants across the country have proven that, when given the opportunity and support, they can find creative and innovative ways to achieve excellent results in bilingualism and diversity. One individual from Statistics Canada in Vancouver discussed how he developed his capacity in French – his fourth language – using free resources available through the Internet. He accessed papers and radio stations from around the world, and participated in French language clubs where people from around the world can meet regularly to practice their language skills, increase their vocabulary and perfect their pronunciation.

“At the Conservation and Protection Branch, Pacific Region, Fisheries and Oceans significant changes in the process of recruitment has resulted in increased employee engagement and a more positive workplace.”

The key is to provide support – moral and otherwise – and you will get results. Allow people to work on new projects and find new ways to do things. The new generation of public servants bring with them new perspectives and new expectations. They are self-organizing and self-motivating. They want to be engaged and involved in decision making and to be part of the solutions to current challenges. This curiosity and willingness to challenge and change creates a perfect opportunity to find new ways to tackle long-standing issues – from language training, to hiring practices, to development opportunities. But, it is not just the role of new recruits – seasoned public servants have a major role to play in thinking through the proposed changes to ensure positive results and interconnectedness of changes.

“One Ottawa participant, a young public servant who is an active blogger on GCPEDIA writing about public service renewal, offered to post the results of this taskforce on-line to ensure broad access to the practical approaches coming from his colleagues.”

8. Necessity is in Fact the Mother of Invention

While it is certainly important to support and encourage people to be creative and innovative, often this creativity is born out of necessity. When a region or a department did not have the resources (financial or human) to approach an issue in a more traditional way, it found new ways to approach areas like language training, typically through collaboration and co-operation, but also by capitalizing on and adapting ideas that existed in the public service or in their communities. Each region of the country has addressed similar issues and found solutions that addressed their unique characteristics.

“The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) found it a challenge to recruit bilingual people and found that the normal year-long, full-time language program did not work for their demands, so the RCMP training centre in Regina developed a program that permits their members to obtain Level B in 13 weeks.”

All departments are developing innovative approaches to ensure that employees are able to provide service to the public in both official languages, including exchanges between regions. Parks Canada in Newfoundland and Labrador increased the level of bilingualism of its staff by offering intensive part-time language training to seasonal staff in rural areas, using local language instructors tested for federal standards. It has been cost-effective as they can train ten people locally for the cost of sending one person to St. John's for full-time language training.

Departments are also taking charge of future employees, as with the Canada Revenue Agency office in Prince Edward Island, which is providing language testing to co-op students to encourage them to become bilingual. Students who are interested in working for the public sector then have the opportunity to perfect their second language by taking the required electives when they go back to school.

While Canada has two official languages, the changing demographics and increasing diversity of citizens requires many public servants to use other

languages. Public servants in Toronto and Vancouver have taken concrete steps to address these changes. In Vancouver, participants talked about language trees at Passport Canada to identify staff with language skills who could be called upon as needed, and efforts by Health Canada to recruit in ethnic communities. The ability to speak additional languages is a definite asset and needs to be recognized and encouraged.

Passive bilingualism is a concept that the canada@150 participants embraced – the right to speak and be understood in your language of choice and the expectation that others will respond in the language of their choice.

9. Technology – An Essential Component

With the evolution of technology, public servants are finding interesting opportunities for connection. Social media in all its multiple forms, such as Facebook, Wiki and Twitter, are used by the new generation of public servants in their personal lives and they expect to have similar access at work, and have discovered ways to make it work for their work.

“canada@150 demonstrated the use of technology in work processes as they did all their group work through electronic media. For that group, there is no going back.”

GCPEDIA, the Government of Canada’s new wiki, now in proof of concept stage, already has strong supporters, communities of practice and individual public servants who use their blogs to reach out to colleagues across the country on issues that matter to their work. They see this tool as one step to address government-wide problems in a more systematic way.

“Health Canada has a staffing officer in Vancouver who works with a Chinese organization called *Success*, which is able to better explain the federal hiring process and help individuals tailor their CVs to better address staffing requirements. The department also uses the Chinese night market to do targeted outreach with immigrants coming from Asia, as well as outreach through Indian radio stations.”

There are many examples included in the practical approaches of individuals who have taken the initiative to be out in front of the curve – several Deputy Ministers are clear examples, through their use of wikis, electronic town halls, DM blogs and webcasts as ways to connect with their employees.

10. Personal Connection – An Underutilized Medium

Not all communication should take place electronically – face-to-face communication remains extremely important. Deputy Ministers are outreaching more and more beyond Ottawa, by travelling to our offices across the country. This recognizes the power in listening to diverse opinions, bringing ideas to the policy development process to ensure that decisions reflect all of the realities that will influence policy implementation. Capturing a diversity of perspectives leads to better decision making. As a side benefit, through this direct contact, Deputy Ministers can also encourage people in the regions – a large talent pool – to consider increased mobility for career development and to bring new perspectives to policy development.

“In Alberta, there is a group called *Franco-Allô*, led by a CRA employee, that has a weekly newsletter sent to over 250 people in various departments and francophone community groups, which provides information about language training and community events.”

We need to do more than to talk to each other. Across the country, there were numerous examples of employees reaching out to minority communities, to recruit and increase diversity and to provide better service to Canadians through those connections.

The process for this task force brought people together and asked them to put their successful innovative and practical approaches on the table. Seeing a Deputy Minister clearly in listening mode was perceived by participants as a very positive signal and they would welcome it more often. For me, it was also a learning experience. As a function of leadership, Deputy Ministers will want to keep innovation taking place within their departments evergreen.

The next steps for me will be to talk about my experience to various forums like the new Assistant Deputy Ministers Orientation, the Canada School of Public Service Armchair Sessions, the Advanced Leadership Program, the Deputy Minister Committee on Renewal of the Public Service, and the Prime Minister's Advisory Council on the Public Service. The findings and Compendium will be circulated by the Canada School of Public Service and the feasibility of using GCPEDIA as a discussion forum is being explored.

I must stress, however, that if this work only becomes a report, it will receive the same treatment as have excellent reports and work done by other Deputy Ministers before me. All the more reason to keep talking about what we do through all the means we have.

Bilingualism

Co-operation and Collaboration to Meet Language Training Needs

The Nova Scotia (NS) Federal Council has organized introduction courses to official languages, which last a few hours each week. The initiative was requested by employees as a way to improve and maintain their second language, and 95 people have taken part. A number of Nova Scotia employees have also participated in the council courses, and now the provincial government has enough demand to start its own similar program. According to the Canada School of Public Service (CSPS), in-house courses such as the ones offered by the council are important because they fill a gap that the School is not able to fill. This is a good model that should be taken across departments. *Contact: Sadie Sasine, Nova Scotia Federal Council*

Newfoundland and Labrador (NL) is not a designated bilingual region, yet there is a strong interest among staff in becoming bilingual. As the Commissioner of Official Languages has indicated, where people don't need to be bilingual there seems to be more passion to acquire a second language. In 2006 the CSPS did not have a capacity in NL, and this presented both a challenge and an opportunity for the NL Federal Council. In examining how to establish language training to meet the strong interest, the various departments in the province decided to come together and pool their financial resources. They entered a partnership with the school to hire a language coordinator, who developed a curriculum of intensive part-time training. Forty employees per year now benefit from the training provided. *Contact: Mark Butler, Newfoundland Federal Council*

For Parks Canada in Newfoundland and Labrador, increasing the level of bilingualism in rural areas was an imperative, albeit challenging, as all national parks must provide service in both official languages. The costs were prohibitive to send interested employees to St. John's for full time training. To respond to both need and interest, Parks Canada NL looked at the concept developed by the Federal Council and decided to implement the same approach in their Terra Nova National Park. They developed an inventory of French language teachers in the park area, and had them tested to meet standards. As Parks Canada makes use of a number of seasonal employees, they modified their program so that these employees could retain their benefits and do the part-time language training. They have

opened the program to all employees and to other people who work in the park. This has contributed to enhanced level of client service, and also has a positive influence on the workplace culture within the park. It has increased the potential mobility of park employees who now see opportunities in other provinces. It was also cost-effective as intensive part-time training for ten people in Terra Nova costs the same as sending one person for full-time training in St. John's. With this success, the program is now recognized as professional training for park employees, and is being implemented at Rocky Harbour in Gros Morne National Park. *Contact: Bill Brake, Parks Canada, Newfoundland*

Unlike other Canadian provinces, references to bilingualism in Québec most often denote the ability of francophones to speak English as a second language. According to an anglophone manager at the Department of Canadian Heritage, two different language training components are offered: one component is for new public servants, and the other is for more experienced people who have trouble gaining access to senior positions due to their second-language level.

The mandate of the Interdepartmental Official Languages Network (OLIN) in the Québec region, on which several departments are represented, is as follows:

- To exchange and share information and best practices in the area of official languages;
- To create partnerships in order to promote the pooling of interdepartmental projects and initiatives;
- To make recommendations to the Québec Federal Council – Official Languages (QFC-OL) on any initiative to help in the implementation of the Official Languages Program; and
- To support QFC-OL initiatives as required.

