

2010-2011

Annual Report To Parliament

Access to
Information Act



Cat. No.: En1-48/1-2011E-PDF

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Access to Information Act

Annual Report to Parliament

INTRODUCTION

The Access to Information Act (R.S.C. 1985, c. A-1) came into force on July 1, 1983. The Act grants Canadian citizens, permanent residents, and persons residing in Canada the right to access information in records held by the federal government, except for types of information falling under the exemptions or exclusions. Section 72 of the Act requires every head of a federal government institution to submit a report to Parliament on the administration of the Act within their institution during the fiscal year.

This report is submitted in accordance with section 72 of the *Act*. It presents an overview of access to information activities carried out within Environment Canada during the reporting period April 1, 2010 to March 31, 2011.

The Department of the Environment was established by the *Government Reorganization Act* (1970-71-72, c. 42) on June 10, 1971. The Department, also known as Environment Canada (EC), has as its primary duties renewable resources management and the protection of Canada's air, water and land resources.

The primary objective of the Department of the Environment is to preserve and enhance the quality of the environment for the benefit of present and future generations of Canadians. Departmental programs are designed to promote the establishment or adoption of objectives and standards relating either to improved environmental quality or pollution control, to ensure the wise management and use of renewable resources and to provide Canadians with environmental information in the public interest. As well, the Department ensures that new federal projects, programs and activities are assessed early in the planning process for potentially adverse effects on the environment and is the federal lead on Government of Canada sustainable development planning and reporting.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Environment Canada's programs are organized around five major activities: sustainable environment; weather and environmental services; environmental protection; sustainable development of the Mackenzie Gas resources; and finally, providing internal services within the department.

The Director General of the Corporate Secretariat is Environment Canada's Access to Information and Privacy Coordinator, and has delegated authority on all matters concerning Access to Information and Privacy (ATIP). The ATIP Secretariat, which is a part of the Corporate Secretariat, is the central coordinating body for all requests received by Environment Canada under the *Access to Information Act* and the *Privacy Act*.

The ATIP Secretariat directs all activities within Environment Canada relating to the administration, application, and promotion of the *Access to Information Act* and the *Privacy Act*. It provides advice to senior management on the implementation of the statutes and prepares reports to Parliament, the Treasury Board Secretariat, and senior management. The ATIP Secretariat represents the Department in complaints and investigations conducted by the Information Commissioner and Privacy Commissioner of Canada, and in any Federal Court applications arising from ATIP matters.

Capacity Development

In 2009-2010, Environment Canada implemented an Access to Information and Privacy Professional Development Program. Four analysts were hired in the initial recruitment period and a second round of recruitment for this program was started during the 2010-2011 fiscal year. The program aims to train employees over a period of three to five years through a combination of competency based training, professional development training, and work assignments. Candidates enter the program at the PM-01 or PM-02 level and will graduate as Senior ATIP Advisors at the PM-04 level.

The Professional Development Program will improve the long-term sustainability of the ATIP Secretariat and address the shortage of trained ATIP staff. In addition to allowing the Secretariat to handle increasing workloads, it will facilitate succession planning through the transferral of corporate memory and encourage staff to remain with the Department for a longer period of time.

Environment Canada's ATIP Secretariat also engaged in a number of staffing activities throughout the year in an effort to improve the Department's capacity in the face of increasing workloads. The ATIP Secretariat supplemented its staff by hiring consultants.

Environment Canada remains committed to recruiting, training and maintaining a workforce that possesses specialized skills and that will continue to provide the best possible service to both internal and external clients.

DELEGATION ORDER

Decision-making responsibility for the application of the various provisions of the *Access to Information Act* has been formally established and is outlined in the departmental Delegation of Authority Instrument. The current Designation Order was approved by the Honourable Peter Kent, Minister of the Environment, on January 6, 2011. A copy of the designation order as well as the specific delegation notes pertaining to the *Access to Information Act* is in Appendix C at page 12 of this Report.

