



Canadian  
Intergovernmental  
Conference  
Secretariat

Secrétariat  
des conférences  
intergouvernementales  
canadiennes

# RENEWED COLLABORATION

**2015-16  
ANNUAL REPORT  
TO GOVERNMENTS**



**In our efforts to provide the best service possible and the most up to date information to you, our clients, CICS welcomes your comments and suggestions.**

**Here are our coordinates:**



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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**Message from the Secretary**

**4**

**Highlights**

**5**

**Who We Are**

**6**

**What We Do**

**15**

**The Year in Review: 2015-16**

**17**

**Financials**

**25**

**Looking Ahead**

**28**

# MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY



**The Canadian Intergovernmental Conference Secretariat (CICS), a key player in the field of intergovernmental relations, continues to provide impartial senior level conference services to federal, provincial and territorial governments.**

Responding to an environment of increased collaboration among governments, the Secretariat has in fiscal year 2015–16 provided its services to 114 conferences, including a First Ministers' meeting which was held in Vancouver in March 2016.

It is interesting to note that of the total number of meetings just mentioned, 72 were face-to-face conferences, 40 were teleconferences and 2 were virtual meetings. The last two types of conferences are twice the number that the CICS served in the previous fiscal year and indicate a clear interest by governments to use these new technologies as a viable and cost-effective way to confer.

With a high degree of professionalism and expertise of its personnel, the Secretariat has over the years, consistently changed its service delivery model to meet the complex requirements of its federal, provincial and territorial government clients.

**André M. McArdle**  
Secretary



# HIGHLIGHTS



# WHO WE ARE

## Mandate

The Canadian Intergovernmental Conference Secretariat (CICS) is an impartial agency whose mandate is to provide administrative support and planning services for federal-provincial-territorial and provincial-territorial conferences of first ministers, ministers and deputy ministers, throughout Canada.

## Objective

The primary objective of CICS is to relieve client departments of the numerous technical and administrative tasks associated with the planning and conducting of multilateral conferences, thereby enabling participants to concentrate on substantive intergovernmental policy issues. CICS provides continuous, effective, impartial administrative support to these meetings.

As a key partner, CICS provides excellence in planning, expertise in service delivery, innovative solutions, impartiality and a commitment to official languages to meet current and future challenges in the field of intergovernmental conferences.

## Core Values

### Excellence

We strive to fulfill the requirements of our mandate through teamwork.

### Respect

We offer a collegial and rewarding work environment that fosters trust, civility, dignity and fairness.

### Integrity

We conduct ourselves in an ethical, honest and transparent manner and with financial probity.





## Mission

We thrive on helping governments by delivering impartial and professional conference services, with innovative solutions.

## Vision

Working together to make it happen.

# Organizational Structure

The Secretariat is divided into the following sectors:

## Corporate Services

Responsible for the financial, human resources, procurement, security and administrative advice and services to managers and staff of the CICS.

### Director

**Corporate Procurement and Administrative Officer**

**Financial Officer**

**Human Resources and Administrative Support Officer**

## Secretary's Office

Serves as the executive office of CICS. Its function is to provide support to the Secretary in his day-to-day activities as the deputy head of the agency.

### Secretary

**Assistant Secretary**

**Planning and Reporting Analyst**

**Executive Assistant**

## Information Services

Responsible for information management, information technology and library services to the organization. It also maintains a permanent archive of audio-visual records and a selection of photographs from various conferences served by CICS.

### Director

**Head, Information Management**

**Information Management Coordinator**

**Support Analysts, Infrastructure and Operations**

## Conference Services

Delivers the agency's core mandate by providing services and advice to the Chair and Co-Chairs with the planning, organizing and the logistics management related to senior level intergovernmental conferences.

Conference Services personnel are a mix of federal, provincial and/or territorial government employees.

### Director

**Conference Managers**

**Conference Administrative Officers**

**Conference Procurement and Technical Services Officers**

**Conference Assistants**

**Travel Services and Administrative Assistant**



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## Executive Committee

Our executive team is experienced and committed to delivering innovative conference solutions. Working together, they are focused on excellence in client service and achieving value-for-money for all stakeholders.