Network members meet face-to-face annually and can continue to share information through an internal website. OLIN creates partnerships with other groups to fulfil its mandate. For example, it joined the Québec Federal Managers' Network and organized a half-day of training to raise participants' awareness of the Public Service's official languages obligations. *Contact: Marie Chantal Girard, Québec Federal Council*

As part of their action plan on official languages, the Alberta Federal Council has come together

with the other western federal councils to develop a bilingual newsletter *Coup de pouce* with a topical focus for the four provinces. They also worked with the CSPS to put fun back into French by incorporating the cultural aspect through work with French communities. A module based system is being developed by Campus Saint Jean, that departments could adopt to fit with their needs.
Contact: Marcel Prévaille, Alberta Federal Council

In Saskatchewan, the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages (OCOL) co-chairs, with Francophone communities and the province, a Leaders Advisory Board in Official Languages to bring challenges and successes together to find solutions. Common events are held to share information on programs at all levels, and to put faces to why bilingualism is so important. Information is shared on language training and quality of service.
Contact: Jennifer Wessner, Office of Commissioner of Official Languages, Saskatchewan

In the Ontario region, the language of work is largely English and employees who have achieved a linguistic profile often lack the opportunity to practice speaking French. In response, the Ontario Federal Council launched a French language maintenance pilot project, supported by both the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages and the Canada School of Public Service. This ten-week pilot provided for professor-facilitated sessions at the B and C level. Evaluations showed that this pilot initiative was successful in helping employees maintain their levels and feel more confident in using French. It has been expanded into a continuing program of six classes that are now offered at four locations within the Greater Toronto Area, with participation from employees in 15 departments. This Ontario region initiative was cited as an excellent example of promoting a bilingual public service in the Commissioner of Official Languages' Report to the Prime Minister in 2008.
Contact: Joan Woodrow, Ontario Federal Council

Peer Support

In Nova Scotia, Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) organizes "Frunch" – a lunch held the same time and day each month where participants speak French during their lunch hour to practice their second language.
Contact: Jocelyne Langlois, Veterans Affairs Canada

There is an added challenge at Justice Canada where employees need to learn legal terminology in both languages. To meet that challenge, the department (NS region) has created a French practice group where a member of the group – which meets once a month – brings a case to review. Participants have the opportunity to ask questions about certain terms that are used in that month's particular case. Bilingual employees are helping others with their second language, which also helps them maintain their first language (i.e. especially French – considering that they work in a predominantly English environment).
Contact: Kim Duggan, Justice Canada, Nova Scotia

Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) has implemented a "buddy system" in which employee volunteers who have strong language skills are paired up with an employee wishing to improve his/her second language. Activities facilitating practicing language skills are organized twice a month for participants in this initiative.
Contact: Christina Scherf, Citizenship and Immigration Canada

Exchanges and Assignments

At Service Canada the need to find innovative methods to foster and improve managers' language abilities resulted in the proposal of a workplace exchange project. They have a program that allows PM-05 to EX-01 managers from the Québec and Ontario regions nearing the completion of their language training or maintaining their level of proficiency to work in the other region to experience full second-language immersion on a team from their respective business lines. Participants who benefit from this opportunity are required to commit to putting in the time and energy required to reach their individual learning objectives.
Contact: Lucie Bergeron, Service Canada

The Canada Revenue Agency Summerside Tax Centre (STC) participates in exchanges of employees from Québec who wish to improve their English language skills, and in turn employees from the centre spend a period of time working in an office in Québec to acquire and maintain their level in French. The STC is in the planning stages of doing an external bilingual team leader process. This will be promoted in the francophone communities. Federal employees on PEI are able to participate in a program called "For the Love of English/Pour l'amour du français". This is a software program that is compatible with Windows Vista, and employees can work individually and install it on their computer at home.
Contact: Jocelyn Anderson, Canada Revenue Agency

Veterans Affairs Canada's (VAC) headquarters is in Prince Edward Island – the only line department outside the NCR. A Montréal based director from VAC spent a month at headquarters in order to better understand the realities of the region, and an employee from PEI went to Montréal to learn more about the operation of a regional office and learn French. These exchanges were positive experiences that helped reduce the “us vs. them” syndrome. *Contact: Nancy Caron, Veterans Affairs Canada*

Management Participation

It's often been said that senior management should act as role models when it comes to bilingualism. During the session with canada@150 participants, it was learned that at Finance Canada, Assistant Deputy Minister (ADM) do just that. For example, during meetings ADMs will address people in their first language – be it English or French. So it's important for other people around the table to have an understanding of both languages if they are to keep up with the exchanges and not miss anything. *Contact: François Massé, Finance Canada*

Another example of senior management's role occurred when one of the participants started working at Treasury Board Secretariat (TBS), and his director asked him to work his files in French – his first language – although she and other senior managers were anglophones. She also makes sure to address some of the agenda items in French during meetings in order to promote inclusiveness and encourage bilingualism. *Contact: Zoiey Cobb, Treasury Board Secretariat*

At the Canadian Human Rights Commission (CHRC), senior managers are all anglophones but make a special effort to speak French during meetings. They want to ensure that all employees feel comfortable speaking in the language of their choice. Because of its particular mandate, CHRC is especially sensitive about inclusiveness – this is integrated in the department's culture. *Contact: Maciej Karpinski, Canadian Human Rights Commission*

Managers at Correctional Services Canada (CSC) in Québec are very conscious of the importance of bilingualism. In fact, to ensure that clients are served in the language of their choice, there are surprise phone calls to test whether employees are really answering members of the public in their first language. The facts on the ground keep managers abreast of their employees' ability to comply with their official languages obligations. *Contact: Zoulikha Kouider, Correctional Services Canada*

At Canada Revenue Agency, in order to encourage management to lead by example, a contest was started where employees vote for their manager based on his or her use of both official languages in the workplace. At the end of the voting period, a winner and runner-up are announced. This not only celebrates success but helps the organization in improving their use of both languages. *Contact: Jocelyne Rioux, Canada Revenue Agency*

Building on Other Resources and Programs

In Vancouver there is a strong emphasis on the need to officially recognize non-official language skills held by staff in providing service to clients. Passport Canada uses a language tree – listing staff with additional language skills who can be contacted should a client require support. This practice is good for the public, and also for staff morale. Statistics Canada's Ethno-Cultural Outreach Program permits interviews to be conducted in non-official languages. Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) participants in British Columbia indicated that co-op students have been a tremendous source for multiple language skills. CRA has relied on them throughout their four month placements and a number of them were subsequently hired, climbing quite quickly into higher-level positions. They also created an informal list of people who speak different languages, which resulted in increased efficiency. *Contact: Owen James, Canada Revenue Agency*

In order to meet the demand generated for bilingual positions, the Canada School of Public Service and the Nova Scotia Federal Council negotiated with the Université Ste-Anne to train bilingual administration staff and create a co-op program. Graduates can then be bridged into the public service. At CRA, bilingual employees who qualified for a CR-04 pool weren't necessarily being called because they didn't meet the positions' requirements. CRA decided to fully assess them and create a sub-pool. Five of the nine employees have since been placed into bilingual positions. *Contact: Sadie Sasine, Nova Scotia Federal Council*

At the New Brunswick region of the Atlantic Opportunities Agency (ACOA), staff took advantage of a popular program to organize an in-house Toastmasters chapter that staff can join to gain confidence at speaking in front of a group in their second language. *Contact: Vilo Pierre-Louis, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency*

The Young Professionals Network of the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages (OCOL) hosted a forum in May 2009 on language of work for young public servants who work in the field of official languages. The specific goals of this forum were to learn more about the various challenges facing institutions in matters related to the language of work and to identify potential solutions to these various challenges, while creating at the same time an informal network of young public servants from different institutions to help implement a government wide response strategy. It also focused on how the network could more effectively reach young public servants (anglophones and francophones) with respect to official languages in the workplace. Discussions focused on the themes of management and official languages in the workplace, organizational culture, how to engage the linguistic minority, and how to engage the linguistic majority. A number of practical approaches were suggested, including the need for senior managers to lead by example, the development of training, orientation and awareness sessions on language rights for managers, the development of a good practice guide for managers with advice on how to lead a bilingual meeting, and the creation of a network of linguistic duality ambassadors within departments. *Contact: Danielle Muise, Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages*

At Citizenship and Immigration Canada, an ongoing official languages campaign has been implemented, which communicates Official Languages Act obligations and information via various electronic mechanisms. They updated the official languages section on the departmental intranet website and added an “OL Champion’s Corner” to showcase the champion’s vision and role, and launched a six week work exchange program to allow a mechanism for employees to improve their second language skills (Québec region). In the Québec region, the SGQLO (Système de gestion de qualité des langues officielles), which informs employees and managers of their official languages obligations and also provides a forum within the region for the sharing of best practices, was also updated. *Contact: Christina Scherf, Citizenship and Immigration Canada*

At Transport Canada (TC), traditionally a very English environment, a pilot project has been launched where staff (including management and non-management) takes part in a cyclical language training program. C-level employees attend school

for one month; when they come back, it’s the B-level group’s turn to go. Mentorship rounds out the program. Employees are encouraged to practice and use their French while they are in the office. *Contact: Francine Allain or Nicole Falardeau, Transport Canada, New Brunswick*

In Québec, as elsewhere, operational requirements and second-language training needs are sometimes in conflict. At Transport Canada, National Capital employees have been permitted to continue performing 80% of their usual tasks from a regional office located in Québec. This has offered the employees the opportunity to improve their second-language skills, and has enabled managers to meet their department’s operational requirements. *Contact: François-Nicolas Asselin, Industry Canada*

Reaching the youth of the community is the focus of two departments in Prince Edward Island. At the Canada Revenue Agency, summer and co-op students are being tested to assess their language level. Students who are interested in working for the public sector then have the opportunity to perfect their second language by taking the required electives when they go back to school. Students are a good feeder group, and this makes it easier to bridge them in. Veterans Affairs Canada has been making presentations in French high schools in PEI that have co-op programs to educate students about language requirements for the public service. *Contact: Ainsly Cardinal, Canada Revenue Agency, PEI*

The Canada Revenue Agency in Newfoundland and Labrador offers language refresher courses with a tutor twice a week and organizes group activities on weekends, including trips to St. Pierre and Miquelon where bilingual staff can obtain a one week immersion. The bilingual capacity of the CRA in NL is such that it provides bilingual outreach and collections across the country. *Contact: George Worley, Canada Revenue Agency, NL*

Maintaining one’s language level once it’s been attained can be a challenge. Service Canada has attempted to address this by offering an online refresher training course in French. Employees connect online with their colleagues using a headset and a webcam. The screen is split and one side features a white board for the teacher. At the Canadian Grain Commission, employees who have reached their levels spend one hour each week with an instructor, while at Health Canada (HC), employees participate in language training in the workplace two hours

per week. Although this approach is convenient, it does pose the challenge of “leaving one’s desk” so – in year two of the program – employees had to commit to 80% attendance and also had to give a cheque to show their good faith (none of the cheques have ever been cashed!). To practice their French, Service Canada as well as Health Canada employees participate in “lunch and learn” events. At Health Canada, the discussions focus on other things than work – the group plays games such as Scrabble or Trivial Pursuit in French, which allows participants to practice their vocabulary and small talk. In addition, some Health Canada employees meet for three hours on Saturday mornings (except during the summer) for the same purpose. One task force participant from Health Canada has established a mentorship relationship with a colleague who can help her practice and enhance her French. *Contacts: Pam Fryers, Service Canada; Yolande Le Quéré, Canadian Grain Commission; Roger Foidart, Jasjit Dhillon, or Gale Frame, Health Canada*

