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# Public Opinion Research in the Government of Canada

## Annual Report

2008–2009



Public Works and  
Government Services  
Canada

Travaux publics et  
Services gouvernementaux  
Canada

Canada

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# Public Opinion Research in the Government of Canada

## Annual Report 2008–2009

*Prepared by Public Works and Government Services Canada*





## Minister's Message

I am pleased to present the 2008–2009 Annual Report on Public Opinion Research.

Public opinion research (POR) is an important communication instrument for government departments and agencies and serves many functions. It plays a key role in assessing the effectiveness of government policies, programs and services; and it ensures that these services and programs reflect the priorities of Canadians. POR allows the Government of Canada to identify Canadians' needs, views and expectations. It helps government better understand Canadian society and engages the citizens of this country on key issues of the public agenda.

Over the past three years, the Government of Canada has taken action to improve fiscal responsibility and accountability in its POR practices. More recently, the government introduced measures to enhance the planning of POR to ensure that research undertaken is aligned with government priorities, policies, programs and services. This report demonstrates the government's ongoing efforts to improve the management of public opinion research. It also demonstrates the government's commitment to transparency by reporting key activities undertaken in 2008–2009.

Public Works and Government Services Canada (PWGSC) works with other federal departments and agencies to serve Canadians efficiently and cost-effectively. We strive for transparency, accountability and excellence, and we are committed to keep working with our partners to ensure public opinion research activities are well coordinated, effectively managed and provide value for money on behalf of Canadians.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rona Ambrose".

Rona Ambrose  
*Minister of Public Works and Government Services*



# Table of Contents

<i>Minister's Message</i>	<i>i</i>
---------------------------	----------

<i>Introduction</i>	<i>1</i>
---------------------	----------

Definition of Public Opinion Research	1
Role of Public Opinion Research	1
Strengthening Public Opinion Research Management in the Government of Canada	2
Business Volume in Public Opinion Research in the Government of Canada	3
Total Projects Coordinated by the Public Opinion Research Directorate	3
Application of Public Opinion Research by the Government of Canada	3
Informing Canadians	3
Taking Into Account Canadians' Needs	4
Research Supporting Other Government Activities	4
Custom and Syndicated Research	5
Approaches to Custom Research	5
Procurement Methods in Public Opinion Research	6
Target Groups Reached	6
Most Active Departments and Agencies	7
Geographic Reach of Surveys and Locations of Focus Group Studies Conducted for the Government of Canada in 2008–2009	7

<i>Highlights of Public Opinion Research Projects</i>	<i>11</i>
---	-----------

Canadian Food Inspection Agency	11
Canadian Heritage	12
Department of Finance Canada	13
Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada	14
Health Canada	16
National Defence	17
Natural Resources Canada	18
Parks Canada	19
Veterans Affairs Canada	21

## *How Public Opinion Research is Managed in the Government of Canada* 23

Expanding the Frontiers of Knowledge	24
Sharing Results with Canadians	24
Sharing Knowledge within Government: The Community of Practice	24
Sharing Knowledge with the Marketing Research Profession	25
Canada's Marketing Research Industry	26
Continuing Education	26

## *Conclusion* 26

## *For More Information* 27

## *Appendices* 28

Appendix I: Listing of Departments and Agencies Engaged in Public Opinion Research, 2008–2009	28
Appendix II: Listing of Contractors Engaged in Public Opinion Research, 2008–2009	29
Appendix III: Standing Offers for Public Opinion Research	30



# Introduction

## *Definition of Public Opinion Research*

Public opinion research (POR) in the Government of Canada is defined as the planned gathering, by or for a government institution, of opinions, attitudes, perceptions, judgments, feelings, ideas, reactions, or views that are intended to be used for any government purpose, whether that information is collected from persons (including employees of government institutions), businesses, institutions or other entities, through quantitative or qualitative methods, irrespective of size or cost.

The information gathering may be associated with a broad range of activities, for example: policy research; market research; communications research; advertising research; program evaluation; quality of service/customer satisfaction studies; omnibus surveys, with the placement of one or more questions; syndicated studies; or product development.

The following research and/or methods for obtaining opinions and/or advice are not considered to be opinion research: literature reviews or reviews of secondary sources, including reviews of already conducted public opinion research; secondary analysis of previously collected public opinion research data; and verification of performance of services or delivery of goods in contract situations.

The definition of public opinion research includes not only entire projects that have a data collection component, but also parts of POR projects, such as the design and testing of a collection method and tools, sampling, data input, coding, primary analysis of data, and online panel development and management.

## *Role of Public Opinion Research*

Public opinion research is an important tool that offers impartial, systematic and reliable methods to collect the opinions of Canadians as a whole or those that could be most affected by a particular Government of Canada activity. POR also provides the opportunity to obtain real-time feedback. This is particularly helpful in times of emergency or rapidly evolving issues such as pandemics.

Public opinion research helps the government to better understand Canadian society and to identify citizens' needs and expectations. It is used to assess the public's response to proposals or to possible changes or initiatives; to assess the effectiveness of policies, programs and services; to measure progress in service improvement; to evaluate the effectiveness of communication activities such as advertising; and to plan and evaluate marketing initiatives, among other applications.

—*Communications Policy of the Government of Canada*

The need for POR is embedded in a number of the government's administrative policies as one of the tools to help ensure that government activities are achieving intended results for Canadians. For example, it helps the Government of Canada understand how its programs and services are used, how much they are used, by whom, and whether or not these programs and services are considered useful and effective. POR also assists the Government of Canada in understanding whether its communications in support of policies, programs and services are heard, read and understood by Canadians.

Expected results of the government's management of POR ensure:

- research undertaken for projects is aligned with government priorities, policies, programs, services and initiatives;
- bidding processes for contracted public opinion research activities are open, fair, and transparent, and that POR contracts provide value for money; and
- the public's views and needs are well understood and taken into account when the Government of Canada develops policies, programs, services and initiatives.

This 2008–2009 annual report identifies government-wide research contracted to the private sector.

## Strengthening Public Opinion Research Management in the Government of Canada

The government has implemented a number of changes to the manner in which POR is planned, managed and released to the public.

The Federal Accountability Action Plan, which was released on April 11, 2006, was the first in a series of changes aimed at strengthening the management of POR to address concerns about the transparency, fairness and value for money of the procurement process in this area.

The *Federal Accountability Act*, which received Royal Assent on December 12, 2006, fulfilled a commitment of the Action Plan by implementing legislative requirements to:

- Prohibit verbal-only POR reports;
- Require departments to provide written reports to Library and Archives Canada within six months of completion of the data collection; and
- "...promote fairness, openness and transparency in the bidding process for contracts..."

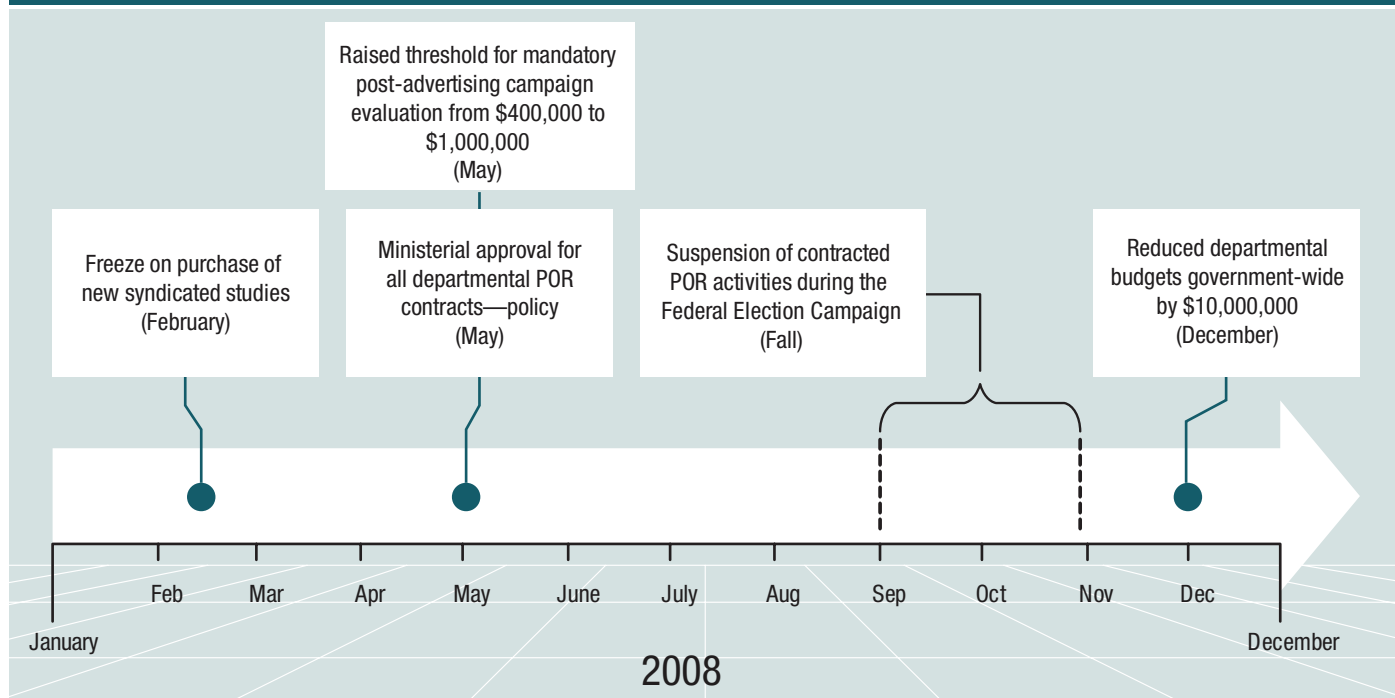
Furthering its commitment to transparency, a new Library and Archives Canada website was developed to house and allow public online access to reports, executive summaries and POR contract information (<http://www.porr-rrop.gc.ca>).