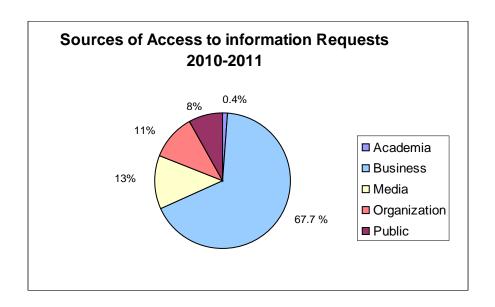
INTERPRETATION OF THE STATISTICAL REPORT

Environment Canada's Statistical Report on the *Access to Information Act* is included in Appendix A of this Report, at page 10.

Between April 1, 2010 and March 31, 2011, Environment Canada received 1,128 requests under the *Access to Information Act*. Two hundred and fifteen (215) requests were carried forward from the 2009-2010 reporting period, for a total of 1,343 active requests in the 2010-2011 reporting period. In 2010-2011, a total of 1,171 requests were completed and 172 were carried forward to the next reporting period.

The following is a percentage breakdown of the sources of access to information requests received in 2010-2011:

Source	Number	Percentage
Academia	5	0.4 %
Business	763	67.6 %
Media	146	13 %
Organizations	124	11 %
Public	90	8 %
Total	1,128	100 %



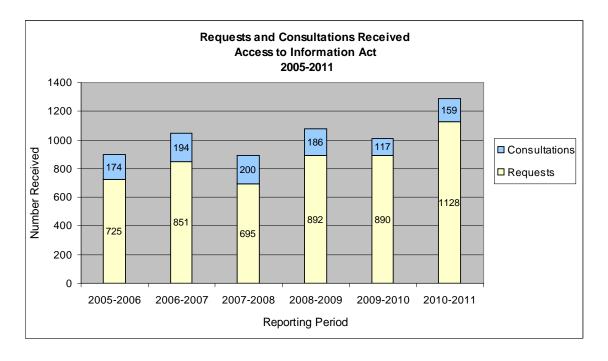
One hundred and thirteen (113) requests were abandoned by the applicants for various reasons including the requirement to pay additional fees.

Five requests received by Environment Canada for records under the control of other departments were transferred to the organizations concerned.

The 676 requests in the "Unable to Process" category were for information for which there was no record. Environment Canada receives a number of requests each year for documents pertaining to the environmental compliance of properties. Most of the requests in the "Unable to Process" category consisted of environmental compliance files where no records were located on the properties in question.

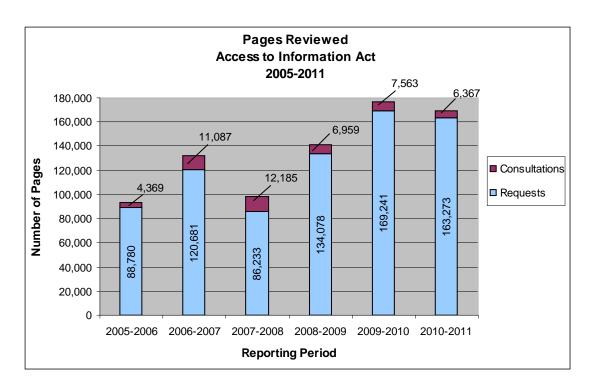
In 2010-2011, there was a substantial increase in the number of access to information requests received by Environment Canada. The 1,128 access to information requests received in the 2010-2011 reporting period represent a 27% increase over the previous reporting period. In addition, the number of access requests completed during the 2010-2011 fiscal year increased by 26% compared with the previous reporting period.

The following graph displays the number of access to information requests and consultations that were received by the ATIP Secretariat from 2005-2006 to 2010-2011:



The number of pages reviewed in response to access to information requests during the 2010-2011 period was slightly lower than the previous year: 163,273 pages compared with 169,241 pages reviewed during the previous period.