For 10 years, Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) has been holding maintenance language sessions of one hour per week. As they canvassed their interests for the program, employees identified terminology as important to their success. In response, CRA has designed a Jeopardy-style game in French based on CRA terminology. *Contact: Gisele Wonta, Canada Revenue Agency*

One of the branches at Health Canada in Ottawa, concerned about retention of language of middle managers after their courses, set up a pilot, hired a French facilitator who started meeting with individuals after their training, and held information sessions where managers could practice by speaking on a topic of their choice. The facilitator also gave feedback to individuals on performance in meetings and organized work-related activities. What started as a pilot has now been in place for nine years. *Contact: Suzanne-Renée Collette, Health Canada*

At Industry Canada (Québec region), language training needs for the next fiscal year are identified as early as December. The costs associated with the training are then included in the office’s budget and business plans. Thus, in a sense, the employees participate in developing a business plan through their respective learning plans. Another benefit of this practice is that people who need second-language training are ready to start at the beginning of the fiscal year. *Contact: François-Nicolas Asselin, Industry Canada*

All employees at the CRA Summerside Tax Centre have been provided with a laminated copy of common French phrases to enable them to handle calls from clients wishing to converse in French. This enables all staff to greet the client in their language of choice and transfer their call to a bilingual employee as needed. All employees have also been provided (on the reverse of these phrases) with how to convert French symbols and letters on their keyboards. *Contact: Ainsly Cardinal, Canada Revenue Agency*

Certain departments in Québec organize special days to encourage people to use their second language. At Canada Economic Development Québec (CED-Q), people receiving language training are also allowed to participate in maintenance courses during lunch or work hours. This method is working well, is relatively inexpensive, and is favourably received by participants and managers. CED-Q has also organized a series of mini-conferences on a variety of topics in both languages; in addition, it supports employees who wish to do a traineeship in another department in order to improve their second-language abilities. *Contact: Éric Lebel, Canada Economic Development Québec*

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) has found it a challenge to recruit bilingual people, and found that the normal year long full-time language program did not work for their demands. They determined that a more aggressive development program was required. The RCMP school in Regina established a new program, called *Au Galop!*, which can take members from 0 to Level B in 13 weeks. The program is based on an adult learning approach, which makes officers responsible for their learning and can be done as a full-time or part-time program. The 13-week full-time accelerated program involves one-on-one training. The part-time program involves three part-time sessions, with a maximum of five students over three years. This program was made available to other federal departments, the province, and minority communities about 10 years ago. It is used with francophone cadets and also in training Aboriginal officers in Nunavut (NU) and Northwest Territories (NWT) before they start their cadet training. While the program is not a walk in the park, it has been highly successful, cost effective and efficient. As part of succession planning, RCMP officers are encouraged to become bilingual early in their careers. The RCMP is also aware of the need to help francophone members to integrate into the Saskatchewan culture, a critical piece in ensuring retention of employees and supporting the building

of relationships with communities that they serve.
Contact: Loretta Beaudet, RCMP, Regina

Using Champions and Departmental Committees

For four years the New Brunswick Federal Council, through its official languages committee, has been organizing a successful Official Languages Week. The event includes various activities, including a workshop where employees of the public sector can learn about Section 7 of the Official Languages Act (i.e. active offer). It was also noted that members of the NB Federal Council whose first language is English make a conscious effort to speak French during meetings so the meetings become fully bilingual. *Contact: Marc-André Chiasson, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency*

Statistics Canada has a strong network of Official Language (OL) champions from each section, who meet annually in a conference. The champions connect regularly with ADMs, and have access to help if needed to develop diagnostics and action plans to ensure a bilingual environment. *Contact: Sylvie Dupont, Statistics Canada, Ottawa*

Language and Culture

Official languages means more than being bilingual; it is also understanding and supporting the culture of both languages and the needs of minority language communities. A participant from Correctional Services Canada (CSC) talked about his work in western Canada where his personal experience as a francophone in an English milieu influenced his approach to official languages. As a senior manager he saw the need to ensure the ability of people to participate in senior ranks in bilingual positions. Initial contact was made with French communities to join together to champion language activities in arts, music, and services in French. He contacted the Federal Council which was working on Official Languages (OL) as a major activity. They created a champion and an OL advisory group with concrete tasks, looked at immediate needs, medium and long-term, and the investment of working with communities to build a foundation of resources. One area for attention by CSC was the number of vacant bilingual positions so they established an objective to staff vacant positions with bilingual people. *Contact: Marc-Arthur Hyppolite, Correctional Service of Canada, Ottawa*

Learning a second language is more than just learning vocabulary; it is also developing an understanding of the culture. This was seen clearly in regions where second language training and retention included “French, food and fun”. Employee engagement with strong personal commitment is critical.

Franco-Allô is an Edmonton group that meets for coffee every Thursday afternoon at Canada Place (the federal building) for all levels of French. There is also a weekly newsletter sent out to over 250 people in various departments and community groups, which provides information about language training, community events that are taking place, activities at the Campus Saint Jean/University of Alberta, etc. An employee at the Canada Revenue Agency is the force behind the development. She taps into an electronic network of francophone groups within Alberta, BC and NWT who exchange information on francophone activities. *Contact: Christina LaFave, Canada Revenue Agency*

An informal, employee-driven group Les Dîne-à-Mots meets every Tuesday over lunch in a boardroom at Western Diversification (WD) to speak French. All are welcome, no matter the level of fluency. It is spearheaded by a francophone living in an English milieu who wanted opportunities to maintain his spoken French. WD allows a standing reservation for one of the large boardrooms every Tuesday over the noon hour. Approximately 75 people are on the e-mail list. The key elements for success are, (a) the participants personal desire to seek out opportunities to practice and improve their spoken French, (b) providing a fun, non-threatening atmosphere for participants, (c) allowing facilitators the latitude to do things informally, (d) the deliberate absence of a prescribed structure, and (e) a department’s willingness to host space with minimal conditions. *Contact: Bob Landry, Western Diversification*

In Winnipeg, the Culturel, Linguistique, Intégration dans la Communauté (CLIC) program is offered to civil servants, professionals and all individuals looking for an opportunity to be immersed in the French language. CLIC is offered three times a year (February, May, October) at the Collège Saint-Boniface, Manitoba, the hub of French Canadian culture in western Canada. The CLIC program has had tremendous success since it was first offered in March 1999. Training is offered between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. and consists of courses, workshops and integration activities in the francophone community. CLIC also includes: two evenings of socio cultural

activities; four meals; free use of Sportex, the collège's fitness centre, for the duration of the program. *Contact: Melody Myers, Industry Canada*

In British Columbia, departments use a variety of approaches to assist staff in retaining their language skills, including weekly discussion groups led by staff with a focus on grammar, film reviews, cafés, lunches, and book clubs. These approaches ensure exposure to the Franco Canadian culture. Heritage Canada has signs on cubicles and pins indicating that individuals are interested in practicing their second language. A presentation on the history of French in British Columbia is being developed that will be shared with people across the country. *Contact: Marie-Eve Savard, Canada Border Service Agency*

As in other regions, it has been found in Quebec that immersion into a community is an effective way to improve second-language skills. For example, a Health Canada employee, who was unable to achieve level C despite her active involvement in training courses, achieved that level immediately upon returning from a stay in an anglophone community. The person did volunteer work – her salary was paid by her department during that time – by helping the community develop its business plan. She was successful because her interests were taken into account before her assignment. *Contact: Paul Bélair, Canada School of Public Service*

As with other departments, ACOA New Brunswick has an official language committee. The committee organizes regular awareness and learning events, such as coffee breaks where people speak only French, lunch and learns with invited guest speakers and “Mercredis en français”. ACOA NB also has an in-house Toastmasters chapter that staff can join to gain confidence at speaking in front of a group in their second language. In addition, the committee awards prizes to staff for various initiatives, such as when a meeting agenda is bilingual and when an employee is caught in the act of speaking in their second language. These initiatives help ACOA NB staff gain the confidence needed to perfect their second language. *Contact: Vilo Pierre-Louis, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency*

Recognizing that access to language training was not clearly understood by branch employees, the Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) learning branch transformation team “ginger group” – ACE (achieving excellence forum)

– has created a second language training policy for senior management approval. Given the importance of language training to increase and facilitate the use of both official languages within the branch and in relation to career development, and the lack of a clearly understood branch-wide approach to access language training opportunities among employees, ACE developed a policy that would clarify for all employees the opportunities for language training and increase access through a series of sessions offered on site, coordinated by the branch. *Contact: Anne-Marie Julien, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, Ottawa*

The Public Affairs and Stakeholder Relations branch at HRSDC has also recognized that fluency in both official languages is a prerequisite for career advancement in the Public Service. Therefore, the branch developed its own language training program that is harmonized with other language training available at HRSDC, yet is more accessible and responsive to the specific needs of its employees. The branch is working in partnership with the Canada School of Public Service to offer and deliver a high quality program that is tailored to the students' individual needs, allowing them to integrate language training to their career plans. Guidelines and a memorandum of understanding outline clear roles and responsibilities for the employees, their managers and the teachers, and ensure that both English and French-speaking employees are accommodated. *Contact: Anne-Marie Julien, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, Ottawa*

The Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) uses a variety of tools adapting language retention to reality: “Pour le mot français” is a time-sharing agreement with a phone tutor to help staff on various modules; an on-site teacher; a pilot project for unilingual officers to help them practice active offer of service; and a list of websites for people to practice their language skills. *Contact: Marie-Eve Simard, Canada Border Services Agency, Vancouver*

Role of Employees in Language Training

There was a common theme that emerged in the sessions when discussing official languages, that employees who want to learn or enhance their second language have to take it upon themselves to make it happen. A good example of that is an ACOA PEI employee who took an assignment at Canadian Heritage to learn French, who kept reminding her colleagues that she was there to learn French and that

they should communicate with her in French. Upon her return to home base, she has been encouraging her staff to speak in their second language more often in the workplace. *Contacts: Donald Arsenault, Canadian Heritage, PEI ; Rachel Clark McDearmid, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, PEI*

One individual from Statistics Canada in Vancouver discussed how he developed his capacity in French – his fourth language – using free resources available through the Internet, with access to papers, radio stations around the world, and French language clubs where people from around the world can meet up every night of the week to practice their language skills, increasing their vocabulary and improving their pronunciation. Passion for the language is a strong element of employee involvement in training outside the workplace. *Contact: Peter Liang, Statistics Canada*

One of the participants from canada@150 suggested the focus of language training be re-oriented towards ensuring that (more or less) all public servants have basic comprehension of both languages. Basic comprehension (also called “passive bilingualism”) is much easier than being able to speak and write in your second language. It could significantly reduce the funding for active bilingualism training, and instead spend that money on widespread passive bilingualism training. Employees should also be encouraged to develop passive bilingualism on their own time (ex. listening to the radio, reading the newspaper in the other language). Group F of canada@150 could be profiled as a practical approach, as everyone in the group could understand both languages – discussions were mainly in French and written work in the individual’s first language. *Contact: Miriam Padolsky, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada*

Diversity

Education and Awareness

The Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) has engaged the Canada School of Public Service (CSPS) to design a course on diversity. They also had frank discussions on this subject, where management and union representatives were present. CRA is now in the process of organizing follow-up sessions to keep the topic top of mind.

At Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, two percent (2%) of its A-base funding is put toward Employment Equity (EE) training, workshops, etc. *Contacts: Kim Boudreau, Canada Revenue Agency Wanda Prosser, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada*

Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) has created the EE Initiative on Recruitment and Development Integration (EEIRDI), the Youth Network Internship Program (YNIP), and will be working with the Professional Development Network (PDN) to develop an employment equity mentoring program. Their regional diversity committee is invited to the bi monthly EE meetings. A spreadsheet was developed for regions to fill in their EE activities and the spreadsheet is shared amongst regions for information/idea sharing purposes. The EE coordinators meet every two months. *Contact: Christina Scherf, Citizenship and Immigration Canada*

CIC also developed a multicultural calendar to highlight diverse celebrations i.e. Black History Month. The multicultural calendar is a multi-initiative, and is available to all Canadians and people abroad. EE representatives purchase these calendars to distribute to employees during EE awareness activities. EE awareness activities are posted on the Connexion (CIC Intranet) to facilitate communication to employees.

CIC's human resources planning group developed a dashboard to track EE representation quarterly (a good tool/reminder for management). The graphic also compares their EE representation to their LMA figures. They are also developing an information and tool kit for managers on duty to accommodate for the department that will also include examples of scenarios and best practices. CIC is also conducting a demographic study of EE representation and developing a survey to be completed by the department's designated group to better understand their needs. *Contact: Christina Scherf, Citizenship and Immigration Canada*

In the Northwest Territories (NWT), support to educational institutions is important in supporting the development of programs that reach Aboriginal people. Career days at high schools can expose students to the array of work with the public service. Field camps organized by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) where students are chosen to live and work with scientists for a week have encouraged some students to change their career focus. *Contact: Mary Tapsell, Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Yellowknife*

Transport Canada (TC) like other departments, has national champions for diversity. With management support, Transport's New Brunswick diversity committee organizes face-to-face meetings with employees from regional offices who are invited to come and share how they can be involved in the community, (e.g. taking the example of a multicultural show and bringing it back to the office to talk further on the topic of diversity.) The sharing of such best practices has increased the dialogue on diversity. *Contact: Francine Allain, Transport Canada*

Since not all departments in Atlantic Canada are large enough to organize their own diversity related activities, the New Brunswick Federal Council has identified three (soon to be four) champion departments in the province. When these champions organize activities, they invite the smaller departments to participate. *Contact: Marc-André Chiasson, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency*

ACOA New Brunswick has an active Diversity Committee. Among the activities that it organizes are "lunch and learns" with guest speakers, and a Diversity Expo. The expo is held on a rotating basis between units and lasts between one and two hours. For example, the Communications unit featured a food break that reflected each member of its group – Australian, Caribbean, and even someone who has celiac. In addition to these activities, ACOA NB will soon be launching a diversity library, and has recently handed-out its first Award of Diversity Excellence to a staff member who organized diversity workshops for the district offices as part of her learning plan. Of note – one employee joined the Diversity Committee after scoring poorly on a diversity quiz! *Contact: Paul C.J. Leblanc, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, New Brunswick*

In Nova Scotia, departments are looking at various ways to educate employees about diversity.

The Canada Revenue Agency celebrated the Festival de la Francophonie by bringing in teachers and dancers; it also organizes “lunch and learns” where the Aboriginal culture is discussed and employees participate in career fairs with the Black community in Nova Scotia. Public Works and Government Services Canada (PWGSC) organized diversity forums, which have been held for the past three years in Nova Scotia, and other provinces have been invited to participate.

At HRSDC, mixed groups organize special commemorative days, such as Chinese New Year, and discuss various related issues. The Department of National Defence (DND) organizes employment equity learning events with guest speakers. *Contacts: Kim Boudreau, Canada Revenue Agency; Debby Williams, Public Works and Government Services Canada; Wanda Prosser Human Resources and Skills Development Canada; Colleen Power, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Nova Scotia (youth network)*

With the diverse population in Toronto, participants in that city stressed the value of an open and honest dialogue with respect to diversity – meaning diversity of perspective that comes from culture, gender, experiences and geographic (i.e.: regional versus NHQ perspective). Many departments have encouraged this conversation. For example at the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) and PWGSC they have created regional EE councils and forums chaired by senior managers. These forums allow employees to share view points and organize initiatives that support EE and diversity. It was underlined by all participants that it is this kind of action, and commitment of culture change that counts, not targets or deadlines on an EE report. *Contacts: Jim Crawford, Canadian Food Inspection Agency; Mariam Malik, Public Works and Government Services Canada*

In 2004, two Newfoundland and Labrador federal employees attended a visible minority conference held outside the province. From that beginning, a small group of people began to explore the development of a visible minority conference in St. John's, which was subsequently held in 2005 with 25 participants. In 2007 they held a second conference with 50 participants. Between conferences there are networking events. At the recent Leadership Forum in St. John's, there was a booth staffed by volunteers from all departments to raise awareness

and for the next forum there are plans to deliver a workshop by visible minority employees. The visible minority labour market availability is limited in NL, but a small group of employees with limited funds can have a large impact because of the relationships between departments.

What has been seen in NL as a result is a real engagement of visible minorities and others, real ownership of the file, and real leadership development with individuals taking on roles outside the visible minority community. The next conference, later in 2009, is being expanded beyond visible minorities to include all employment equity groups. *Contact: Bill Brake, Parks Canada, NL*

The Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages organizes diversity discussion forums. The Québec Federal Public Servants' Youth Network approaches the issue of diversity with a sense of humour at a conference held every two years. *Contact: Marie Chantal Girard, Quebec Federal Council*

The Central Regional Council of the National Council of Visible Minorities, (NCVM) in collaboration with the Manitoba Federal Council, the National Managers' Community (NMC), the Manitoba Youth Network and the Human Resources Council (HRC) hosted a Partners in Renewal Conference on November 20, 2008 in Winnipeg. This was a two-part event with a learning piece for internal employees of the federal Public Service and a targeted recruitment event for external candidates to access federal job opportunities. *Contact: Joyce Bateman, Executive Director, Manitoba Federal Council*

It is not enough to organize workshops to raise public servants' awareness; there must be a follow up, and, according to a Correctional Services Canada (CSC) employee, there must be supportive care and attention. In this regard, CSC has developed a method to manage cultural and religious conflicts in order to give managers the tools they need to find the best solutions. The objective of this method is to find the positive aspects of a situation – what is working well, but also what needs improvement. *Contact: Zoulikha Kouider, Correctional Services Canada*

The Health Canada regional office in PEI has a strong focus on diversity. In addition to Diversity Week which is celebrated in Health Canada offices

across the country, the regional office has organized a diversity retreat and invited employees from the provincial government as well as NGOs to participate. Health Canada is also one of seven departments that is a member of a diversity network. The network has an interactive training program for its members. In addition, Health Canada (PEI) will soon launch a recruitment initiative that will target children of immigrant public sector employees. *Contact: Dr. Sarath Chandrasekera, Health Canada, PEI*

At PWGSC, a course on diversity is mandatory for all employees. The department's diversity group also developed a video documenting the journey that someone went through while losing his vision in order to create some awareness about the visually impaired.

The Canada Revenue Agency has embraced diversity as part of their culture. The agency has diversity committees with reps from senior management, has created a brochure and placed information on their website for all to see that raises awareness and understanding. In management training programs, they ensure that participants include ample representatives from various minority groups – to ensure a diverse and representative management cadre in the future. CRA has recognized that in some areas of HQ there are gaps in representativeness at senior management. To address this they have developed a learning program that includes simulation exercises for visible minority employees to help them prepare for management positions. *Contact: France Bilodeau, Canada Revenue Agency, National Capital Region*

Proactive Development and Recruitment

In many sessions, participants closely tied the issues of diversity and career development, explaining that employees from employment equity groups want development and support opportunities just like most public servants. Some departments have created targeted development programs for EE groups, which can be seen as a positive development.

When it comes to training and career development for diversity groups, departments in Nova Scotia are taking proactive measures. For example, HRSDC has a management development program for EE groups in which five employees are currently participating and being trained for management positions. CRA has an aggressive staffing plan to ensure diversity

where two in five new employees are from EE groups, when gaps are identified. An internal development program for EE groups at VAC was started two years ago as a pilot. Given its success, it will most likely continue. *Contacts: Wanda Prosser, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada; Kim Boudreau, Canada Revenue Agency Jocelyne Langlois, Veterans Affairs Canada*

The Canada Revenue Agency has a targeted recruitment of Aboriginal employees, as they have found it difficult to attract Aboriginals with accounting knowledge. The tax office has an apprenticeship program where they bring in Aboriginal university graduates and provide on the job training. Recruitment is done through a regional process; however interviews are done locally with member of the Aboriginal employment equity committee participating on the board. They have recently brought three people into the program in Regina. They are also targeting Aboriginal students in high schools, to encourage them to obtain accounting training. CRA also uses RCMP language training and interchanges with Service Canada for staff. *Contact: Darryl Dreger, Canada Revenue Agency, Regina*

In the realm of diversity, the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs (INAC) is unique by virtue of its Aboriginal clientele. INAC has a detailed diversity management plan; moreover, it has a diversity officer in its HR department. All INAC employees must take a training course to acquaint them with Aboriginal culture. The department also has an internal and external diversity communications plan, and seeks to recruit 100% of its students from Aboriginal communities. *Contact: Gérard Raharolahy, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada*

In 2007, Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) realized that despite recruitment efforts and the increased flexibility provided by the PSEA it had not been successful in improving the participation of women and members of visible minority groups in its workforce. The department decided to take a phased approach in changing its corporate culture to achieve a representative workforce. The first focus was on communicating focused messages to all staff. Secondly they targeted managers, encouraging them to increase EE representation. Employment equity champions, coordinators and chairs of regional EE/diversity committees from all regions were brought together through interactive mini-conferences.