In addition, Public Opinion Research Contract Regulations, which standardize the form and content of contracted POR reports came into effect on June 7, 2007.

On February 13, 2008, the Minister of Public Works and Government Services and the President of Treasury Board announced a series of additional measures and committed to reducing government-wide expenditures on POR by \$10 million. New measures include:

1) a requirement to obtain ministerial approval of all departmental POR, 2) an immediate freeze on the signing of new subscriptions of syndicated surveys, and 3) an increase in the evaluation threshold for post advertising campaigns from \$400,000 to \$1 million. In May 2008, these changes, along with a requirement to provide a quarterly POR plan, to be approved by each department's Minister and to be sent to Public Opinion Research Directorate (PORD) and Privy Council Office (PCO), were integrated into the Treasury Board *Procedures for Planning and Contracting Public Opinion Research* (See Figure 1).

**Figure 1: 2008 Contract Value Control Measures, Strengthening Accountability**



The implementation of these measures has contributed to more focused expenditures and best value for taxpayers' money.

## *Business Volume in Public Opinion Research in the Government of Canada*

### **Total Projects Coordinated by the Public Opinion Research Directorate**

In 2008–2009, 131 contracted public opinion research projects worth \$8.1 million were coordinated through the Public Opinion Research Directorate.

In total, 23 contractors were involved in POR. The firm with the highest volume, Environics Research Group, conducted 23 of the 131 projects, followed by Ipsos Reid Corporation with 21 projects and EKOS Research Associates with 16 projects. See Appendix II for a list of contractors engaged in public opinion research in 2008–2009.

### **Application of Public Opinion Research by the Government of Canada**

Public opinion research undertaken by the Government of Canada can be divided into three areas of application. They are:

- Informing Canadians
  - Advertising research
  - Development of communication plans
  - Communication product testing
  - Website testing
- Taking Into Account Canadians' Needs
  - Market research
  - Policy development
  - Quality of service and client satisfaction measurement
  - Policy and program review
- Research Supporting Other Government Activities
  - Internal organizational research
  - Panels

In 2008–2009, a total of 131 POR projects were conducted, of which 74 were intended to inform Canadians, and 51 were to help strengthen policies and programs that take into account Canadians' needs. The remaining six projects focused on research that supports other government activities (See Table 1).

A total of \$8.1 million was contracted on Government of Canada research, of which 50 percent was allocated to informing Canadians; 46 percent assessed Canadians' needs as the government develops policies and programs; and an additional four percent was spent on research that supported other governmental activities.

### **Informing Canadians**

The government has a duty to explain its policies and decisions and to inform Canadians of its programs and services. POR helps ensure that information about policies, programs and services is clear, credible and targeted to appropriate audiences. This includes research to:

- pre-test government advertising;
- evaluate recall and recognition of advertising;
- measure awareness, attitudes and behavioural intentions as the government develops information products and communications vehicles, as well as the concepts for these tools;

**Table 1: Categories of Custom Research 2008–2009**

	Contract Value	% Contract Value	Number of Projects	% Number of Projects
Informing Canadians	\$4,065,479.37	50%	74	56%
Taking Into Account Canadians' Needs	\$3,731,957.41	46%	51	39%
Research Supporting Other Government Activities	\$306,449.35	4%	6	5%
Total	\$8,103,886.13	100%	131	100%

- test communication products (including evaluation of concepts, messages, content and creative design); and
- develop and refine other vehicles that provide Canadians with information, such as guides and brochures.

The Government of Canada regularly pre-tests advertising associated with major campaigns to ensure that funds are invested wisely and that messages are well communicated. Pre-testing is mandatory for campaigns with a media buy of \$400,000 or more.

Post-testing of advertising is used to attribute recall, attitude and behaviour changes resulting from major campaigns. Post-testing is mandatory for campaigns with a media buy of \$1 million or more. The information from these studies is used to improve the planning and development of future information campaigns.

In 2008–2009, 50 percent of all custom research expenditures was allocated to informing Canadians. For an example of this research, see National Defence's post-test of the recruitment advertising campaign *Fight* described in the Highlights of Public Opinion Research Projects section of this report.

### Taking Into Account Canadians' Needs

The government also uses POR to identify the need for implementing policies and programs and to understand and take account of how Canadians relate to them. This includes research to develop programs and outreach initiatives to help Canadians make informed choices about their health, safety and security. This type of research also helps the government both understand the public's perspectives and experiences, and identify the best approaches to reach out to Canadians.

This category includes:

- **Policy development research**, in which the government collects information on attitudes and opinions to develop public policies that reflect the needs and wants of Canadians or the specific stakeholder groups affected by those policies;
- **Market research**, which involves collecting information on product attributes, attitudes and opinions that will help in the design and delivery of programs and services and, in some cases, decisions regarding user fees;
- **Policy and program reviews**, in which the government uses surveys and focus groups to evaluate the effectiveness and usefulness of programs and services and the factors that are related to the utility of programs and services; and
- **Quality of service and client satisfaction studies** that help the government understand users' experiences, interest in future services, priorities for services, key areas requiring improvement or change, drivers of client satisfaction, sources of information for clients, and current and future trends.

In 2008–2009, 46 percent of all custom research expenditures was allocated to policy development and market research. An example of this research carried out in 2008–2009 is Natural Resources Canada's study *Granting a Social License to Operate: Public Opinion and Mining in Remote/Rural Communities* (see Highlights of Public Opinion Research Projects).

Program and service evaluation research enables the government to track quality and service indicators, to report on the progress and success of its programs and services, and to identify possible improvements. Parks Canada's study on *Special Events in Canada's National Parks* is a good example. It too is described in the Highlights of Public Opinion Research Projects section of this report.

### Research Supporting Other Government Activities

In 2008–2009, the government focused on ways to improve and strengthen the quality of its research and human resources in the public service. Types of research in support of other government activities included internal organizational research, such as employee surveys or focus groups, which help the government understand the needs and expectations of employees. It also included the maintenance of a Government of Canada online panel, which could be used by all government departments and agencies.

In 2008–2009, four percent of all custom research expenditures was allocated to research supporting other government activities.

## Custom and Syndicated Research

**Custom public opinion research** is commissioned for specific departments or agencies for the exclusive use of the government. Commissioning organizations hold the intellectual property rights to reports and other materials generated by each project. These products are then made available to other federal organizations and the public through Library and Archives Canada. Parliamentarians and the media have access through the Library of Parliament. Custom research accounts for all of the POR work undertaken by the government in 2008–2009.

**Syndicated research studies** are developed by suppliers who, in turn, make them available to paying subscribers in the private and public sectors. These off-the-shelf products often contain trend information on various topics. The suppliers retain copyright and sole responsibility for managing the content. Subscribers are normally prohibited from distributing the information to non-subscribing parties. As the research costs are shared among the subscribers, syndicated research is sometimes a cost-effective option for meeting a departmental research need and obtaining information on hard-to-reach populations and highly specific target groups. No syndicated research was purchased by the Government of Canada in the 2008–2009 fiscal year.

## Approaches to Custom Research

There are two main ways of conducting research: quantitative and qualitative.

**Quantitative research** follows a systematic approach to collect and analyze information. The information is gathered in carefully structured ways. This includes surveys conducted by telephone, on the Internet, through face-to-face and exit interviews, mailed questionnaires, and self-completed diaries.

A quantitative approach is used when descriptive or inferential statistics are required. The results from quantitative research can in most cases be generalized to the population being studied. The approach can be used to evaluate the effectiveness of a program, service, or advertising campaign, to measure customer satisfaction, to identify market segments, and to track changes in the public's attitudes, behaviour and use of products and services.

As an example, Foreign Affairs' *Corporate Communication Survey*, described in the Highlights section of this report, was conducted using quantitative research methods.

**Qualitative research** is used to gain insight into people's intentions and perceptions. It explores their opinions on particular topics in more depth than is generally possible with a survey. Unlike quantitative methodologies, those used in qualitative research do not yield data that can be generalized to the population being studied. Commonly used types of qualitative research include focus groups, personal interviews and small group discussions.

Qualitative research can be used to generate new product, program or service concepts. It can examine clients' knowledge of, and experiences with, a product, program or service. For a publication or website, qualitative research can test clarity and comprehension of the content or format. It can also be used to pre-test concepts for an advertising campaign.

Health Canada's study entitled *Exploring Traditional Food Safety Information for First Nations*, described in the Highlights of Public Opinion Research Projects section of this report, is a good example of a qualitative public opinion research project.



## Procurement Methods in Public Opinion Research

The Government of Canada uses various procurement methods to contract public opinion research. Standing offers were established competitively for the three main approaches to custom research (qualitative, quantitative and a mix of the two). Appendix III includes a complete list of contractors on the standing offers.

In 2008–2009, 88 percent of the total value of contracts issued (\$7,107,755) was awarded through standing offers. The value of contracts for public tenders (MERX) was \$832,359 or 10 percent of the total. Specialized research services not offered through the standing offers or public tenders accounted for \$163,771.41, or two percent of the total. These are typically low dollar-value requirements below \$25,000 for specialized services not covered on the government's existing standing offer list for POR (See Table 2).