While the number of consultations received from other departments increased by 36% in 2010-2011, the number of pages reviewed decreased by 16%. The following is a graph of the number of pages reviewed by the ATIP Secretariat in processing requests and consultations under the *Access to Information Act*:



Exemptions and Exclusions

The *Act* prescribes a number of exemptions and exclusions which allow or require the Department to refuse to disclose certain types of information. The two most common exemptions invoked by Environment Canada in 2010-2011 were for personal information (section 19) and government operations (section 21). In 2010-2011, exemptions and/or exclusions were cited in 21% of the completed requests.

Time Limitations

During the 2010-2011 reporting period, 850 (73%) of the completed requests were processed within the initial 30 day period.

Extension of Time Limits

Section 9 of the *Act* allows the government institution to extend the deadline for responding to a request if the request requires the institution to search a large number of records, to consult with other government institutions, or to communicate with third parties.

In 2010-2011, 39 requests required extensions of 30 days or under and 224 requests required extensions of over 30 days.

Consultations

As an integral part of departmental processing procedures, other government institutions are consulted if access requests contain issues of interest to them. Although formal consultations are undertaken in writing, additional discussions between ATIP offices are initiated as required in order to facilitate the completion of each case. Consultations are also regularly undertaken with third parties and other levels of government.

In the 2010-2011 reporting period, 159 Access to information consultations were received from other federal government institutions. This constitutes a 36% increase relative to the previous fiscal year.

Fees

For the 2010-2011 reporting period, total fees of \$11,881 were collected. Of this amount, search fees totalled \$6,331 and application fees totalled \$5,390. There was a \$60 charge for preparation fees and a \$100 charge for computer processing fees. Fewer reproduction fees are being charged as requesters are now provided the option of receiving electronic copies of the documents on CDs.

In accordance with Treasury Board Secretariat guidelines, Environment Canada waived fees which individually amounted to \$25 or less, though no waiver is granted for the initial \$5 application fee.

Costs

The cost involved in administering the *Act* was \$631,600 for salary and \$473,900 for administration (O and M), for a total of \$1,105,500.

TRAINING ACTIVITIES

The Department's ATIP Secretariat continued its training and development activities in the 2010-2011 reporting period. Eleven (11) information and training sessions were held, attended by approximately 170 Environment Canada employees. The sessions included an overview of the *Access to Information Act* and a description of internal procedures and associated deadlines for responding to requests. Information and training activities will continue throughout the 2011-2012 period.

POLICIES, GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES

Each year, the ATIP Secretariat submits updates on Environment Canada's activities and information holdings to the Treasury Board Secretariat for publication in Info Source. During 2010-2011 Environment Canada continued to revise its Info Source chapter based on the Department's program activity architecture.

Publically Accessible Information and Inquiry Points

Info Source is a series of publications containing information on the Government of Canada and on the government's data collection activities. Info Source is intended to help the public access government information and to exercise their rights under the *Privacy Act* and *Access to Information Act*.

Environment Canada's comprehensive website provides information on the Department's policies, its organizational structure, and the means to contact Department officials. In accordance with the federal government's policy of proactive disclosure, the Department's website also allows access to internal evaluations and audits, as well as information on hospitality expenses, contracts, and grants.

A new Environment Canada Access to Information and Privacy web page was created in March 2011. This page provides background information on both the *Access to Information Act* and the *Privacy Act*. It also contains a Frequently Asked Questions section and links to access to information request forms and personal information request forms.

In order to facilitate public access to information and to comply with the *Act*, the Environment Canada Library has been designated a public reading room. The Library is located on the second floor of the Place Vincent Massey building, 351 St. Joseph Boulevard, Gatineau, Quebec.

Policy Development

During the 2010-2011 reporting period, the Department drafted a new suite of departmental Access to Information and Privacy policies and directives in accordance with Treasury Board Secretariat requirements. Development of departmental procedures will continue in the coming year.

PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

In November 2010, Environment Canada was asked to appear before the House of Commons Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics (ETHI). Environment Canada officials provided Committee Members with an update on its progress in implementing recommendations from the Information Commissioner's 2008–2009 Report Card.

COMPLAINTS/INVESTIGATIONS

During the 2010-2011 reporting period, 16 complaints were filed with the Office of the Information Commissioner of Canada against Environment Canada. Nine (9) of these complaints as well as 11 complaints from previous reporting periods were completed in 2010-2011. The following table provides a breakdown of the reasons for and results of the complaints that were completed in 2010-2011:

Reason for Complaint	Number of Decisions	Results of Investigations							
		Well founded, resolved without recommendations	Well founded with recommendations - resolved	Well founded with recommendations – not resolved.	Not well founded	Discontinued	Settled		
Delay	4	3				1			
Exemptions/	5	4			1				
Exclusions									
Extensions	3	1			2				
Fees	4	4							
Miscellaneous	0								
Refusal 69	1	1							
Refusal	3	3							
General									
Total	20	16	0	0	3	1	0		

Explanation of the Results of Investigations:

- Well founded- The Office of the Information Commissioner (OIC) found evidence of the complainant's rights being denied under the *Access to Information Act*. It was necessary for the OIC to report the finding of the investigation and provide recommendations where appropriate.
 - o well founded, resolved without recommendations -The institution took remedial action to the satisfaction of the OIC during the course of the investigation. The OIC did not need to provide a recommendation to the head of the institution
 - o well founded with recommendations resolved -If the head of the institution accepted the OIC recommendations and remedial action was taken by the institution to the satisfaction of the OIC, the matter is considered resolved and no further action by the OIC is necessary.
 - o well founded with recommendations not resolved -If the head of the institution did not accept the recommendations of the OIC, or if the remedial action was not to the satisfaction of the OIC, the complainant will be informed that the matter is not resolved and the complainant, or the OIC with the complainant's consent, can pursue the matter in Court where the matter relates to a refusal.
- Not well founded -As a result of the investigation, the OIC found that the institution applied the Access to Information Act correctly.
- Discontinued -The complaint was withdrawn or abandoned by the complainant before allegations were fully investigated
- Settled -In the case of a minor error, the complaint was settled to the satisfaction of the OIC without the need for the OIC to make a finding.

Seven (7) complaints received from this reporting period and 16 complaints from previous years remain outstanding.

Applications/Appeals to the Federal Court or Federal Court of Appeal

T-1014-04 *Sheldon Blank v. Minister of the Environment* – The application filed pursuant to section 41 of the *Act* in 2004/2005 was still before the Federal Court of Canada at the end of the reporting period.