They became the voice of diversity in their regions. The department also held a two-day session with 200 managers responsible for recruitment to expose them to best practices, practical tools and successful approaches from experts. Managers had the opportunity to discuss ways to increase recruitment for the four employment equity groups and to discuss statistics, biases in staffing, etc. DFO made noticeable progress over 18 months in improving the representation of members of all EE groups, reducing its representation gap for women and members of visible minority groups. DFO plans to continue its efforts to adapt to demographic changes. *Contact: Naomi Bambara, Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Ottawa*

Public Works and Government Services Canada (PWGSC) recognizes that co-op placements offer a great opportunity to create a more diverse workforce, and staff at all levels can take leadership to make this happen, especially managers who can then become good ambassadors for a diversified public service.

At Justice Canada, they make sure the department has a presence with minority group organizations. For example, they aim to send senior staff to the Université de Moncton French law program career fair to recruit.

A significant and growing percentage of the population in Saskatchewan is Aboriginal. Each department is working hard to increase recruitment. INAC's workforce is currently 43% Aboriginal and they would like to increase that to 50%. As part of their plan they use an Internet strategy that targets apprenticeships and bridging of students. They have determined that it is necessary to accept hard-copy applications as well as online applications to increase number of applicants. They have also found that external processes for Aboriginal peoples only are more successful than regular external processes. Preference can be given to Aboriginal people under the statement of merit criteria and area of selection can also be adjusted. It was also suggested that departments could work with Aboriginal communities who have databases of training and professional backgrounds of potential candidates for positions. *Contact: Wendy Bonish, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, Regina*

The Saskatchewan Federal Council developed an MOU with the School of Public Administration at the University of Regina and the University

of Saskatchewan to recruit Aboriginal students through co-op programs, and then bridge them into departments in the region. The Federal Council has a sub-committee through which departments can work together with their available funds to recruit Aboriginal and Métis. *Contact: Lorne Koback, Saskatchewan Federal Council*

Retention was highlighted for the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) in Calgary - a small office of 29 people which has seen a 50% turnover rate during the last few years. The province of Alberta is able to attract staff with the offer of higher salaries and better benefits. To address this challenge, the office is bridging co-op students and this has resulted in a diverse workforce - 13 of the 29 staff are former co-op students and represent a generational shift in the office. *Contact: Jessie Hislop, Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Calgary*

VAC has developed an Employment Equity Internal Developmental Program (EEIDP). The purpose of this initiative is to provide professional development opportunities for designated groups of employees: visible minorities, persons with disabilities, Aboriginal Peoples and women in compression areas. The unique characteristic of this program is that it provides for the matching of an individual's skills and interests with internal developmental assignments, on a temporary basis. In addition, there is a strong coaching and mentoring component to the developmental program. By providing professional development opportunities to targeted EE group members, the department is assisting in creating a critical mass that is needed to achieve and maintain a representative workforce with an appropriate employee distribution throughout the various levels in the department. *Contact: Leticia LaRosa, Veterans Affairs Canada*

Through the EEIDP, participants broaden their work experiences and develop new skills that will help them prepare for future opportunities and positions within the department. The program will benefit both participants and the department by providing a more experienced workforce, increased mobility and flexibility, and promoting a continuous learning environment within VAC. *Contact: Monique Jackson, Veterans Affairs Canada*
HRSDC was recognized for its contribution to diversity through the piloting of the Immigrant Internship Program. The program was developed in

close collaboration with the Canada Public Service Agency and CIC. The objective of this program is to accelerate the integration of foreign-trained professionals into the Canadian labour market by providing them with valuable work experience and a Canadian reference. This was an excellent opportunity for HRSDC to recruit and mentor foreign-trained professionals and lead by example in assisting immigrants integrate into the labour market. Through this initiative HRSDC has placed 16 (exceeding the target of ten placements) interns across the department. These interns began their placements in early September 2008 and completed them in May 2009. HRSDC has run intercultural communications workshops for hiring managers and interns alike, and has successfully matched each intern with a mentor drawn from the middle managers forum. The program was recently recognized with an HIO (Hire Immigrants Ottawa) award. (HIO is a community-based initiative that recognizes local employers for their innovative recruitment and retention policies, and promising practices around the integration of skilled immigrants into their organizations.) *Contact: Anne-Marie Julien, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada*

The Canadian Forces has a strong focus in its recruitment efforts to increase diversity representation from visible minority communities and Aboriginal peoples, with clear recruitment objectives and an outreach approach that takes into account both the needs of the military and the interests of potential recruits.

In visible minority communities, parents, grandparents, educators and coaches have a strong influence on the career choices of young men and women. As part of its recruitment efforts, the Canadian Forces works closely with these influencers in the various visible minority communities, to ensure that they have accurate information about the employment opportunities available and to address any misconceptions they may have about the military. These efforts have yielded positive results.

In Aboriginal communities, the Canadian Forces recruitment focus is on providing opportunities for youth to experience the military prior to making a career commitment. This approach includes pre-recruitment education and training programs, in which potential recruits learn about life in the military and at the same time celebrate the diversity of Aboriginal culture.

Over the last two years, the Canadian Forces has also offered young Aboriginals with leadership potential an opportunity to complete a year of academic, leadership and athletic training at the Royal Military College. At the end of the year, a number of the participants have joined the military or the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, while others returned to their communities to become involved as teachers or community leaders. For further information go to www.forces.ca or call 1-800-856-8488.

In the various regions, Canada Revenue Agency has strong relationships with the Association of New Canadians, university and colleges for recruitment and has an Aboriginal student employment program. They have developed the Aboriginal Tax Offer Incentive Program that helps train Aboriginal employees in the various areas required for development and advancement within the agency. *Contact: Kim Boudreau, Canada Revenue Agency, Halifax*

A persistent reality for Aboriginal people in Canada is that they continue to be disproportionately represented in the correctional system. In recognition of this over-representation and potential for increasing numbers of Aboriginal offenders, CSC determined that there is a need to have measurable and focused efforts regarding Aboriginal employment within CSC to ensure a culturally representative workforce. They have created an Aboriginal Human Resource Management Strategy – a three year, three phase approach with a focus on recruitment, retention, training, succession and knowledge transfer. To connect with Aboriginal communities CSC determined that a different communications approach was required that changes the image. They have created a “How to Apply to CSC” package, are working with the PSC to establish a pool of Aboriginal candidates for appointment to the EX cadre, and are developing a qualified pool of Aboriginal selection board members. They are also developing an Aboriginal management/executive development program. *Contact: Rayette Giles, Correctional Service Canada, Ottawa*

Objective Eye, developed by Citizenship and Immigration Canada, is designed to recognize and then reduce bias in staffing processes. It consists of two components. The first is an online course that helps managers become more aware of and in tune with biases that exist. Starting last year, the Department of Justice has strongly encouraged managers to take this training. They are now

seeing progress in how managers (at all levels) are approaching processes – through board composition etc.

The second component is a pool of trained/available board members. Departments/managers can go to this list, read peoples' qualifications, and invite them to sit on competition boards to ensure diversity representation. This pool can be especially helpful to departments and agencies that do not have such a resource available internally. Ultimately, this is all supporting the theme of diversity – not about numbers or quota, but about encouraging diversity of perspective on boards and ultimately in management. We tend to hire people most like ourselves – so this program helps us recognize that bias (in the learning component), and then encourages us to manage it (in part through board composition). Website for Objective Eye: www.isbm-rmjs.gc.ca *Contact: Terry McAuley, Justice Canada, Ottawa*

Traditional approaches to recruitment from visible minority communities do not always work. A different approach taken by Health Canada in British Columbia is to have a staffing officer work with a Chinese organization called Success, which is able to get the message out and is helping individuals tailor their CVs to keep them from being screened out of staffing processes. The Chinese night market is also a way to do targeted outreach with immigrants coming from Asia, and they also do outreach through Indian radio stations. Better outreach, with targeted staffing combined with better use of diverse communities does have a positive impact. *Contact: Eugene St-Prix, Health Canada, Vancouver*

Fisheries officers with DFO are trying to make changes in how they deal with First Nations and recruitment of Aboriginals. The RCMP in BC are leading a series of canoe journeys, teaming up with First Nations youth on old canoe routes, providing mentoring, and trying to change perceptions of working with the public service. There is also help provided to First Nations youth who want to apply for positions, but have been getting screened out online when they do not complete the applications correctly. *Contact: Leri Davies, Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Vancouver*

One example of an initiative that worked well to develop young public servants for management positions was the Management Trainee Program (MTP). Bridging is also seen as an effective way to

ensure public service renewal, and could also be used to meet diversity requirements. Participants indicated that they should be sharing their list of students that they can't bridge in with other departments, or the federal council in their province to create more opportunities for students.

Natural Resources Canada has a Visible Minority Career Enhancement Program which has conducted mock interviews with 30 to 40 people to prepare them for staffing processes. They have also tested website for accessibility for employees with disabilities. *Contact: Mark Kennedy, Natural Resources Canada, Ottawa*

Networks and Committees

There are two Aboriginal employee networks in Calgary: 1) Calgary Aboriginal Network is a cross-sectoral social development network, and 2) CAF-EN which is a learning and development network for Aboriginal federal employees. Both groups link into the long-term strategy for the National Council of Aboriginal Federal Employees (NCAFE). NCAFE held its first forum in 2004, where 13 departments made presentations, and discussions identified common themes of recruitment/retention/advancement/career development for Aboriginal employees. They determined that more work was needed in retention and advancement. Support networks are important for new employees, allowing them to learn in a safe environment. The new executive at NCAFE wants to link with federal councils to ensure a regional as well as national context, with links to other networks. *Contact: Treva Rancier, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, Calgary*

The Southern Alberta Federal Employees Network, with Western Diversification as the banker, developed a forum attended by 150 stakeholders in Aboriginal communities to share information, supported through projects, and developed informal networks of front-line employees who work in G&Cs. There are many different programs but no central location to get information. A spin-off of the forum is the Aboriginal Funders Network with representatives from non-governmental organizations, the province and federal government to talk about aboriginal funding initiatives. *Contact: Amber Potts, Indian and Northern Affairs*
PrideNet – a self-organized network to provide support to gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and

two-spirit (GLBTT) employees – was established at October 2008 in HRSDC. It provides a forum for identifying and moving forward on action to address the unique issues faced by these employees. PrideNet is available as a resource to management and staff or the department and seeks to promote a healthy and inclusive work environment for GLBTT employees. Some of the activities and objectives of the network of volunteer participants include ensuring that GLBTT issues are included in human resource considerations for the department; providing education and information on issues faced by GLBTT employee by hosting learning and education events; and, providing resources and advice on addressing workplace issues surrounding sexual diversity (e.g., conflict, inclusion, accommodation). This network will enhance the department's ability to create and support a positive, inclusive workplace.