### Public opinion research by the Government of Canada touches all Canadians

POR studies undertaken by the government reach out to many segments of Canadian society. Research populations include the general public, users of specific government services, parents, victims of crime, business people, seniors, potential military and public service recruits, youth, Aboriginal people and persons with disabilities. When their opinions are heard through research such as surveys and focus groups, Canadians are able to influence the government decision-making process.

## Target Groups Reached

POR is conducted among a wide variety of audiences. Table 3 presents 34 specific target groups reached by POR studies conducted in 2008–2009.

**Table 2: Procurement Methods 2008–2009**

	Total Contract Value (\$)	% of Total Contract Value	Number of Contracts	% of Total Number of Contracts
Standing offer	7,107,755	88%	112	85%
Public tenders (MERX)	832,359	10%	10	8%
Other methods	163,771	2%	9	7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,103,885</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 3: Target Groups Reached**

Aboriginal people	Employees of the Government of Canada	Parents	Taxpayers
Benefit recipients	Ethnic communities	Parents with children living at home	Trade school students
Business people	First Nations people	People with household incomes under \$60,000	Travellers
Canadian investors	General population	Persons with hearing impairment	Users of networking sites
Canadian passport holders	Health professionals	Potential Canadian business owners/entrepreneurs	Visible minorities
Canadian youth	Homeowners	Potential home buyers	Wage earners
Caregivers	Immigrants	Seniors	Working Canadians
Clients of PWGSC	Internet users	Smokers	
Disability organizations	Opinion leaders	Students	

## *Most Active Departments and Agencies*

As health care continues to be a top priority for Canadians, health-related research has predominated for several years. This trend continued in 2008–2009. Contracts awarded on behalf of Health Canada accounted for 17 percent of both the total value of contracts and the total number of projects. Human Resources and Social Development Canada was the second highest with eight POR projects valued at \$808,000. Only one department had research in excess of \$1 million, compared with five in 2007–2008 and ten in 2006–2007. Appendix I includes a list of all departments and agencies engaged in POR in 2008–2009.

## *Geographic Reach of Surveys and Locations of Focus Group Studies Conducted for the Government of Canada in 2008–2009*

The map, *Government of Canada Public Opinion Research 2008–2009: Geographic Reach of Surveys and Locations of Focus Groups*, shows the areas surveyed by the Government of Canada in 2008–2009 and the number and locations of focus groups conducted during the reporting year. Many telephone surveys included all area codes in Canada. Residents of all provinces and territories with landline telephone numbers were included in the samples. The information on focus groups is from studies undertaken in 2008–2009 for which final POR reports were available at the time of publication of this report.

# Geographic Reach of Surveys and Locations of Focus Group Studies Conducted for the Government of Canada in 2008–2009

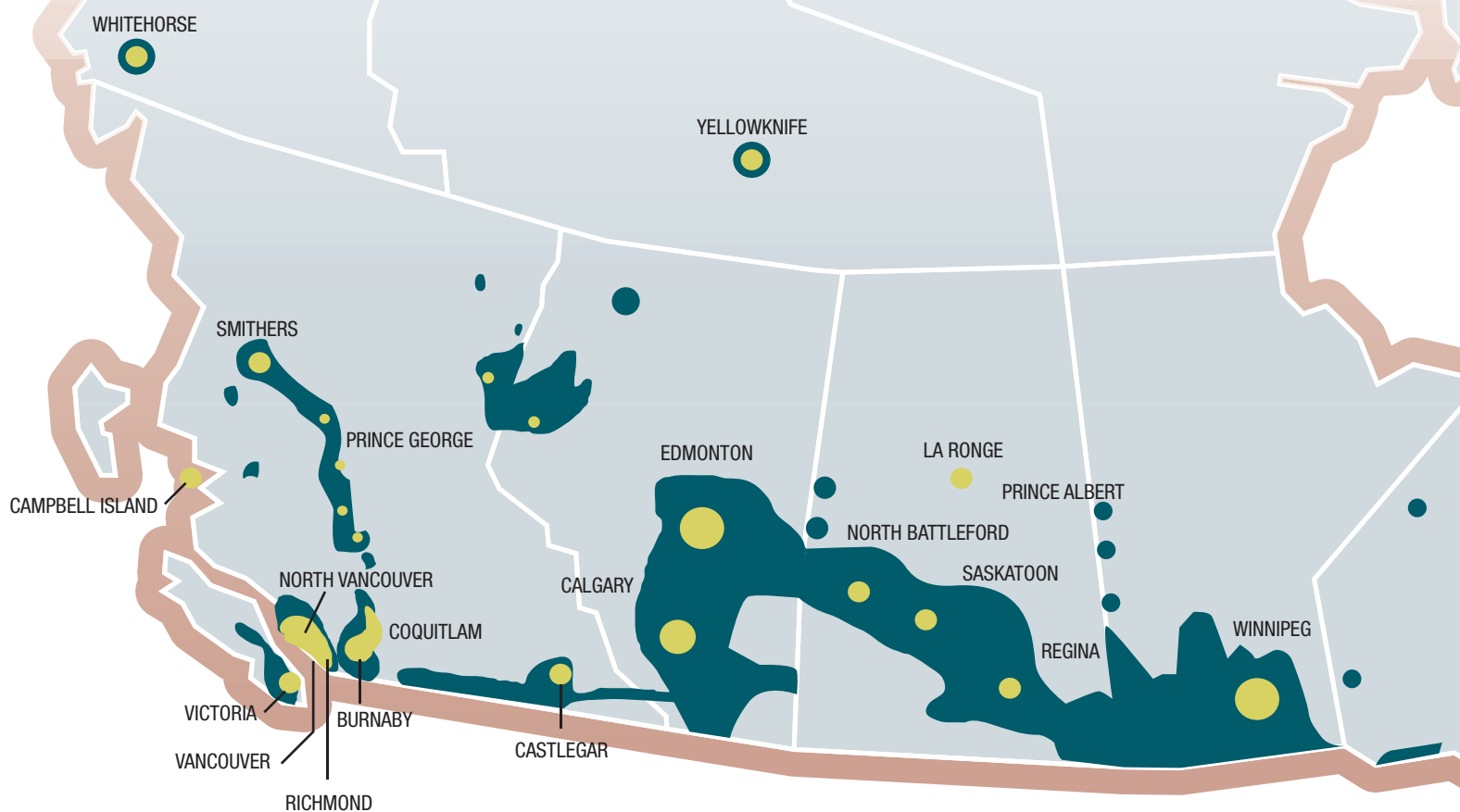
### Locations for Focus Group Studies in 2008–2009:

- Big Cove, N.B. (1)
- Brampton, Ont. (1)
- Burnaby, B.C. (1)
- Calgary, Alta. (4)
- Campbell Island, B.C. (1)
- Castlegar, B.C. (1)
- Charlottetown, P.E.I. (1)
- Coquitlam, B.C. (1)
- Edmonton, Alta. (3)
- Edmundston, N.B. (1)
- Fredericton, N.B. (1)
- Golden Lake, Ont. (1)
- Halifax, N.S. (13)
- Iqaluit, Nun. (1)
- La Ronge, Sask. (1)
- Lac Simon, Que. (1)

- London, Ont. (2)
- Long Harbour, N.L. (1)
- Mississauga, Ont. (3)
- Moncton, N.B. (4)
- Montreal, Que. (32)
- North Battleford, Sask. (1)
- North Vancouver, B.C. (3)
- Oakville, Ont. (1)
- Ottawa, Ont. (4)
- Prince Albert, Sask. (1)
- Prince George, B.C. (1)
- Quebec City, Que. (4)
- Regina, Sask. (1)
- Richmond, B.C. (1)
- Roberval, Que. (2)
- Saint John, N.B. (2)
- Saskatoon, Sask. (2)
- Sharbot Lake, Ont. (1)
- Sherbrooke, Que. (1)

- Smithers, B.C. (1)
- St. John's, N.L. (3)
- St. Stephen, N.B. (1)
- Sydney, N.S. (1)
- Toronto, Ont. (35)
- Trois-Rivières, Que. (2)
- Val D'or, Que. (1)
- Vancouver, B.C. (20)
- Victoria, B.C. (1)
- Welland, Ont. (1)
- Whitehorse, Y.T. (2)
- Windsor, Ont. (2)
- Winnipeg, Man. (10)
- Yellowknife, N.W.T. (3)

Note: The numbers correspond to the amount of times a focus group study was held in each location.





This map shows the locations of focus groups conducted for the Government of Canada in 2008–2009. The areas shaded khaki represent zones of high population density, which are urban areas and surrounding districts, where by far the largest number of Canadians live. The areas shaded dark blue represent zones of medium population density where a smaller proportion of the Canadians live. The areas shaded gray represent zones of light population density where only a relatively small proportion of Canada's population lives.

The map shows that the vast majority of the focus group studies were held in the areas shaded khaki: i.e. urban areas and surrounding districts, where the majority of the Canadian population resides.





# Highlights of Public Opinion Research Projects

This section contains a review of public opinion research studies of note in selected departments and agencies across the Government of Canada.