**From left to right:** Brian J. Berry, Assistant Secretary; Laurent Bissonnette, Director, Corporate Services; Bernard Latulippe, Director, Information Services; André M. McArdle, Secretary; Rodrigue Hurtubise, Director, Conference Services

### A special welcome

In early 2016, Rodrigue Hurtubise joined the agency as Director of Conference Services.

Rodrigue is a graduate of the University of Guelph and has 35 years of experience in a wide range of areas including communications, event planning, policy and intergovernmental affairs. Rodrigue's first exposure to the CICS and its Conference Services division was in the mid-1990s as a secondee from the Government of Ontario.



## Employees

As a client-focused organization, our greatest asset is our employees. Responsible for delivering conference services to federal, provincial and territorial governments, our employees bring diverse backgrounds and experience to their work. They have worked in federal, provincial or territorial government departments, as event planning experts, in the technology industry and as project managers.



CICS staff photo, taken in March 2016 at the First Ministers' Meeting in Vancouver, BC

*Enjoyable and  
inclusive environment*

### In their own words

COMMENTS FROM THE 2015 CICS EMPLOYEE  
ENGAGEMENT SESSION

**“We are proud of the services we offer.”**


**“We believe in our organization.”**

**“We are always available to support our  
colleagues, new or experienced.”**

**“Managers trust their employees and know  
that they are experts in their fields. Trust  
makes every conference a success.”**

CICS is a great place to work; we invest in the well-being of our employees as well as in their training, at both an individual and a corporate level.

In 2016, new learning and development plans were developed for each position to encourage continuous learning.



As a leader in providing innovative conference solutions, we also ensure that our employees are equipped with the latest tools and technologies designed to get their work done as efficiently as possible, in response to clients' evolving needs.





Summer students, Pareesa Bina and Yasna Sarwar participating in a group activity

CICS makes use of the Federal Student Work Exchange Program across all divisions on a regular basis to encourage interest in the public service.

## Representation from the provinces and territories

A number of positions in the Conference Services division are reserved for provincial and territorial (PT) public servants who are seconded to the agency from their respective governments. CICS offers these employees a unique developmental opportunity in the field of intergovernmental affairs. Most of them serve three-year terms. Their presence ensures that the CICS can fulfill its mandate as a neutral intergovernmental body and boosts the organization's knowledge of provincial and territorial governments as well as Canadian cities and regions. Upon completion of the secondment, the PT employees return to their respective governments enriched with the experience of working with key sectors of intergovernmental activity.



CICS employees on conference site

# Spotlight on the provincial secondment experience

## Q&A with a former CICS provincial employee



**Jacqueline Gervais**  
Government of Manitoba  
Former Conference Administrative Officer  
at CICS

### **What was it like moving and adjusting to living and working in a different province and city?**

I very much enjoyed working in Ottawa and I felt at home the minute I landed. It's a beautiful city with friendly people. I come from Winnipeg and I find there are many similarities in both cities, therefore it wasn't a big adjustment for me apart from not having my loved ones as close to me as they were in my home province. I was welcomed at CICS from day 1 and felt like I was part of a family, which made the transition much easier.

### **How would you describe your experience as a PT employee at CICS?**

I have nothing but good things to say about it. I was treated the same way the permanent employees are treated when it came to the work environment and on the personal/social aspect, I must say that many of my co-workers at CICS went out of their way to ensure I was comfortable and felt welcome in Ottawa. I didn't feel as though I was there on a temporary basis and got to know many people very well during my 3 years in Ottawa.

### **What did you like best about working for CICS?**

Apart from the friendly staff and management, I liked the fact that I was able to travel so much and see pretty much every major city in Canada. These are places that I wouldn't have had the chance to visit/see, had I not worked for CICS. The fact that I was working in the office in Ottawa and travelling made it much more interesting as the scenery was always different and of course, meeting people from all government sectors across the country was great. I have made lifelong friends in the process.