Contact: Anne-Marie Julien, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada

The inaugural meeting of the Visible Minorities Committee of Champions and Chairs (VMCCC) was held in September 2007 under the leadership of Peter Boehm and the chair of the VM committee from the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. The mandate of this committee is to provide a forum for visible minorities champions and visible minority network chairs to discuss and take action on issues related to the recruitment, career development, retention and equitable advancement of employees belonging to visible minorities groups.

The committee consists of departmental visible minorities champions and chairs of departmental visible minorities networks/committees. The VMCCC also includes ex-officio representation from the National Council of Visible Minorities, Public Service Commission, Canada School of Public Service, and Treasury Board Secretariat. The action plan for 2008-2009 focused on three areas: Career development programs/systems, support mechanisms such as mentoring and coaching programs, and the promotion of representative hiring and promotion boards.

Departments take their turn in hosting and organizing meetings. To date, Health Canada, Fisheries and Oceans, Veteran Affairs, Justice Canada, National Defence, and Canada Revenue Agency have organized meetings. Each department presented initiatives within their own organizations

which have contributed to the recruitment and career development of visible minorities. The Health Canada Deputy Minister has been an active leader in these meetings, and supports this interdepartmental committee. Health Canada also has a dedicated division within its Human Resources directorate that focuses on diversity and official language programs.

At the meeting held in May 2009, the results of the “stock taking exercise” were presented to the participants. A questionnaire was sent in advance to get feedback on the strengths of the committee, areas requiring improvement and to establish the priorities for the upcoming year. The comments were positive, as members reported that the VMCCC was making a difference. This was a good forum to exchange ideas and best practices and the committee was pleased with the leadership engagement. Some areas requiring improvement were the absence of certain departments that have not participated to date, the emphasis on sharing, and not enough action driven results.

The suggested priorities for 2009-2010 were to promote and ensure the integration of employment equity in decision making as it relates to business planning and human resources planning, continue to promote and engage in support mechanisms for career development and promote and discuss strategies as it relates to the recruitment and retention of visible minorities and integrate multi-generations in these discussions.

Contact: Kin Choi, Health Canada

A Visible Minority Executive Networking Group was established about a year and a half ago as an informal forum for visible minority executives to network and enhance the representation of visible minorities in the executive cadre of government by influencing system wide changes and improvements in human resource practices and corporate culture; encouraging the development of visible minorities through mentorship and coaching; improving access to job opportunities and leadership abilities in a proactive manner for all members through the promotion of skills and sharing of knowledge and resources; and collaborating and sharing experiences and best practices with any group that has a similar community of interest. There is a list of approximately 20 members currently. There is no formal structure and networking events are coordinated by volunteers.

Contact: Jose Aggrey, Health Canada, Ottawa

Management Engagement

Statistics Canada did an analysis of its workforce and developed a strategy and governance structure that set the stage for short-term and long-term activity and accountability. A senior policy committee chaired by an ADM meets every Wednesday, with a focus on HR issues, including official languages, diversity, recruitment, and training. Each EE group has a champion who works with employee groups and ensures linkages to create awareness. Outreach activity takes place on university campuses to reach EE groups. A professional evaluation reports on official languages and diversity every two years.

Contact: Claude Graziadei, Statistics Canada

At Veterans Affairs Canada, two hours of each senior management meeting is dedicated to discussing a topic of interest – such as diversity. The department also supports each employee in celebrating his/her culture. Other interesting initiatives at VAC include the development of an employee equity development program and a mentoring program, which helps diversity members move up in their careers.

Contact: Faith McIntyre, Veterans Affairs Canada, PEI

Managers and employees share equally the responsibility of ensuring diversity in the public service. According to one diversity group member in Montreal, managers must be forward and creative in their approach to diversity with employees who identify with a group. For example, that person's manager was open to the idea of a one-year telecommuting trial.

Contact: Michel De Césari, Canadian Human Rights Commission

Justice Canada has been taking steps to ensure that they are representative – it is not about numbers, but rather living change, thinking differently and creating a vibrant community. They have a new mentoring program that is the brainchild of the visible minorities committee, supported by dedicated staff, that currently has 200 people matched to help them work on their career development. All direct reports to the DM are mentors. They also have a Justice Leaders of Tomorrow program that takes staff with good prospects into a two-year program where they are mentored and given stretch assignments. 50% of the participants are from visible minority communities.

Contact: Terry McAuley, Justice Canada, Ottawa

New Technology

Sessions in Ottawa had a strong focus on GCPEDIA, the Government of Canada's internal collaboration and knowledge-sharing website launched as a pilot in 2008. One of the participants from HRSDC talked about the use of GCPEDIA as a collaborative solution, and referenced the Young Professional's Networks who have their own pages, using them as a hub to build community, with sub-pages on best practices. He suggested that the potential of GCPEDIA be recognized by senior management, noting that it challenges professional class structure and encourages more open communication. It was noted that interdepartmental groups are migrating to GCPEDIA as it is user-friendly. The Public Service needs to trust the professionalism of its employees in the use of Web 2.0 tools. *Contact: Nicholas Charney, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada*

CSC is now using a software program called One Degree developed by Innova Post that is a Facebook-like product which provides an avenue for conversations, activities or projects. *Contact: William Staubi, Correctional Service Canada, Ottawa*

GCPEDIA is seen to be at the heart of a transformation in the public service - providing a communication tool that supports good management and provides a better way to work. This session had a lot of discussion about the use of GCPEDIA for communities of practice, for building work connections, as a place to gather, get positive reinforcement. Discussions focused on trust and professionalism of staff - senior management give up a little control - get a whole lot of influence. There are a number of issues that still need to be addressed such as language, but people are using GCPEDIA. Young people who are entering the public service are self-organizing and self-motivating and will look for tools to self-organize. *Contact: Jeff Braybrook, Treasury Board Secretariat*

Representatives from Natural Resources Canada (NRCAN) indicated that there was a major change within their department after the arrival of their current deputy minister. Horizontal task teams were set up on issues, with representation from all levels, all sectors. There was encouragement for development of communities of practice on line, using video. Their wiki is a success with over 5000 documents on line, 2200 employees registered, and 6 million page views. GCPEDIA was modeled on the NRCAN wiki. Investment is required in hardware to support the use of Web 2.0 tools. There was recognition that with the development of this competency we need to buy

capacity to permit extended use. A studio has been set up in their library to encourage the use of video links. NRCAN has a version of YouTube called NRTube. *Contact: Mark Kennedy, Natural Resources Canada*

In terms of the use for web conferencing (Live Meeting) for meetings with working groups of employees across the country, we see the evidence of the beginning of a paradigm shift, where everyone comes to the virtual table as equals (as opposed to the experience of a room full of participants in the NCR in discussion with single individuals in the regions). Despite some hurdles in integrating the technologies, related mostly to developing a level of competence using them, these technologies are here to stay, and increase opportunities for open collaboration across the department and across government. *Contact: Anne-Marie Julien, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, Ottawa*

Internal Communications

Departments are also coming up with innovative ways to ensure staff can provide feedback or ask questions. For example, CRA has thank you forms with different categories that everyone can use. A copy of the form is sent to different people and there is a draw at the end of the month. Still at CRA, teams were asked to nominate someone who would bring sensitive messages to managers; messages were then rolled-up and sent up. Similar to the town hall concept, the CSPA organizes meetings where questions are asked and staff can vote using a special technology. The school has found that more sincere answers are received using this anonymous format, since no one wants to answer sensitive questions out loud. Similarly, the Justice department creates anonymous surveys on its SharePoint site, asking the right questions and then following-up accordingly. *Contacts: Anne Day, Canada Revenue Agency; Robert Armstrong, Canada School of Public Service Kim Duggan, Justice Canada*

As far as planning the workforce and communicating needs to employees is concerned, Justice Canada posts the positions that will become available in the coming year on its internal website. This enables employees to prepare their training plans based on the skills required for these positions. In addition, at Industry Canada (Québec region), Integrated Human Resource Planning (IHRP) makes it possible to identify the positions that will become vacant, and the diversity and official languages needs. *Contacts: Sokho Soupin, Justice Canada François Nicolas Asselin, Industry Canada*

Departments have various processes in place to ensure open and transparent communication between senior management and employees. At EDC, managers hold virtual meetings with all employees, including those from Québec's regions, one to three times a year in order to ensure that everyone has the same information. At the QFC, there are regular team meetings, and, at DND, according to a trainee who is currently with the QFC, a manager has implemented Friday morning "stand-ups" These stand-ups follow a Thursday afternoon conference calls with the director general and the deputy minister, and make it possible to rapidly disseminate the information and the challenges to the team. At INAC, managers meet employees on Monday mornings and discuss the preceding week's events and what is ahead for the current week. *Contacts: Éric Lebel, Canada Economic Development; Ritza Vieux, Québec Federal Council Gérard Raharolahy, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada*

At Citizenship and Immigration Canada, TV monitors were hung from ceilings at the elevator banks in their main NHQ buildings. Featured daily are TV slides promoting various activities, events or special occasions. Also featured every day is the Daily Wrap – good news stories from the media. An intranet side (Connexion) was introduced to employees which houses messages so that all employees can go and visit them whenever they have a chance. A video section was introduced as well, with flippers which highlight specific events. Today@CIC was implemented as a place to house all messages and events for CIC-related activities and to avoid the massive amount of e-mails that employees were receiving daily from numerous sources. Today@CIC is sent to employees at 9:30 a.m. each day. *Contact: Christina Scherf, Citizenship and Immigration Canada*

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada has a number of products that support internal communications, including News@Work, which is a weekly e-mail to all AAFC employees, a quarterly magazine Agriculture intended to share and celebrate success stories, an Agriculture News Network which provides a visual medium for short announcements, and an associate DM's blog which enables employees to engage in corporate conversation on topical issues. In addition there is a DM and Coffee and Conversation series, and regional outreach to encourage face to face dialogue, and DM Management monthly town halls with executive council members from across the country. *Contact: Irene Serry, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada*

HRSDC has been exploring and experimenting with innovative technologies to engage employees in the dialogue on renewal and excellence. By using innovative means to reach all employees across the department, regardless of region, business line or occupation, they are connecting to some of the power of new technologies in facilitating collaboration and engagement. They held a number of webcasts which connected a group of employees with a senior leader or leaders of a good practice in the department to discuss, exchange ideas, and demonstrate that initiative and innovation can make a difference. The feedback on the inaugural webcast between the DM, Janice Charette, and 150 employees across Canada spoke to the desire of employees to be able to exchange with senior management members. Subsequent webcasts have been similarly positively reviewed for sharing practices and experience in the department with others who may grow that experience to develop their own or similar initiative.