## *Canadian Food Inspection Agency*

### ***Food Safety and Food Labelling: Canadians' Awareness, Attitudes and Views***

Research into these subjects was designed to achieve the following objectives:

- Measure Canadians' confidence in Canada's food safety system, and food produced in Canada and in other countries;
- Measure Canadians' awareness of recent high-profile food recalls;
- Understand the impact of recent high-profile food recalls on Canadians' confidence in Canada's food safety system;
- Probe Canadians' attitudes about and awareness of food labelling practices;
- Probe Canadians' knowledge, understanding and awareness of the newly enacted "Product of Canada" and "Made in Canada" food labelling guidelines; and
- Measure and examine the ways Canadians' prefer to receive communications related to "Product of Canada," "Made in Canada" and food labelling guidelines.

A two-pronged research design was employed, consisting of qualitative and quantitative components. Ten focus groups were conducted with members of the public in Halifax, Montreal, Toronto, Saskatoon and Vancouver between March 16 and 24, 2009. A telephone survey of 1,014 Canadian adults (through random selection) was conducted between March 11 and 23, 2009. The sample had a margin of error of +/- 3.1 percent, 19 times out of 20.

The research revealed that 74 percent of Canadians rate the safety of domestically produced food higher than food produced by other developed countries.

Awareness of food safety recall events is high. During the six months preceding the study (September to March), approximately nine out of ten Canadians had heard, read or seen something related to food safety or the recall of food products in Canada.

For one-third of Canadians, food recalls demonstrate that the system is working; however, for a larger proportion—approximately half of Canadians—food recalls mean that some unsafe food products are getting through the system. Research indicated that Canadians desire more information on food safety, including food recalls.

Nonetheless, focus group participants indicated that they continue to have faith in the effectiveness and accountability of Canada's food inspection system.

The majority of Canadians believe that the federal government is responsible for protecting Canada's food supply. About one in five identified the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) as the responsible agency.

Focus group participants indicated that the following labelling information was important in their purchase decision-making: brand name, size, quantity, expiry date, whether the product is organic and nutritional facts.

There is interest in country-of-origin labels, such as “Product of Canada” and “Made in Canada”; however, there was also significant confusion as to what these labels precisely designate.

Focus group participants would welcome product label designations that help them clearly identify Canadian products, such as a maple leaf or Canadian flag.

Focus group participants believed that the federal government should lead the effort to communicate food product labelling guidelines to the general public, and should use traditional media.

The information from this research is being used to develop relevant communications products, as well as programs and policies. Specifically, the following have been undertaken as a result of the research:

- In response to Canadians’ desire for more information on how to protect their families from foods that pose health risks:
  - Consultations were conducted with Canadians in five cities across Canada in September 2009 to clarify the types of food safety information Canadians would like to receive, including information relating to food recalls; and
  - Two videos are in development: one on safe food handling, and a second, entitled *From Farm to Fork*, on the steps undertaken to ensure the safety of food as it travels from the producer to the consumer.
- In response to Canadians’ interest in country-of-origin designations on food labels:
  - The CFIA’s Consumer Centre, located on the CFIA website, has been redesigned and tested with Canadians to ensure that they have access to comprehensive information on food safety and food labelling, including the new “Product of Canada” and “Made in Canada” designations.
- In response to Canadians’ interest in food labelling, including best-before dates:
  - A fact sheet describing best-before and expiry dates, and how they should be used, has been published in the fall of 2009.

## Canadian Heritage

### 2008 Canadian Books Readership Study

The *2008 Canadian Books Readership Study* was conducted for Canadian Heritage’s Book Publishing Industry Development Program (BPIDP). The objective of the BPIDP is to ensure access to a diverse range of Canadian-authored books domestically and abroad. The survey was intended to provide up-to-date information about public attitudes towards Canadian books, and to measure the current consumption of books in Canada. The survey aimed to determine how Canadians perceive the quality of Canadian books, how Canadians discover, access and purchase Canadian books across existing and emerging media, and what are current Canadian readership patterns.

The survey was based on a nationally representative sample of 1,502 Canadians aged 15 and older. Telephone interviews were conducted from June 5 to 22, 2008 in both official languages. A sample of this size has a margin of error of +/- 2.5 percent, 19 times out of 20.

Overall, Canadians are not particularly aware of Canadian authors. Only one-third of respondents felt very (three percent) or somewhat (30 percent) familiar with Canadian authors. In an unaided exercise, however, more than half of Canadians (53 percent) were able to name at least one Canadian author. Margaret Atwood was the most commonly mentioned.

Almost one-half of Canadians would purchase more Canadian-authored books in an average year if they could find them more easily, seven percent would purchase many more, and 38 percent would purchase a few more. Only eight percent of Canadians read at least one digital book in the last 12 months for leisure or interest. The primary reasons reported for not reading more digital books included a preference for printed books (40 percent), lack of time (eight percent), and lack of interest (eight percent).

This information helped Canadian Heritage assess the Book Publishing Industry Development Program and measure consumer behaviour, which is important in determining the relevance and impact of some other current programs and policies.

## Department of Finance Canada

### Tax-Free Savings Account Focus Groups Findings

The primary objective of the study was to assess the views and attitudes of Canadians toward creative concepts for an advertising campaign. The campaign was intended to inform Canadians and raise their awareness of the Tax-Free Savings Account (TFSA), a new Government of Canada savings vehicle. The research study sought insight on how the department could best advertise the TFSA to ensure as many Canadians as possible will be aware of its benefits. In addition, the study assessed attitudes and behaviours of the participants toward saving, as well as their familiarity with the TFSA.

A series of eight focus groups were conducted with Canadians during the first week of December 2008. Three television campaigns were tested in French in Montreal, and in English in Vancouver, Toronto and Halifax. Groups in each city were segmented by age: one group with those 18 to 35 years of age, and one group with those aged 35 to 60. Qualitative research was

conducted to evaluate the impact of the visual concepts, taglines and text of the campaign.

Three tested advertising concepts were “Letters,” “Father and Daughter” and “Colleagues”.

In terms of assessing attitudes and behaviours toward saving, participants expressed concern and frustration over the difficult economic times but did not change overall attitudes or plans in terms of savings and investing.

Participants did not foresee the need to make adjustments in their financial plans and objectives in the upcoming year unless there was a change in their employment status.

Research indicated that overall recognition of the acronym TFSA and the name Tax-Free Savings Account is quite high; however, depth of familiarity with the functionality and the benefits was minimal. Key misunderstandings were evident, some of which had to be addressed in order to accurately promote the TFSA to Canadians.

**TV - DIALOGUE - WORK COLLEAGUES**



**STEVEN:** You know it sure is tough thinking about saving these days, isn't it?



**VALERIE:** Yeah, but have you heard about the new tax-free savings account introduced by the Government of Canada?

**STEVEN:** Tax-free savings account?

**VALERIE:** Yes, you can invest up to \$5,000 per year in a tax-free savings account, without paying tax on the investment income, even capital gains. And you won't be taxed on withdrawals—ever.



**STEVEN:** Tax-free savings account – that is just what I need.

Visit  
**tfsa.gc.ca**  
1 800 O-Canada (1-800-622-6232)

**Canada**

**V.O. ANN:** Contact your bank, credit union or other financial service provider to open an account or visit [www.tfsa.gc.ca](http://www.tfsa.gc.ca) for more information.

A message from the Government of Canada.

**TV - L-E-T-T-E-R-S**

**TFSA**



**MUSIC:** DYNAMIC  
**V.O. ANN:** In trying times like these ...

**TAX-FREE TOMORROW**  
TANGIBLE



... the new tax-free savings account introduced by the Government of Canada can help you focus on today and save for the future.

**FAMILY FLEXIBILITY**  
FUTURE



Canadians can put aside up to \$5,000 per year ...

**STABILITY SAVINGS**  
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... without paying tax on the investment income, including capital gains.

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And, you won't be taxed on your withdrawals.

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**Canada**

**V.O. ANN:** Contact your bank, credit union or other financial service provider to open an account or visit [www.tfsa.gc.ca](http://www.tfsa.gc.ca) for more information.

A message from the Government of Canada.

Subsequent discussions and clarifications about the TFSA lead to substantial increased interest among the participants. The general conclusion of the majority of participants was that the TFSA program was of value mainly because of its flexibility, and the way it minimizes tax payable for those in certain circumstances.

**TV - DIALOGUE - DAD AND DAUGHTER**



**DAD:** You know, now more than ever, it is time to think about saving.



**DAUGHTER:** Dad, I know. But how can I tend to the present but also save for the future?

**DAD:** The new tax-free savings account introduced by the Government of Canada can help.



You can invest up to \$5,000 per year in a tax-free savings account, without paying tax on the investment income, even capital gains. And you won't be taxed on withdrawals — ever.



**DAUGHTER:** So, I can save money for the future, not pay tax on interest earned ...



... and I can access the money when I need it?

**DAD:** That's right!

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**VO. ANN:** Contact your bank, credit union or other financial service provider to open an account or visit [www.tfssa.gc.ca](http://www.tfssa.gc.ca) for more information.

**Canada**

A message from the Government of Canada.

## Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada

### The Corporate Communications Survey 2008

During the 2008–2009 fiscal year, the department conducted the seventh edition of its *Corporate Communications Survey*. The objectives of this annual survey are to explore public perceptions of international issues, regions and countries that are priorities for Canada, as well as awareness about the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) and public knowledge of departmental activities. The study also measured views on departmental performance, on the relationship between Canada and the United States, on the United Nations, and on various foreign policy priorities. In addition, the study examined views regarding Canada's stature on the world stage, the drivers that influence Canada's foreign policy and public perceptions of international trade.