APPENDIX A: STATISTICAL REPORT FOR ENVIRONMENT CANADA

Institution			NMENT CA					Reporting		1/2010 to/à		1
iource	Media Médias 146	Ac		nia Secteur universitaire Business Secteur commercial O			Organization Organisme Public			90		
Requests under	the Access to Informa etu de la Loi sur Facci	tion Act	II	Disposition of	request	s completed les demandes trait	ées					
eceived during reporting eques pendant la périod	period	1 120	1.	All disclosed Communication			126	6.		to process		676
utstanding from previous	s period	215	+	Disclosed in p Communication	ert	242			therefore the conferred			113
n suspens depuis la péri OTAL	oce anteneure	1,343	+	Nothing discio	sed (exc	uded) & Treated			d informally sent non official		0	
ompleted during reportin	g period	1 171	+ 1	Nothing discio	sed (exe	impt)	3		Tracer	nent non dricke		
raitées pendant la périor amied forward	se visee par le rappor	172	1 -	Transferred Transmission	runcatio	n (exempeon)	5	TOT	AL.			1,171
Exemptions invo	ked			Transmission								
Lianguoia ma	quées 2	s			1	\$.			1	\$.		81
vt. 13(1)(a) (b)		3 Art. 16(1)(a)			4	Art. 18(b)		+	<u>_</u>	Art. 21(1)(a)		88
(6)	1				5	(d)			5	(c)		37
(6)	-	3 (4			0	5.		+-	175	(d)		2
1	2	. 8.			48	Art. 19(1) S.		40 8		8.		4
vt. 14 i. 15(1) International n	at A	S. S.			0	Art. 20(1)(a) (b)		+	12 S. S. Art. 22			38
vt. Relations inter Defence		8. S.			0	(e)			28	S		1
Defense Subversive act	lv/Ses	n 8.			1			11 S. Art. 26			8	
Activités subve	13/103	Art. 18(a)						v	Compi	letion time		
E. ELLOSSONS LINES		16	S.				0	30 da	ys or und			850
Art. 68(a)		0	Per out the				3	31 to	rs ou moi 60 days			97
(c)		0	-			2E 61 to 1			De 31 à 60 jours 61 to 120 days			84
3.		6	-				1	121 days or over				140
Mt. 69(1)(a) (b)		0	_				49	121 je	rurs et plu	8		140
V/I Extensions			_	Translations			40	J TV	Mo	thod of access		
Prorogations de	s délais 30 days or under	31 days or over	_	Traductions ns requested			_	VI		thode de commun	ication	
Searching	30 jours ou moins	31 jours ou plus		ns demandées	Eronch		0	Copie	s de l'orig	jnal		368
Recherche	29	75	prepared	De l'angla	is au fran	nçais	0	Examination Examen de foriginal Copies and examination			0	
Consultation Third party	10	100	préparées	Dufrança		fais	0		s et exam			0
Tiers	0	49	-									
TOTAL	39	224				_						
X Fees Frais						X Costs	5					
		fees collected als nets perpus						ncial (all i anciers (r		(\$000)	_	
Application fees Frais de la demande	\$5,390.0			\$60	0.00	Salary Trailement		631.6		1.6		
Reproduction	\$0.0	O Computer p Traitement	vocessing informatique	\$100	0.00	Administration (D and M) Administration (fonctionnement et		ert et maintien) 473.9		3.9		
Searching Recherche	\$6,330.5			\$11,880).50	TOTAL		1,105.5		5.5		
Fees w Dispense			f times e de fois	\$			Person yea Années-per					
\$25.00 or under 25.5 ou moins		21	0	\$1,345	5.00	Person year (d Années-person)	12.00		
Over \$25.00			5	\$4,241								

$\frac{\textbf{APPENDIX B: ADDITIONAL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS FOR THE}}{ACCESS \ TO \ INFORMATION \ ACT}$

Part III – Exemptions invoked

Paragraph 13(1)(e)	0
Subsection 16.1(1)(a)	0
Subsection 16.1(1)(b)	0
Subsection 16.1(1)(c)	0
Subsection 16.1(1)(d)	0
Subsection 16.2(1)	0
Subsection 16.3	0
Subsection 16.4(1)(a)	0
Subsection 16.4(1)(b)	0
Subsection 16.5	0
Subsection 18.1(1)(a)	0
Subsection 18.1(1)(b)	0
Subsection 18.1(1)(c)	0
Subsection 18.1(1)(d)	0
Subsection 20(1)(b.1)	0
Subsection 20.1	0
Subsection 20.2	0
Subsection 20.4	0
Subsection 22.1(1)	0

Part IV – Exclusions cited

Subsection 68.1	0
Subsection 68.2(a)	0
Subsection 68.2(b)	0
Subsection 69.1(1)	0

APPENDIX C: DESIGNATION ORDER INSTRUMENT

Environment Canada

Delegation of Financial Signing Authorities and Designation Order Instrument: Part A, Summary Chart Effective on January , 2011