HRSDC representatives also spoke about the power of communities of practice and change-minded "ginger groups" or transformation teams to contribute to shifting the how and why we communicate with each other in our organizations. The value of these groups, which bring together employees who have a shared experience to learn and grow together, is well understood. And, in HRSDC they recognized their value by creating a support and planning team to facilitate the organization of opportunities for group members to come together to learn from each other and share experience. By facilitating the work of the communities through the provision of this support, they create a more open space for the work of the groups. The development of branch transformation teams, or "ginger groups", builds on the strengths of community of practice, pulling together a group of volunteers across an organization (typically, a branch of the department). These groups currently exist in the Learning branch, Strategic Policy and Research, Public Affairs and Stakeholder Relations, and Human Resources Services. These volunteers are focused on opportunities to improve the work or the working environment within the branch. Within parameters set by senior management of the branch, initiatives have been developed which speak to issues of concern to branch employees (most ginger groups have tested their key issues with colleagues in the branch). By placing the power in the hands of employees across the organization, the ginger groups are having a positive affect on the work and working environment in their organizations. *Contact: Anne-Marie Julien, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, Ottawa*

Networks

Regional Federal Councils exist in each province and territory. Councils comprise the senior representatives of federal departments and agencies with a presence in, or responsibility for, a given region. These representatives are individually accountable to senior officials/deputy ministers of their home departments/agencies. Each council is chaired by a senior public servant in the region and is supported by a small secretariat that facilitates activities of council members on a range of program and policy issues that cross departmental and jurisdictional lines. Since their formation in the early 1980s, councils have broadened the scope of their mandate and now promote a more collaborative approach to delivery of federal programs and services in the regions, a stronger consideration of regional realities in policy and program development, a more effective coordination of regional communications, and information sharing networks.

Councils are not homogeneous; they differ in size, structure, and modes of operation and their programs vary accordingly. Regional Federal Councils' activities can include the following:

- Provide a regional perspective and context for the national policy agenda and public management priorities and initiatives;
- Monitor federal Public Service capacity in the region;
- Provide a federal interdepartmental forum/gateway for other orders of government and regional stakeholders, and a portal for central agencies in the region;
- Undertake horizontal projects and initiatives; and
- Advise and support regional ministers in representing their respective regions in Cabinet and representing the federal government in the regions.

Regional Federal Councils strive to be a model of excellence in horizontal governance, with a view to advancing the Government of Canada's priorities and better serving Canadians in the regions. Through leadership and strong working partnerships, councils are well positioned to provide integrated regional advice to senior executives on national priorities, act as a forum to exchange information between the regions and the centre, and promote a more collaborative approach to the delivery of federal programs and services. To this end, councils share

information and best practices, support projects that respond to shared objectives, and provide regional perspectives on national priorities.

In addition to pursuing priorities specific to each region, councils also identify national priorities each year on which they can work together. These national priorities are based on the Government of Canada's priorities and the unique contributions that councils make.

Councils have led a broad range of initiatives and activities to advance Public Service Renewal. Councils conducted analyses of regional demographic data and facilitated regional discussions that contributed to councils' strategic planning and priority setting and helped to identify key sectors for recruitment and retention activities. Partnerships were strengthened with networks, communities of practice/interest, other jurisdictions, and academic institutions to support retention and development strategies. Councils communicated progress on Public Service Renewal to employees through forums, events, themed meetings, websites, and other means, all with a view to increasing understanding, strengthening linkages, and maintaining momentum. Through councils' support, leadership and skills development initiatives were implemented – often in partnership with networks, communities of practice, and academic institutions – to build capacity among regional employees across departments and at all levels. Councils also coordinated joint recruitment campaigns and interdepartmental staffing processes to streamline hiring and facilitate mobility, which was especially useful for departments with small regional presence.

Contact: Sandra Lafortune, Treasury Board Secretariat, Ottawa

The National Managers' Community (NMC) is a best practice in itself, in terms of opening the lines of communications between departments in a region. And the NMC is involved in several initiatives to that effect. It is working on a performance management strategy for managers as it's important that they share and have discussions about best practices related to – not only performance management – but also related to learning plans and diversity in the workforce. The NMC has also organized in the NCR a session with expert panellists who talked about their roles and shared performance management best practices. In addition, the NMC developed a one-day workshop entitled Coaching Practices for Managers and volunteer managers are now delivering

throughout the country. Participants are introduced to eight coaching practices and cover topics such as coaching language, improving observation skills, accessing new approaches to old problems, as well as strengthening skills using reflection. Finally, the NMC is starting to make use of GCPEDIA with its own space on the site, as a way to connect managers from across the country. *Contact: Mark Butler, Chair, National Managers Community Governing Council, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, NL*

The value of networks was emphasized in the Toronto session. Many participants were involved in the Future Leaders of Ontario (FLO) that gave them the opportunity to connect on a variety of topics and share ideas. Youth networks were also popular way to share ideas and for public servants to connect on horizontal issues. *Contact: Jash Malik, Environment Canada*

In Calgary there are a number of small pieces of departments. From what used to be the Southern Alberta Managers group, a network has developed that brings together communities of practice across all three levels of government, including a cluster on economic development and one on social development. This network is facilitated by the collocation of offices that supports consultation on policy, etc. The role of federal-provincial relationships is clear in the regions, and vehicles such as Trade Team Alberta allow forums to manage sibling rivalries, working out difficulties at the larger table and mitigating difficulties. *Contact: Jessie Hislop, Foreign Affairs and International Trade*

The communicators' community of practice in the Pacific Region was originally only for managers; however it has now been opened to permit any communicators to attend, and as a result attendance has expanded dramatically. There is cross-pollination of ideas, out-of-town guests, and information sharing that is not reliant on managers. Information is posted on the web, there is access to minutes, and a virtual network for connections.

The Pacific Federal Communications Council (PFCC) successfully implemented a new approach to regional communications activities during the past year with an aim to enhance participation and engagement within the regional communications community; encourage and facilitate information sharing, knowledge transfer and collaboration within and across departments; and promote professional

development and learning among communicators and federal public servants in the Pacific region. The initiatives introduced as part of this new approach have reinvigorated the regional communications community, and can be considered best practices in improving lines of communications and information sharing. These best practices, which could readily be extended to other communities of practice, include:

- Expanding membership to the full community of practice (i.e., all regional communications personnel, regardless of level) and holding regular meetings which include opportunities for both formal presentations and informal information exchange and networking;
- Enhancing website presence and developing and maintaining an e-mail distribution list and directory to facilitate regular and timely updates and information sharing on horizontal initiatives (e.g., 2010 Olympics) and/or professional development opportunities (e.g., assignments, training, etc.);
- Developing a robust program of professional development, including a series of half-day learning events as an alternative to holding one key event annually for the communicators community of practice, providing learning opportunity variety and flexibility for regional employees;
- Leveraging partnerships and resources to bring in dynamic and leading-edge thinkers to federal employees in the Pacific region;
- Engaging speakers/presenters from Ottawa and across the country to deliver "Ottawa-type events" or alternative perspectives to regional staff; and
- Encouraging extending learning beyond the communicators group and establishing connections between and among communities of practice, departments and regional employees by opening learning series events to participants outside the communications cadre.

The PFCC developed and updated a comprehensive directory of regional communications personnel in all GC departments and agencies; introduced a thematic approach to meetings; and began extending invitations to monthly PFCC meetings to the entire regional communications community. This significantly broadened the PFCC network and facilitated an improved exchange of knowledge, information and inclusivity within its membership. The PFCC website was also re-organized and updated in order to improve the quality of communications

products and services available to the community. All communicators are now able to access a wide array of resources including regional communications directory, meeting minutes, communications policy and resource links, career opportunities, and corporate documents.

Professional Development and Learning

The PFCC delivered a series of learning and professional developmental initiatives on topical issues for the communications community. The PacificComm Learning Series included; a half-day forum on “Canada’s People, Politics and Public Service” with topic experts Andrew Coyne and David Good; a two-day intranet web symposium with industry leaders; a two-part training session on Web 2.0, social media and internal communications; and a half-day workshop on “How Ottawa Works”. The sessions, which were delivered in partnership with interdepartmental support (i.e., TBS Regional Communications Network, Pacific Federal Council, HC, CRA, WD, CSPC and the Yukon Federal Council), were promoted within the regional communications community, but also made available to other interested public servants involved in policy, programs, and service delivery. Approximately 370 regional participants from BC and the Yukon attended the learning events, all of which were very well received.