### **How was your return to your home government?**

The return to the Government of Manitoba was good. Everyone was happy to see me and it was nice to be back amongst my co-workers and closer to my family and friends. At the same time, I also realized that event planning is something I enjoy very much and would like to do for the rest of my career, if the opportunity were to present itself in the future. I miss working with the public as I am a people person and in my line of work here within the Government of Manitoba, I do not deal with the public at all but the transition wasn't hard either.

### **Overall, how satisfied are you with your time working at CICS?**

The overall experience was a great one and I have no regrets. I am proud to say I worked at CICS and lived in our Nation's Capital.

### **Would you recommend working at CICS to other PT employees?**

I highly recommend the experience to anyone working for a provincial or territorial government. It's one of the best and most unique opportunities I have had during my career over the past 31 years. I consider myself very fortunate to have experienced it.





## 2015 Recipients of the Secretary's Award of Excellence

Bernard and Matthieu, in recognition for their contribution in delivering the Secretariat's first ever virtual conference and working collaboratively to overcome obstacles to produce and deliver a seamless meeting experience for all conference attendees.

Patricia, in recognition of her ongoing support to Secretariat projects and the friendly manner in which she helps CICS staff solve problems to achieve their goals.

*Additional recipients not pictured:  
Louise Seaward-Gagnon, Denis Simard and Robert Gosselin.*



Interested in a career development opportunity?

## WE HAVE OPENINGS!

There are assignments available for provincial/territorial public servants.

For more information, [click here](#)



**From left to right:** Bernard Latulippe, Patricia Wilson, Matthieu Letang-Keithlin



# WHAT WE DO

## *Expertise in service delivery*



Click the following [link](#) to access a short video that highlights some of the core services offered by CICS.

**Working with CICS is the best way to ensure the success of your conference. We offer a wide range of services that can be tailored to meet your needs, including:**

- Complete set-up of main conference room (from flags, tables and chairs to multi-media equipment);
- Set-up of press conference and scrum area;

- Sourcing, installation and operation of multi-media equipment;
- Videoconferencing;
- Teleconferencing;
- Online registration;
- Online document retrieval;
- Digital recording of the meeting and press conference;
- Simultaneous interpretation of the conference proceedings and press conference in both official languages;
- Translation of conference documents in both official languages;
- Secure disposal of conference documents;
- On-site WiFi;
- On-site security; and
- Support for drafting of communiqués, including word processing, translation, printing, distribution and Internet posting.

CICS maintains a conference office on-site to provide administrative support and guidance on protocol, and to quickly resolve logistical issues. The office is equipped with a scanner, photocopier and message centre.



## Who can use CICS and what are the costs?

CICS services are available to any federal, provincial or territorial department that organizes an intergovernmental meeting of First Ministers, Ministers or Deputy Ministers.

The host government is responsible for the costs of conference rooms and hospitality events; CICS covers the cost of most other conference services. CICS is

financed by the Government of Canada (through parliamentary appropriations) and by the provinces (through contributions).

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To request our services, please contact our Director of Conference Services at **613-995-4328** or [info@scics.gc.ca](mailto:info@scics.gc.ca). We look forward to working with you on your next event!



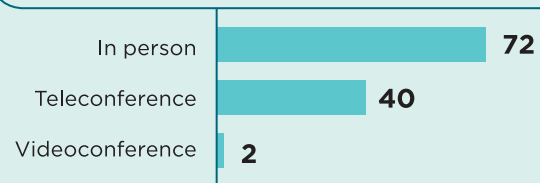


# THE YEAR IN REVIEW: 2015-16

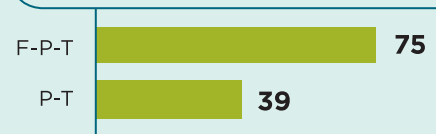
In 2015-16, the Secretariat provided its services to **114** senior-level intergovernmental conferences; a **20% increase** over the previous year's total.