The survey, which took place between December 12, 2008 and January 3, 2009, was based on 2,021 telephone interviews with Canadians. Respondents were selected randomly and the sample was weighted against the latest census data. The sample is representative of the Canadian population and has a margin of error of +/- 2.2 percent, 19 times out of 20.

The economy is the area of greatest overall concern to Canadians, followed by the environment. Canadians identified the Americas as the most important region for Canada, while the United States was seen as the most important country. Few Canadians are familiar with the department's activities and fewer still can name the department responsible for Canada's international affairs. Those who are familiar with DFAIT give it high marks for most of its international activities, except in the matter of addressing Third World poverty.

The public is satisfied with Canada's international stature and there is general satisfaction with the Canada-U.S. relationship; however, public opinion is split on the effectiveness of the United Nations. The most prominent foreign policy priority is reconstruction in war-torn areas, and respondents believe that foreign policy is driven by economic factors and by Canada-U.S. relations. Canadians say new free-trade agreements are a priority for the Government of Canada.



Information from *The Corporate Communications Survey* was used in briefing notes, presentations and communications plans, and was sent out to the department's network of missions worldwide via their biweekly *Public Opinion Bulletin*. The research results were also shared with the Department of National Defence (DND) and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

The research results also allowed policy planners and decision makers to:

- understand the international issues that are most pressing to Canadians;
- learn which regions and countries that are important to Canada;
- build public awareness of the department and its activities; and
- measure the performance of Canadian diplomats across a few key indices, the public mood towards Canada-U.S. relations and multilateralism, and levels of support for the key pillars of Canada's foreign policy and attitudes towards international trade.

The results also support Canada's foreign and trade policy in general, as they permit the department's communications specialists to understand the public environment in which they operate.

### ***The Corporate Connections Trade Survey***

The department tracks the opinions of Canadian business leaders, who form a potential client base for the Trade Commissioner Service, regarding topics related to trade. Objectives were to identify existing barriers to trade and investment among those businesses that are already exporting or are export-ready, and to identify services required by business executives.

The survey was based on 401 telephone interviews with business executives, and was weighted by sector, size and region against Statistics Canada data in the *Business Register*. The study, which took place from February 2 to 26, 2009 had a margin of error of +/- 5 percent, 19 times out of 20.

The firms surveyed were most likely to identify the following as potential obstacles or barriers to international business: access to capital, complex international rules and regulations, and a lack of reliable market intelligence. These were followed, in descending order by taxes, skills shortages, foreign ownership restrictions and inter-provincial commercial barriers.

More than two-thirds of executives involved in international business are aware of organizations that offer trade services, though few could name any specific organization. Among those who could name one or more, Export Development Canada was the most mentioned, followed, at a distant second, by Business Development Bank of Canada.

Information from *The Corporate Connections Trade Survey* was used in briefing notes, presentations and communications plans. It was also used by Canada's trade commissioners in order to provide better services. The results enabled decision makers, policy planners and communications specialists to quantify the number of businesses that are exporting or export ready. The study:

- revealed the areas of the world that offer the best business opportunities for Canadian companies;
- helped the department better understand the type of support that these firms require from government, including the tariff and non-tariff barriers businesses face in exporting goods and services;
- revealed the level of awareness among Canadian businesses regarding trade organizations like the Trade Commissioner Service; and
- will help inform key decision makers when negotiating new free trade agreements with countries to lower or remove barriers to trade.

## Health Canada

The Perception Analyzer® is a research tool used for collecting quantitative data in qualitative settings, such as focus groups. Participants use the Perception Analyzer's hand-held dials to respond to questions shown on a screen. The system software collects the responses, tabulates them, and makes them available for both immediate review and deeper analysis following the research session(s).

The Perception Analyzer has been used for public opinion research for more than 25 years and is trusted by corporations, associations, universities and government agencies in more than 30 countries worldwide.



For example, Health Canada used this technology in the study *Focus Testing of Foreign Anti-Drug Television Advertisements with Canadian Youth*.

**Erratum:** A modification was done to the above paragraph to correct an inadvertent error that occurred during the production of the report.

## Exploring Traditional Food Safety Information for First Nations

The objectives of this study included exploring common practices used in hunting, fishing, food preparation, handling and storage among First Nations; identifying gaps in knowledge of traditional food safety; and identifying the right medium to be used for dissemination of education materials (e.g., posters, fact sheets and calendars).

The target audience for the research was First Nations people living on-reserve who actively participate in gathering and preparing traditional foods. A total of six focus groups were conducted, two in each of three regions: Ontario (Algonquins of Pikwakanagan on Golden Lake), Quebec (Anishnabe Nation in Lac Simon), and British Columbia (Heiltsuk Nation in Bella Bella). In each location, two additional in-depth interviews were conducted with elders, with three conducted in Bella Bella. The focus groups and interviews were conducted on March 23, 24 and April 8, 2009 respectively.

Across locations, hunting and fishing using traditional methods are the most common activities. Throughout collection and preparation activities, selected safe food handling measures were not consistently applied but rather temperature and cleanliness were judged by the individual. Preservation techniques and collection of food are transferred from one generation to the other and based on traditional knowledge.

Overall, despite their varying levels of interest in food safety and contamination information, participants were somewhat apprehensive as to the type of information they could obtain from the government about their traditional means of collecting, gathering or harvesting foods. First Nations people expressed a preference for a learning method that involves hands-on activities in a group setting to find out more about food safety, and a few participants suggested information on the changing environment and its impact on foods eaten was of interest. Therefore, it was recommended that consideration be given to creating a dialogue on food safety by first providing information on the impact of environmental changes and contamination on animal health and behaviours, which in turn may affect humans.



This research will be used to enrich the *Traditional Food Safety Guide* with traditional knowledge and help tailor it to the needs of First Nations communities. It will also help to influence the communication/dissemination strategy for the *Traditional Food Safety Guide*. The Guide will assist Environmental Health Officers (including health care providers such as nurses) in delivering environmental public health services such as information sessions on food safety and food handler training to First Nations community members as part of the environmental public health programming. The Guide will also provide knowledge on “best practices” regarding safe food handling and preparation of both traditional and store-bought foods to reduce exposure to disease-causing foodborne microorganisms and to contaminants, thereby potentially contributing to reduction in foodborne illnesses. Based on the Guide, public awareness materials will be developed and distributed to First Nations community members.

### ***Assessing Canadians’ Knowledge, Attitudes and Behaviours Regarding the Importation of Consumer Products***

Canada’s Food and Consumer Safety Action Plan proposes a series of initiatives to modernize and strengthen Canada’s safety system for food, health and consumer products and to better support the collective responsibilities that government, industry and consumers have for product safety.

As part of this plan, Health Canada launched a marketing campaign aimed at raising awareness and educating Canadian shoppers on the rules, regulations, and possible repercussions of bringing products back to Canada from the United States of America and other countries.

As such, research was needed to determine:

- awareness, knowledge of, and attitudes about, rules and regulations governing importation of products into Canada;
- any characteristics of populations (demographic/psychographic) who are more likely to import products into Canada;
- best approaches for presenting information on rules and regulations to Canadians; and
- types of products imported into Canada as well as their quantity, origin and frequency of importation.

The quantitative research conducted between March 16 and 31, 2009, comprised 21-minute telephone interviews with 1,110 adult Canadians who brought consumer goods from abroad into Canada via personal travel or online shopping at some point in the previous two years, or who intended to do so within the next 12 months. The margin of error was +/- 2.9 percent, 19 out of 20 times.

A majority of respondents consider themselves at least moderately knowledgeable about three of the four product safety areas mentioned in the survey (general household products, 75 percent; children’s products, 56 percent; cosmetics and personal hygiene products, 53 percent). However, at the same time, a majority of respondents (54 percent) also do not think they have enough information about product safety.

Approximately two-thirds of those Canadians who either travelled outside Canada and brought back products (64 percent) or who purchased products online from outside Canada (65 percent) did not first look for information about the products they bought.

The Health Canada website (62 percent) is considered to be the most effective source of information on product safety, followed by the Internet (60 percent).

This research will help meet the goals of Canada’s Food and Consumer Safety Action Plan, including raising awareness and educating Canadian shoppers on the rules, regulations, and possible repercussions of bringing health-related products back to Canada from the United States of America and other countries.

## ***National Defence***

### ***Arctic Sovereignty and the North***

National Defence coordinated an interdepartmental study, *Arctic Sovereignty and the North*, to examine the views and expectations of Canadians about the demonstration of Canada’s sovereignty in the Arctic, asserting presence in the North, and the Canadian Forces’ capacity to act in that region. A telephone survey sought to compare and contrast the views of residents in the provinces (Southerners) with those of residents of the territories (Northerners). This survey was followed by a series of eight focus groups—two each in Toronto,

Montreal, Edmonton and Whitehorse—to further delve into the topic of Northern sovereignty.