Contact: Annie Desgagné, Pacific Federal Council

Leadership and Public Service Renewal

One of the participants from Industry Canada developed a leadership development pilot project to provide a forum for interdepartmental exchanges (via acting or assignments) for public servants at the EX minus one, two and three levels to gain leadership and senior management skills. This pilot project would focus on on-the-job learning (via acting and assignments) to provide participants with learning and development opportunities in other federal government departments, thereby giving them access to organizational knowledge and broadening their networks. This will allow participants to gain valuable skills and competencies, and enable them to easily transition into leadership positions within the federal government. The pilot will expose participants to new and different thinking styles, knowledge and perspectives, and provide an opportunity to develop future leaders. The time frame for the pilot project is three years commencing in January 2010. *Contact: Melody Myers, Industry Canada, Winnipeg*

To pave the way for the next generation, the Québec Federal Council (QFC) now invites not only senior managers to its meetings, but emerging professionals as well. QFC trainees also take advantage of hour-long one-on-one sessions with a manager to discuss files and certain concerns. These sessions are an opportunity to take stock. EDC offers emerging professionals mentoring opportunities with an employee from another department, thereby helping to obtain an objective vision and discussions. EDC has also implemented a knowledge transfer initiative to attempt to retain a degree of institutional memory. *Contacts: Marie-Chantal Girard, Québec Federal Council Cédric Lefebvre, Canada Economic Development*

Leadership development was especially important, as one participant (at DND) drew the distinction between leadership and management: “Managers do things right; leaders do the right thing. Leadership is influencing human behaviour.” All participants recognized that leadership can arise from any level within the organization. They emphasized the need to take risks and do the right thing, not being overly bogged down in rules and bureaucracy. The idea of a “Department of Common Sense” was one way of illustrating how managers can be encouraged to do what needs to get done rather than being overly preoccupied with unnecessary process and risk avoidance. *Contact: Major David DeVries, Department of National Defence*

In the National Capital Region, DND has established a mentorship program for EX minus one and two, military and civilian employees. This is a formalized program with an electronic database and matching program. The mentee always has the choice of the mentor he/she will contact and with whom they will potentially work. *Contact: Lucia Sciannname, Department of National Defence*

Industry Canada uses an institutionalized approach to mentoring. Interested participants register for the program and then someone matches them up. A first meeting between mentor and mentee is then held to see if the fit is right. This helps to build confidence in a comfortable environment – and it also helps build networks as people from different offices are matched. *Contact: Trajan Schulzke, Industry Canada*

In terms of career development and planning, participants agreed on the benefits of support tools in this area. The Ontario Federal Council sponsors an initiative known as *Come Experience the Public Service* that allows employees to spend time (typically a half-day) at another department to learn about what they do, with the goal of exposing public servant to other career opportunities. This is similar to the Farming the Public Service (PS) initiative (a DND-AAFC partnership) and “office/departmental crawls” offered by other departments and other regions. Participants also supported career development programs such as the developmental program for aspiring leaders in Service Canada and mentorship programs such as that of CFIA where they worked in partnership with York University to put their program in place. *Contacts: Monika D’Amato, Citizenship and Immigration Canada Major David DeVries, Department of National Defence*

The Newfoundland and Labrador Future Leaders Network held a one day event in October 2008 entitled “Leadership without Title”, supporting networking and communication between employees in a variety of departments. One of the speakers was a cancer survivor who brought a unique perspective to a breadth of issues that should be considered by leaders. The network is a sub-committee of the HR sub-committee of Federal Council. Membership in the network does not require managerial permission, is not age-restricted, and focuses on a mandate to support members to become leaders. Over the last few years the network has partnered with the managers community to hold events. There is a speakers series where members of Federal Council meet with them. Events and networks

such as these are important to break down barriers between silos. There is recognition that small amounts of money to fund core operations can have influence in charting the direction of a community.

Contact: Michele Haire, Canadian Heritage

While it is recognized that employees have a responsibility for the management and advancement of their own careers, many of them lack a fundamental understanding of career planning within the Public Service, and as such may be challenged in achieving their full potential. In addressing this shortfall, the Ontario Federal Council launched the Career Development Series of armchair discussions. This initiative provides small groups of employees, usually about eight to ten, with the opportunity to engage in informal, facilitated discussions with OFC members, senior leaders and functional experts. During these discussions, the host talks about his or her personal experiences in the public service, provides tips and guidance, and answers questions on the subject of career development and progression. Each discussion was led by a volunteer facilitator and participants are requested to complete a feedback form. They ran a Part I and a Part II of this Career Development Series over six months, with a combination of GTA, non-GTA locations (Kingston, Sudbury, London, Burlington, Peterborough) and inter-jurisdictional hosts. In total, they ran 24 armchair discussions, with 19 different hosts. The feedback from participants and hosts was extremely positive. *Contact: Joan Woodrow, Ontario Federal Council*

Leaders' Circle is an initiative recently launched by the Ontario Federal Council. As leadership development is one of the tenets of the Clerk's Public Service Renewal (PSR) plan for the upcoming year, OFC and TBS regional communications have developed an initiative to bring together the recognized "leaders" at all levels across the region into a group called the Leaders' Circle. The purpose of the circle is to foster a culture of leadership, build relationships among leaders, and, primarily, to ensure that regional leaders understand, and can in turn communicate the government's key messages and policy directives within their individual spheres of influence.

The initial activity is to bring this group together for a series of forums on topics that reflect the government's current priorities. These sessions feature high quality commentators or subject matter experts whose presentations would have

relevance to all levels of leaders and would attract the highest number of participants. Participants discussed the "career manager" approach taken by DND for their military employees, and agreed that career development support, either central or within a department, is a valuable tool where it exists. PWGSC and Health Canada were both cited as departments that have excellent career development support systems within their organizations.

Contact: Joan Woodrow, Ontario Federal Council

Another best practice from DND is for military personnel who are transferred to be paired with a "sponsor" at their new location. This sponsor helps them find their way through local policies, the workplace, and the community. This buddy-system is a best practice that could be used to benefit new hires in the public service. *Contacts: Monika D'Amato, Citizenship and Immigration Canada*

In Vancouver, it was mentioned that one of the staff at WD in British Columbia at the CR 04 level won an opportunity to take a DM internship program. As a result, this employee spent six months in Edmonton, six months in Ottawa and six months in British Columbia. During this time she acquired a degree, and is now filling different positions which will position her for leadership positions in the future.

In Yellowknife, it was noted that the public service is arbitrary about how it does knowledge transfer. We have a good emphasis on orientation but not on the back end. A manager from DFO talked about her approach – ensuring an overlap between the departing staff and their replacement to ensure transfer of knowledge, to provide support as the new person takes over the duties, to provide advice. She acknowledged that there is a cost, but that she budgets for it. She also asks staff who are going on assignment to help find replacements and ensure knowledge sharing. Planning is essential and individuals have responsibility. *Contact: Mary Tapsell, Department of Fisheries and Oceans*

DND has a standard practice of hand over for a two week period, and have built that into their staffing process. Justice Canada has "practice groups" where they discuss files, share knowledge and develop approaches that support Justice speaking with one voice.

Statistics Canada operates in a matrix system, with horizontal management of programs; directors sit on committees outside their responsibility areas. Senior managers must sit on at least two committees. This

encourages sharing of information and issues across sections. All directors move every two years, and all new hires spend their first two years in training learning about all sections, with a mentor to look at progress, etc. This approach means that people can be easily moved around with the department – “plug and play”. *Contact: Sylvie Dupont, Statistics Canada*

Participants at the Network Summit meeting, organized by the National Managers’ Community, in September 2008, recommended creation of a structure of support in the National Capital Region to help bring together networks and communities to collaborate, co-operate and engage on PS renewal in the NCR. This concept recognized the difficulty in Ottawa for public servants to connect across departments to accomplish joint activities, or to discuss common issues, as no vehicle currently exists. There was recognition that people must want to participate, and that a secretariat function would be required to support its development. It was felt that such a structure could engage NCR employees, including executives, managers and youth, as well as other key target audiences.

Subsequent discussions within the working group for NCR engagement have informed approaches to creating a possible NCR network committee. An NCR Network Council could be created with a mandate and membership that would be broadly similar to the former Canada Public Service Agency’s PS Renewal Network of Advocates Committee, but with an NCR focus. Membership could be comprised of a senior representative in the NCR from the following groups: Association of Professional Executives (APEX); National Managers Community; Youth Network; Human Resource Council (HRC); DG Communications Network; National Council of Federal Employees with Disabilities; National Council of Visible Minorities; National Council of Aboriginal Federal Employees; and functional communities. Further activity on the development of this network is continuing. *Contact: Francine Kennedy, Public Works and Government Services Canada*

The PS Renewal Network of Advocates was established by the former Canada Public Service Agency, with a sample number of representatives of different networks, functional communities, regional federal councils, and employment equity councils as well as communities of interest, to broaden the range of voices and perspectives engaged in support the renewal of the public service across Canada.

The mandate included recommending proactive and strategic advice on renewal issues, encouraging horizontal collaboration and leveraging existing initiatives, and ensuring consistent messaging. It brought network perspectives to the PS renewal table and promoted opportunities to share and learn best practices from other participants. It encouraged communication on renewal within networks and communities as well as horizontal collaboration. *Contact: Danièle Besner, Privy Council Office*

In November 2008, the Québec Federal Public Servants Youth Network organized a large seminar in Québec City which attracted close to 275 participants. The aim was to bring together young public servants, and also managers, to take part in personal and professional development and networking activities, under the chosen theme “finding and making a place for ourselves in our environment”. Since public service renewal was to be discussed, and the event used the respect for the environment as a backdrop, the organizing committee had adopted “renewable energy” as a slogan.

The main objectives of this sixth seminar were to allow participants an opportunity to reflect on public service renewal, and to provide them with concrete and personalized tools so they could find and make a place for themselves in their environment. The themes of the discussions related to public service renewal, which is among the priorities of the Clerk and where young people have an important role to play. Seminars and workshops dealt with a vast array of subjects such as diversity, motivation, intergenerational conflicts, demographic issues, the public service of tomorrow, etc.

Criteria were not limited to the age of participants – far from it. The term “young” applied to experience in the federal Public Service and the need for professional development is also valid; therefore anyone who felt an interest in the issues to be discussed was welcome to participate in the seminar. Managers were also invited to participate in the event to hear what young people had to say, to express their own needs, and contribute the perspective they gained through their experience on the different issues discussed. Several responded to the call.

This event was an opportunity for young federal public servants from Quebec to acquire new tools that will allow them to be more effective in their personal and professional lives. They went back to

their departments with knowledge that will help them know themselves better, and therefore better plan their career in the federal public service. They will also be able to establish new relationships with other young public servants and with managers, which will allow them to widen their network of contacts, an important aspect of their career development and also for attaining a larger horizontality in the federal public service. After the seminar, participants were able to share their newly acquired tools and knowledge with their organization, thereby having a direct impact on their work environment.

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