	Operational Authorities					Functional Authorities				
Accountability Level	Departmental Emil		2	3	- 4	5	G	7	а	5
30 Spending Authority - Expenditure Initiation with Availability of F	unde									
Of Goods and Services (including contract in liation)	approved budget	£	F 2	- 10			E		F	C
02 Human Resources Staffing, Pay Actions, Training	approved budget		E	F	É	c	i i	e		
Travel in Carlada and Continental USA	approves sudget	- 6	F	F		È	F	e		
04 Relocation .	approved budget	-	F	F	-	c	-	Č.		
06 Isolated Fosts	approved budget	Г	F	-	- c	č	F	- c		-
06 International Travel	approved hudget	ř	F	- :					-	-
07 Conference Attendance	approved budget	Ė	ć	c	0	-	c	e ·		-
06 Conference Sconsorship	éponovéd budget	F		-		-				
09 Membership Foos	approved budget	F	С	c	С		C	c	-	-
10 Hospitality	approved budget	Ċ	č	c	č		Č.	č		
Grants and Contributions	approved budget	c	č	c	č		č	č	-	-
12 Ex-Grata Payments	approved budget	ć	c	Ĉ	- :		è	c		
13 Claims by or against the Crown	approved budget	F	c	c	c		0	C		
10 Commitment Authority - Availability of Funds (Section 32 FAA)	approved bengan			_			_	-		
Al Expenditures	approved by agei	F	E	į.	1		1	P	F	
 Contracting Authority - to enter into contracts (managers remains) 		nagement a	nd administr	ation of their	r contracts)					
Goods (Amendment)	25K	F(F)	0	0	- 5	0	F(F)		0(0)	(c
Services (Amendment)	as per TB policy	F(F)	c	C	c	0	7(7)		0(0)	6
K Call-up against Standing Offers	as per Stending Offer Limit	FIFE		E .	6.	C C	F(F)	-	rbere)	C
6 Antiflectural 8 Engineering Service Contracting (Americinent)	so per 15 policy	FIFE	-	-	-		F(F)		C(C)	
6 Construction Correcting (Amendment)	as per TB policy	F:F:		-		4	F(F)		C(C)	
P Emergency Contracting	f 1M	F	F	F		5	F	-	C.	
6 Purchasing Test Vehicles (Amendment)	as per TB policy	F(F)	-	-		-	E(E)	-	G(C)	
Project Authority										
1 Projects - Property Management Division	as per TB policy	c	c .	-		-		-	C	
Projects - Projects - Chief Information Officer Branch (CIOB)	as per TB policy	c -	c		- 5).	c			C
3 Projects - Integrated Enterprise Services (IES)	as per TB policy	c	c	c			C		-	
Projects Other	as per TB policy	c	С				c	-	-	
Other Contracting Authorities										
7 Revenue Contracting	1	п	F	Ė	F	0 0				
 Spending Authority - Contract Performance and Price, Eligibility 	or Entitlement (Section 3	4 FAA)								
Al Expenditures	approved budget	E	F	F		i F	F	F	i -	E
Payment Authority (Section 33 FAA)										
Al Expenditures	approved budget	F	-		100		F	F		
Pay 8 Benefits Expenditures	asproved budget		,	-			Г	Г	-	C
Other Authorities										
Request for Special Distribution of RG Cheques	-	F					F	F	-	- 1
2 Release of Security Deposits	-	F			12		F	F		
3 Intellectual Properties including License Focs		F	0	G	G.	C.	F			
4 Amend Delegation Instrument		C					C	-	-	
6 Deletion of Debis	-	-	c	С	e.		C.	C	-	
Waive or Reduce Interest or Administrative Charges				- 4		- 4	F	C		- 4
Set-Off per Section 155 (1) FAA		E	-0	6	-		F	0		
S Write-off of Material	as per TB polity	c	C	C-	C		C.		c	
8 Otsposal of Surplus Assets	акри ТВ жеку	,c	C	C	C	-	С	-	c	
Denarion of Surplus Assets	as por TB poliky	0	C	C.	C		С С	-	C.	
1 Collaborative Arrangements	approved budget		C	C	C	C '	F	-		
2 Specific Service Agreements	approved budget	E	-	-			- 1		c	-
5 Federal Real Property Transactions	so see TB policy	- 5		-		-	F	-	С	-
Designation Order										
Section 73 of the Privacy Act		P					11	-		1 6
Section 73 of the Access to Information Apt		F		-			. 1:			

Delegation of Financial Signing Authorities and Designation Order Instrument.