Highlights of this study include:

- Canadians are more likely to believe there is currently a threat to Canada's Arctic sovereignty or to the security of its northern border. A majority of Canadians believe there is a threat to Canada's Arctic sovereignty or to the security of its northern border, although this view is more prevalent in the territories (60 percent) than in the provinces (52 percent);
- Eight in ten Canadians in both the provinces and the territories agree that more should be done to strengthen Canada's sovereignty over Arctic territory;
- When asked what Canada needs to do to "clearly establish its claim," both Southerners and Northerners most frequently propose (unprompted) a greater military presence (20 percent and 23 percent, respectively);
- In a prompted question giving respondents four policy options, however, Northerners believe the most effective way for Canada to strengthen its control over Arctic territory is to conduct more research in, and mapping of, Arctic geography and resources, while Southerners consider this and negotiations with other countries that have Arctic claims to be equally effective; and
- Interestingly, only three in ten (31 percent) Southerners and slightly fewer (26 percent) Northerners, correctly identified the Arctic Ocean as Canada's northern boundary.

The *Arctic Sovereignty and the North* study was conducted in two phases. For the initial quantitative phase, telephone interviews were conducted between January 15 and February 1, 2009 with a representative sample of 1,450 Southerners and 450 Northerners 18 years of age and older. The margin of error for the sample of 1,450 Southerners is +/- 2.6 percent, 19 times out of 20; for the sample of 450 Northerners, the margin of error is +/- 4.6 percent, 19 times out of 20.

For the follow-up qualitative phase, the eight focus groups in Toronto, Montreal, Edmonton and Whitehorse were held the first week of March 2009. In each city, one group was conducted with participants aged 20 to 44 years, and the other group with participants aged 45 to

75 years. All participants were screened to ensure they have at least moderate interest in current events and public policy issues.

### **Recruitment Advertising Campaign *Fight***

The recent recruitment advertising campaign *Fight* was post-tested after all three versions of the series were televised nationwide for a nine-week period beginning on January 12, 2009. The government's advertising campaign evaluation tool (ACET) was used to measure recall of these advertisements. Four in ten Canadians (40 percent) were able to recall the advertising unaided, up from 19 percent in the last assessment (March 2008). When provided with a brief description of the ads and asked whether or not they recall seeing them—a procedure referred to as aided recall—about two in three Canadians (62 percent) said they had seen at least one of the *Fight* ads.

## ***Natural Resources Canada***

### ***2009 Alternative and Renewable Fuels Research Study***

The *2009 Alternative and Renewable Fuels Research Study* used both qualitative and quantitative methods to give the department a deeper understanding of Canadians' attitudes towards alternative and renewable fuels. The research indicated that although the majority of Canadians are aware of these types of fuels, there is little depth of understanding beyond ethanol and few have ever purchased alternative and renewable fuels.

Using the research findings, the department is developing an outreach strategy that will address gaps, dispel myths and increase awareness to help Canadians make informed choices in the alternative and renewable fuels markets. The findings will also guide the development of communication products aimed at increasing acceptance of alternative and renewable fuels, and educating Canadians on their availability and benefits.

The qualitative portion of the research was based on five teleconference meetings each involving three to five members of the general public from across Canada between March 9 and 19, 2009. The quantitative portion was based on a telephone survey of 1,508 adults across

Canada between April 28 and May 15, 2009. The margin of error for a sample of this size is +/- 2.5 percent, 19 times out of 20.

### ***Granting a Social License to Operate: Public Opinion and Mining in Remote/Rural Communities***

In the study, *Granting a Social License to Operate: Public Opinion and Mining in Remote/Rural Communities*, public opinion research was used to explore factors that influence the extent to which stakeholders in rural and remote communities are supportive of mineral exploration and development. Using focus groups and in-depth executive interviews, the study found that the role of government is perceived to be primarily that of a watchdog of industry and, in this regard, is seen to be fulfilling that role well in terms of environmental responsibility.

The research was conducted to inform future policy development that will promote competitive and responsible mining. Results of the study were presented to the Canadian Mines Ministers at the 2009 Energy and Mines Ministers Conference.

With respect to the focus group research, 12 groups were conducted between March 19 and April 14, 2009 in six mining communities: two groups each in Smithers, British Columbia; Yellowknife, Northwest Territories; La Ronge, Saskatchewan; Sharbot Lake, Ontario; Roberval, Quebec; and Placentia, Newfoundland and Labrador. The research also included 34 executive-type interviews with persons in academia, the media, Aboriginal groups, civil-society groups, consulting firms and regulatory agencies.

## ***Parks Canada***

### ***Parks Listens Online Web Panel***

A new tool for POR is Parks Canada's *Parks Listens* online web panel, which brings together more than 10,000 mountain park visitors. For the past three years, Parks Canada has conducted research through online surveys with *Parks Listens*' members who have visited one of Canada's seven mountain parks: Banff, Jasper, Yoho, Kootenay, Waterton, Mount Revelstoke and Glacier National Parks.



*Banff National Park*

*Parks Listens* began in 2006 as a pilot project, and funding for the project was extended on a multi-year basis as managers recognized this tool as being useful for consulting with a large base of visitors in a coordinated, timely and very cost-effective manner.

### ***Seeking Feedback on Special Events in Canada's National Parks***

The objective of this study was to:

- measure visitation levels at the mountain national parks in the reporting year;
- evaluate the number and types of special events that mountain park visitors have encountered or attended;
- determine how mountain park visitors encounter special events (e.g., deliberately, accidentally or both);
- gauge the impact that special events in the mountain parks have on visitors' use and enjoyment of the parks;
- learn how special events either enhanced or detracted from visitors' experience to the mountain parks;
- explore mountain park visitors' general attitudes towards special events in these parks, as well as their feelings about the mountain parks in general; and
- evaluate the reasons why some mountain park visitors did not encounter any special events.



This research, conducted for Banff National Park, between November 17 and 28, 2008, helped Parks Canada learn more about the role of special events in people's visits to National Parks. The research also helped identify what visitors want and do in terms of special events, and permitted visitors to relate expectations of how Parks Canada should manage special events. The information from this study was combined with results of other research, stakeholder reviews and best-practice principles to develop a Special Events Assessment and Review Process. The process assists the parks with better planning and evaluation of the social impacts of special events, enables public comment and evaluation of proposed new events, and facilitates increased opportunities for park appreciation, learning and environmental care.



*Cave and Basin National Historic Site*

### ***Wildlife and Highways in Banff National Park***

The key objectives of the study were to:

- measure visitation levels and patterns at Banff National Park in the reporting year;
- evaluate visitors' knowledge of a fence that runs along the four-lane section of highway within the park;
- measure awareness and understanding of the purpose of the animal overpass and underpass structures that exist in Banff National Park;
- evaluate knowledge levels regarding wildlife use of the crossing structures within Banff National Park;
- examine park visitors' views on the importance of Parks Canada's role in protecting wildlife along the Trans-Canada Highway;
- determine the methods visitors to Banff National Park feel would be effective in reducing the number of collisions between vehicles and wildlife;
- learn from which information sources park visitors have heard of wildlife crossing structures; and
- determine which communication methods park visitors feel would be effective in providing information to the public to protect wildlife along the Trans-Canada Highway.



*Waterton Lakes National Park*

The study was conducted from January 19 to February 2, 2009. Among other results, the study helped Parks Canada:

- measure the effectiveness of current public awareness campaigns related to wildlife structures on the Trans-Canada Highway through Banff National Park;
- gain insight into public support for the construction of these structures in future phases of highway twinning;
- confirm that many park visitors are aware of the purpose and success of the crossing structures; and
- learn about methods that could advance public awareness of the purpose and success of the wildlife crossing structures.

Crossing structures for Phase IIIB of highway twinning are already part of the approved design. The design of future sections will be influenced by the level of public support identified by this study and other data collection tools.



*Banff National Park*

## *Veterans Affairs Canada*

### *Attitudes Towards Remembrance and Veterans' Week Omnibus Survey*

In 2008–2009, the department repeated its annual *Attitudes Towards Remembrance and Veterans' Week Omnibus Survey* to gauge Canadians' awareness of and participation in Veterans' Week in November of 2008. The survey assessed the effectiveness of the communications used in the campaign. As well, with 2008 marking the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the First World War, Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) was interested in tracking the awareness of this anniversary among Canadians.

The report containing survey findings was circulated widely within the applicable program areas of the department. The feedback received from the survey respondents helps:

- guide the department in its Veterans' Week planning and future Canada Remembers programming;
- determine if VAC's objectives are being met in terms of commemorating Veterans' Week; and
- determine the effectiveness of communications media used in the Veterans' Week campaign and, specifically in 2008, the effectiveness and reach of messages marking the 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the First World War.





## Public Works and Government Services Canada

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### Public Opinion Research in the Government of Canada

PWGSC's Public Opinion Research Directorate provides coordination and advisory services for all Government of Canada public opinion research. The Directorate facilitates studies by guiding client departments throughout the entire process — from the research planning and procurement to completion of the final report — to ensure that objectives are met and that the research undertaken conforms with Government of Canada policies and Treasury Board regulations as well as industry standards.

- [Annual Reports](#)
- [Best Practices in Public Opinion Research](#)
- [Research Reports](#)
- [Evaluation and Audit Reports](#)

### Features

- [Annual Report 2007-2008, Opinions Matter: Public Opinion Research in the Government of Canada](#)
- [Advisory Panel On Telephone Public Opinion Survey Quality](#)
- [Improving Respondent Cooperation for Telephone Surveys](#)
- [Public Opinion Research Practices of the Government of Canada](#)

#### Annual Reports

These Public Opinion Research Annual Reports provide an overview of the research projects conducted each year by departments and agencies. They also highlight trends in public opinion research across the Government of Canada.

- [Fiscal year 2007-2008](#)
- [Fiscal year 2006-2007](#)
- [Fiscal year 2005-2006](#)
- [Fiscal year 2004-2005](#)
- [Fiscal year 2003-2004](#)
- [Fiscal year 2002-2003](#)
- [Fiscal year 2001-2002](#)

#### Best Practices in Public Opinion Research

The Advisory Panel on Online Public Opinion Survey Quality was established in 2007 to provide advice and guidance to the Public Opinion Research Directorate/ PWGSC on survey quality standards and benchmarks appropriate to public opinion online survey research conducted for the Government of Canada.

- [The Advisory Panel on Online Public Opinion Survey Quality](#)

The Advisory Panel on Telephone Public Opinion Survey Quality 2006 was established in 2006 to provide advice and guidance to the Public Opinion Research Directorate/ PWGSC on survey quality standards and benchmarks appropriate to public opinion telephone survey research conducted for the Government of Canada.

- [Advisory Panel On Telephone Public Opinion Survey Quality](#)

*Improving Respondent Cooperation for Telephone Surveys* is intended to provide public servants undertaking public opinion research on behalf of the Government of Canada with a practical guide to achieving and maintaining high response rates from telephone surveys.

- [Improving Respondent Cooperation for Telephone Surveys](#)

#### Research Reports

Read final reports of public opinion research studies online on the Library and Archives Canada Internet site.

- [Public Opinion Research Reports On-line](#)

The Communications Policy, as of August 2006, requires departments and agencies to provide written public opinion research reports to the Library of Parliament and to Library and Archives Canada (LAC) within six months of the completion of fieldwork, to facilitate access to the public and parliamentarians. Library and Archives Canada will post executive summaries of the reports on its Web site as well as contract information.

- [Public Opinion Research Reports](#)

#### Evaluation and Audit Reports

- [Public Opinion Research Practices Of The Government of Canada](#) (Daniel Paillé, Independent Advisor on Public Opinion Research, 2007)
- [Advertising and Public Opinion Research](#) (Auditor General of Canada, 2007)
- [The Quality and Reporting of Surveys](#) (Auditor General of Canada, 2005)
- [Report on the Management of Public Opinion Research](#) (Auditor General of Canada, 2003)



# How Public Opinion Research is Managed in the Government of Canada

The Treasury Board *Communications Policy of the Government of Canada* sets out a framework for conducting public opinion research. The policy is mandatory for departments and agencies identified in schedules I, I.1 and II of the *Financial Administration Act*. As of June 9, 2009, agents of Parliament are exempt under the procedures. This report focuses on the POR activity of institutions covered by the policy.

**Departments** are at the centre of the overall process. They are responsible for the quality, content and management of their POR activities, including acceptance of all deliverables and payment of suppliers (See Figure 2).

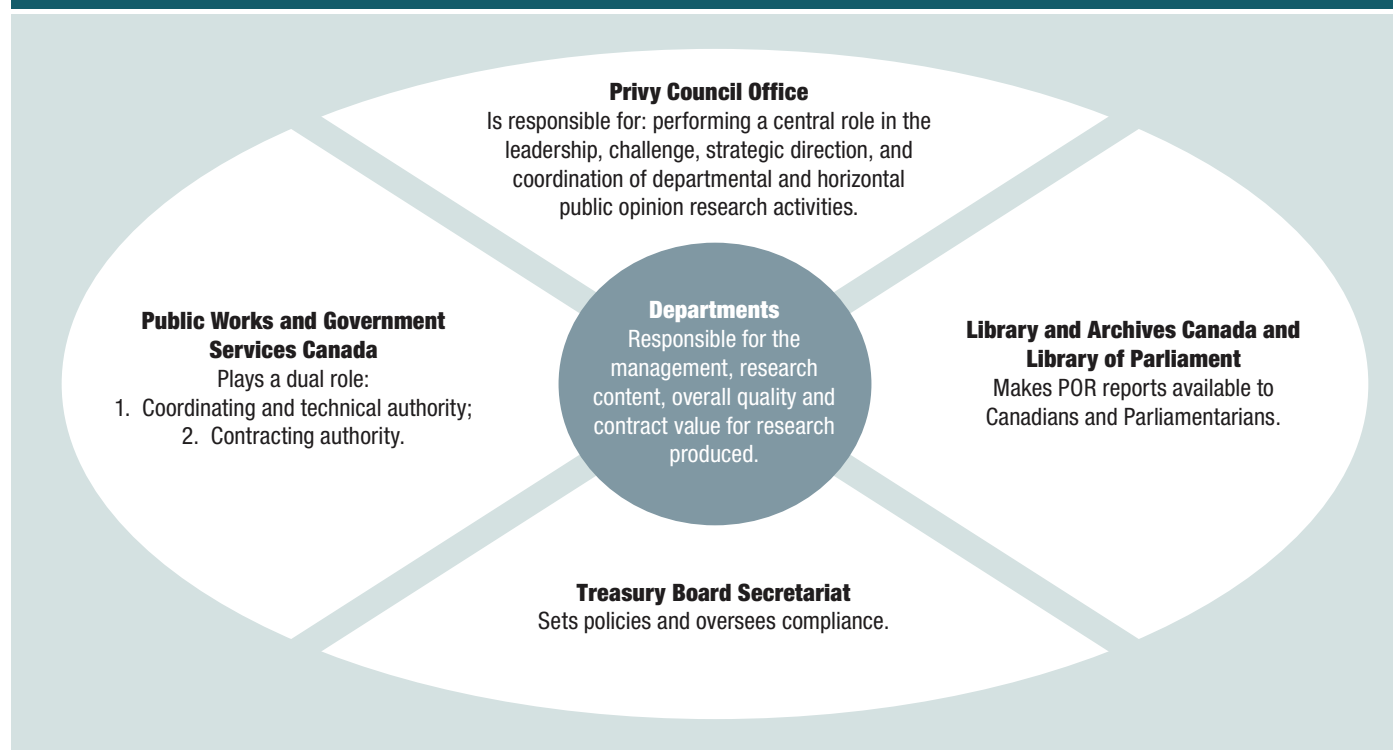
The **Treasury Board Secretariat** (TBS) advises and supports the Treasury Board and its president in the development, management and evaluation of administrative policy. Under the *Communications Policy*

of the Government of Canada, TBS is responsible for developing, evaluating and reviewing government-wide communications policy and advising institutions on policy interpretation.

**Library and Archives Canada** (LAC) ensures increased transparency and facilitates access to POR reports. LAC receives final research reports from departments and agencies and makes them available to the public. It also has a website (<http://porr-rtop.gc.ca/>) on which it posts bilingual executive summaries and other basic details of research reports. The **Library of Parliament** (LP) makes the reports available to members of Parliament and the media.

The **Privy Council Office** (PCO) has a central role in the leadership, challenge, strategic direction and coordination of departmental and horizontal public opinion research activities.

**Figure 2: Organizations with a Responsibility for Public Opinion Research**



## Public Works and Government Services Canada

(PWGSC) works with other federal organizations to serve Canadians efficiently and cost-effectively. The department is the coordinating, technical and contracting authority for public opinion research within the government. PWGSC exercises this authority through two of its directorates, the Public Opinion Research Directorate and the Communications Procurement Directorate, which work closely with each other to provide seamless services to federal organizations.

- The **Communications Procurement Directorate** (CPD) provides a mandatory common service as the government's contracting authority for public opinion research. The CPD also manages the acquisition process in accordance with Government of Canada policies. Where applicable, the CPD chairs and conducts open, fair, and transparent bid evaluation processes.
- The **Public Opinion Research Directorate** (PORD) provides a mandatory common service for the coordination of public opinion research activities. When federal organizations plan public opinion research projects, they must consult the directorate from the initial stages. PORD helps departments and agencies with their research needs, facilitating the procurement of services, sharing best practices and research results, and coordinating work across federal organizations. More specifically, PORD is tasked with activities such as:
  - Confirming whether projects fall within the definition of public opinion research;
  - Providing advice on legislative, regulatory and policy requirements, as well as generally accepted methodologies, research standards and benchmarks; and
  - Contributing to government-wide capacity building in the discipline of public opinion research.

## Expanding the Frontiers of Knowledge

### Sharing Results with Canadians

Since December 2006, the *Library and Archives of Canada Act* has required federal institutions to deposit their final research reports with Library and Archives Canada within six months of the completion of fieldwork. Under the Communications Policy, institutions must also send a copy to the Library of Parliament. In 2008–2009, 271 projects were completed and their reports submitted directly to Library and Archives Canada and the Library of Parliament. These reports include studies conducted before and during the 2008–2009 fiscal year.

### Sharing Knowledge within Government: The Community of Practice

The Public Opinion Research Directorate continued to coordinate the federal Community of Practice and participate in other interdepartmental working groups during the past fiscal year. The Community of Practice for public opinion research continually provides its members with a synergy of knowledge and best practices through communication and sharing of information across the Government of Canada. In turn, increased capacity within this community contributes to high quality research that reflects the views of Canadians, sound management of resources and provides value for money.

The community includes POR practitioners from 57 departments and agencies. It meets regularly to share information and address issues of common concern, such as survey quality and response rates, procurement issues, emerging research techniques, new survey software, joint initiatives and partnerships, and new legislation and policy requirements.



Knowledge Management Unit fosters partnerships and the sharing of public opinion research across the federal government. The unit develops and manages the on-line Research Information Management System (RIMS) database, produces the annual report, research guides and online resources. It also organizes information sharing meetings and sessions for the POR interdepartmental community of practice.