Delegation of Financial Signing Authorities - Every Officer of the Cepartment appointed to a position risked on the Summery Chart and on the List of Equivalent Positions, inducing those officially appointed on acting basis, is hereby granted financial signing authorities within the stated limits therein and in accordance with relevant statutes. regulations and directives. Limits may be modified, from time to time under the authority of the Deputy Minister to reflect changes in authorities as approved by Treasury Ecard.

Designation Order Instrument - Every Officer of the Department appointed to a position tisted on the Summery Chart and on the List of Equivalent Positions, including those officially appointed on acting basis is hereby designated to perform the duties and functions of the Minister, as head of a government institution, pugatient to Section 73 of the Privacy Act and Section \$3 of the Access to information Act.

> Honorable Peter Kont. Minister of Environment

Or. Paul Boothe Caputy Minister of the Environment

This Summary Chart must be read in conjunction with Part B - List of Equivalent Positions, Part C - Specific Delegation Notes and Part - Real Property Delegation Instrument,

The authorities which extend to the full resource balance available. in the relevant budget are limited by policies and procedures prescribed in TB regulations and directives, esseed pursuant to the Financial Administration Act (FAA) and by departmental directives.

3. Signing authorities for Grants and Contributions are subject to the terms and conditions approved by the Treasury Board or the Minister in accordance with the authority delegated to the Minister by the

4. Spending authority (Section 34, FAA) and Payment authority (Section 33, FAA) for a particular payment, are not to be exercised by the asme person.

5. Individuals are not to approve payments through which they may personally benefit.

Departmental Limit – the maximum authority granted to the Winster in colors. C = Conditional authority as act out in Part C.

Fin Pull authority within approved budget and subject to authorities delegated to the department.

K = Thousands of dollars M = Millors of dollars

12

SPECIFIC DELEGATION NOTES

SECTION 9.00 – DESIGNATION ORDER

The purpose of this Section is to establish the framework for managing the Access to Information Act and the Privacy Act. The Minister of Environment Canada pursuant to Section 73 of the Privacy Act and Section 73 of the Access to Information Act, hereby designates that persons holding the positions set out below to exercise the powers to perform the duties and functions of the Minister, as head of a government institution, under the sections of the Act specified opposite each position.

Position	Privacy Act Section	Access to Information Act Section
Level 1	All sections	All sections
Level 6	All sections	All sections
Director, Corporate Secretariat	All sections	All sections
Manager, ATIP Secretariat	All sections	All sections
Chief, ATIP Secretariat	15	7(a), 8, 9, 11, 27

SECTION 9.02 – Section 73 of the Access to Information Act

The powers, duties and functions that may be delegated under Section 73 of the <u>Access to Information Act</u> are set out below, in relation to its various sections and subsections.

7(a)	Respond to request for access, give access or give notice
8(1)	Transfer to institution with greater interest
9	Extension of time limits
11	Assess fees
12(2)(b)	Translate a record
12(3)	Provide access in an Alternative Format
13(1)	Apply exemption – Information obtained in confidence from other governments
14	Apply exemption – Federal-Provincial Affairs
15	Apply exemption – International affairs and defence
16	Apply exemption – Law enforcement and investigation
17	Apply exemption – Safety of individuals
18	Apply exemption – Economic interests of Canada
19(1)	Apply exemption – Personal information
19(2)	Disclose personal information
20	Apply exemption – Third party information
22	Apply exemption – Testing procedures
23	Apply exemption – Solicitor/client privilege
27	Give notice to third parties