PORD's Knowledge Management Unit seeks to foster education and capacity-building within the Community of Practice. In 2008–2009, the unit organized 15 learning sessions on various subjects. They included:

- Questionnaire Design; Ethical Issues and Privacy in Marketing Research; La mesure de la satisfaction, de la valeur et de la loyauté; Marketing Research Design: An Applied Course; Qualitative Marketing Research and Introduction to Marketing Research. Most of these courses are part of a series being offered by the Marketing Research and Intelligence Association (MRIA) to Government of Canada employees wishing to attain the Certified Marketing Research Professional (CMRP) designation;
- Managing Public Opinion Research: What You Need to Know. The course helped public opinion researchers in the Government of Canada keep up to date with the changes in policies over the previous two years and the new requirements facing public opinion researchers in the Government of Canada.

The Knowledge Management Unit continued its speakers program. Online research has been a particular focus of this program, which has included speakers who came to share their knowledge regarding various aspects of the results of the Advisory Panel on Online Public Opinion Survey Quality, which was completed in the 2007–2008 program year (<http://www.tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca/rop-por/rapports-reports/comiteenligne-panelonline/tdm-toc-eng.html>). The focus on online research also responded to interest by government departments and agencies in using the Internet as a medium for research. In 2008–2009, this relatively new medium was used in 16 of the

131 projects conducted for the Government of Canada. Among the subjects of the PORD's 2008–2009 speakers program were:

- conducting research with online communities of youth;
- new methods of online qualitative research;
- using online survey software;
- making research useful for the organization;
- conjoint and discrete choice methods;
- new methods in surveys conducted face-to-face;
- survey data analysis;
- using panels for online surveys;
- doing research on services; and
- designing scales for online research.

Surveys conducted with attendees at these sessions have revealed that, on average, nine out of ten believe that the information sessions were useful for their work.

Another vehicle to share knowledge with the Community of Practice was the *Research Corner* publication, issued twice a year since 2004. This publication covered a wide range of topics of interest, including trends, upcoming events and courses.

### Sharing Knowledge with the Marketing Research Profession

In 2003, the Government of Canada, represented by PWGSC, began meeting regularly with the Marketing Research and Intelligence Association (MRIA). The result has been a growing and productive working relationship that deals with issues of mutual interest. These issues include:

- ensuring that all Government of Canada surveys contracted through POR standing offers are registered with the MRIA Survey Registration System;
- consultations on research quality;
- identification of research best practices;
- participation in research studies to voice wide-ranging matters of concern to the marketing research profession; and
- holding courses on public opinion research that are directly relevant to federal government employees.

## Canada's Marketing Research Industry

The marketing research industry in Canada accounted for \$786 million in research activities in 2008, according to the MRIA, the national association for the marketing research industry and the marketing research discipline.

The Canada-wide Marketing Research and Intelligence Association counts among its members over 1,901 practitioners and 372 corporate members, which include small to large research firms and private and public sector buyers of research services. Its mission is to promote a positive environment in which the industry can operate effectively and for the benefit of the public.

### Continuing Education

The Public Opinion Research Directorate understands the importance of training and education in the area of public opinion research and has committed itself to aiding the process of developing skill and knowledge levels in public opinion research among researchers in the Government of Canada. In this vein, PORD is working with MRIA to make training and education in public opinion research available to researchers in the Government of Canada with the long-term objective of enabling and encouraging them to attain the certification offered by MRIA, that is, the Certified Marketing Research Professional (CMRP) designation.

PORD is working with the Marketing Research and Intelligence Association to offer the following courses to federal public servants between fall 2009 and spring 2010:

- Introduction to Marketing Research;
- Marketing Research Design: An Applied Course;
- Advanced Qualitative Marketing Research Techniques;
- Competitive Intelligence, Competitor Benchmarking and Mystery Shopping;
- Questionnaire Design;
- Ethical Issues and Privacy in Marketing Research;
- Online Research: Best Practices and Innovations;
- Marketing Research Statistics and Data Analysis;
- Qualitative Marketing Research; and
- Marketing Management for Researchers.

These courses are mandatory in the MRIA's Certified Marketing Research Professional (CMRP) program. Between 2008 and 2010, the Public Opinion Research Directorate and MRIA will have offered all 12 courses required for the CMRP designation.



The Knowledge Management Unit has helped develop a new program at Algonquin College in Ottawa entitled Marketing and Business Intelligence Research (<http://www.algonquincollege.com/prospective/fulltime.html>). In 2008–2009, PORD was a member of the Advisory Committee for this program, which started in the fall of 2009. The program will prepare students to write the examination for the MRIA's Comprehensive Marketing Research. In addition, students will receive training and preparation for careers in the private and public sectors.

## Conclusion

Public opinion research plays a useful and valuable role in the mandate of a wide range of departments and agencies, which serve an increasingly diverse mix of clients and needs. With the improvements introduced in the management of POR in 2007–2008, the Government made more focussed expenditures and ensured best value for money in that year and continued to make progress in 2008–2009. Government of Canada departments and agencies will continue to engage Canadians to better understand their needs with the overall objective of ensuring that policies, programs and services are developed, managed and delivered for the maximum benefit of Canadians.

## For More Information

This report provides an overview of public opinion research activities in the Government of Canada during the fiscal year 2008–2009.

If you have any comments or questions, please contact:

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Internet version: <http://www.tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca/rop-por/rapports-reports/2008-2009/tdm-toc-eng.html>

# Appendices

## *Appendix I: Listing of Departments and Agencies Engaged in Public Opinion Research, 2008–2009*

<b>Department Totals for Year End (from April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2008 to March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2009)</b>		
<b>DEPARTMENT/AGENCY NAME</b>	<b>NUMBER OF PROJECTS</b>	<b>AMENDED BUDGET TOTAL</b>
Health Canada	22	\$1,374,560.96
Human Resources and Social Development Canada	8	\$807,823.17
National Defence	10	\$701,409.39
Natural Resources Canada	7	\$613,473.95
Canada Revenue Agency	8	\$595,451.61
Canadian Heritage	9	\$468,909.74
Department of Finance Canada	8	\$466,343.76
Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada	7	\$435,665.56
Privy Council Office	4	\$336,238.83
Parks Canada	4	\$314,184.92
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada	4	\$296,189.01
Department of Justice Canada	4	\$243,263.76
Veterans Affairs Canada	2	\$242,964.75
Citizenship and Immigration Canada	5	\$232,633.26
Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat	2	\$199,942.70
Canadian Food Inspection Agency	3	\$184,779.97
Royal Canadian Mounted Police	5	\$153,302.75
Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada	2	\$129,722.08
Passport Canada	2	\$129,682.15
Public Safety Canada	3	\$120,445.30
Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions	2	\$65,803.36
Public Service Commission	1	\$51,260.16
Public Works and Government Services Canada	1	\$40,352.47
Canadian Security Intelligence Service	1	\$24,412.50
Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency	1	\$17,025.75
Public Service Labour Relations Board	1	\$16,944.38
Canada Border Services Agency	1	\$5,823.52
Indian and Northern Affairs Canada	1	\$5,232.72
Transport Canada	1	\$1,097.25
Financial Consumer Agency of Canada	1	\$-10,128.05*
Environment Canada	1	\$-160,925.55*
<b>Grand Total:</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>\$8,103,886.13</b>

\* In 2008–2009, contracts were amended to cancel or reduce the value of existing projects. The result was a net decrease.

## Appendix II: Listing of Contractors Engaged in Public Opinion Research, 2008–2009

<b>Firm Totals for Year End (from April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2008 to March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2009)</b>		
<b>SUPPLIER</b>	<b>NUMBER OF PROJECTS</b>	<b>AMENDED BUDGET TOTAL</b>
Environics Research Group	23	\$1,522,867.89
Ipsos Reid Corporation	21	\$1,501,787.30
Phoenix Strategic Perspectives Inc.	15	\$1,050,486.64
EKOS Research Associates Inc.	16	\$1,027,253.68
Decima Research	14	\$850,913.83
The Strategic Counsel	9	\$635,142.30
Sage Research Corporation	5	\$280,476.00
Corporate Research Associates Inc.	6	\$263,269.21
Phase 5 Consulting Group	2	\$228,842.90
Royal Canadian Legion	1	\$219,975.00
Western Opinion Research Inc.	2	\$188,169.16
TNS Canadian Facts	6	\$134,675.41
Patterson, Langlois Consultants Inc.	1	\$30,431.88
Léger Marketing	1	\$24,990.00
D-Code	1	\$24,412.50
Angus Reid Strategies	1	\$24,150.00
DesRosiers Automotive Consultants Inc.	1	\$22,050.00
IE Market Research Corp	1	\$19,950.00
Pollara Inc.	1	\$17,025.75
R.A. Malatest & Associates Ltd.	1	\$16,944.38
Circum Network Inc.	1	\$12,862.50
Les Études de Marché Créatec +	1	\$5,823.52
HEC Montréal	1	\$1,386.28
<b>Grand Total:</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>\$8,103,886.13</b>

## *Appendix III: Standing Offers for Public Opinion Research*

The Communication Procurement Directorate of Public Works and Government Services Canada, in collaboration with the Public Opinion Research Directorate, established a series of contracting tools for POR services through a competitive process. These included standing offers with the following suppliers:

### ***Series A—Qualitative Research***

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

### ***Series B—Quantitative Research***

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

### ***Series C—Qualitative and/or Quantitative Research***

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