## Breakdown:

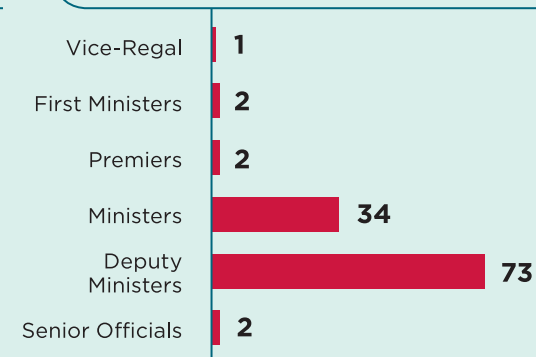
### FORMAT



### TYPE



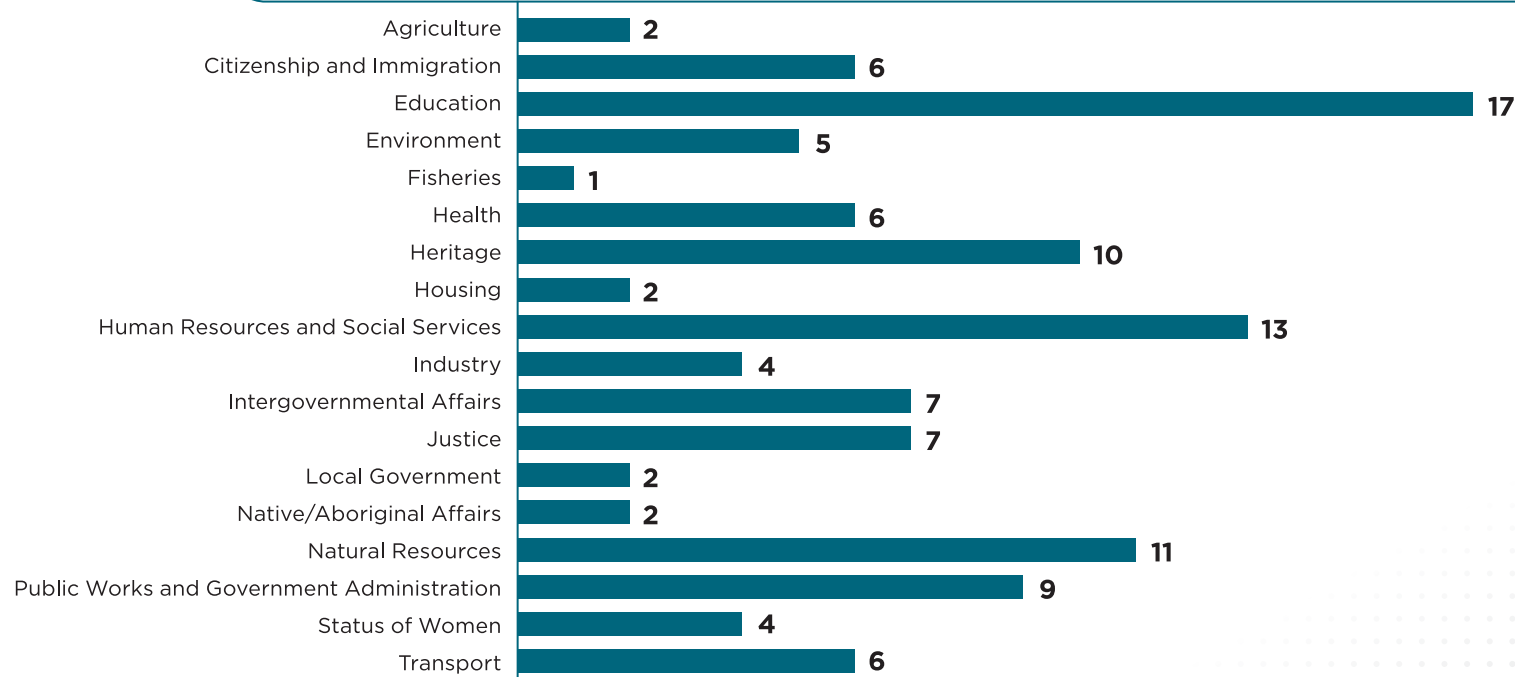
### LEVEL



Number of  
Conferences

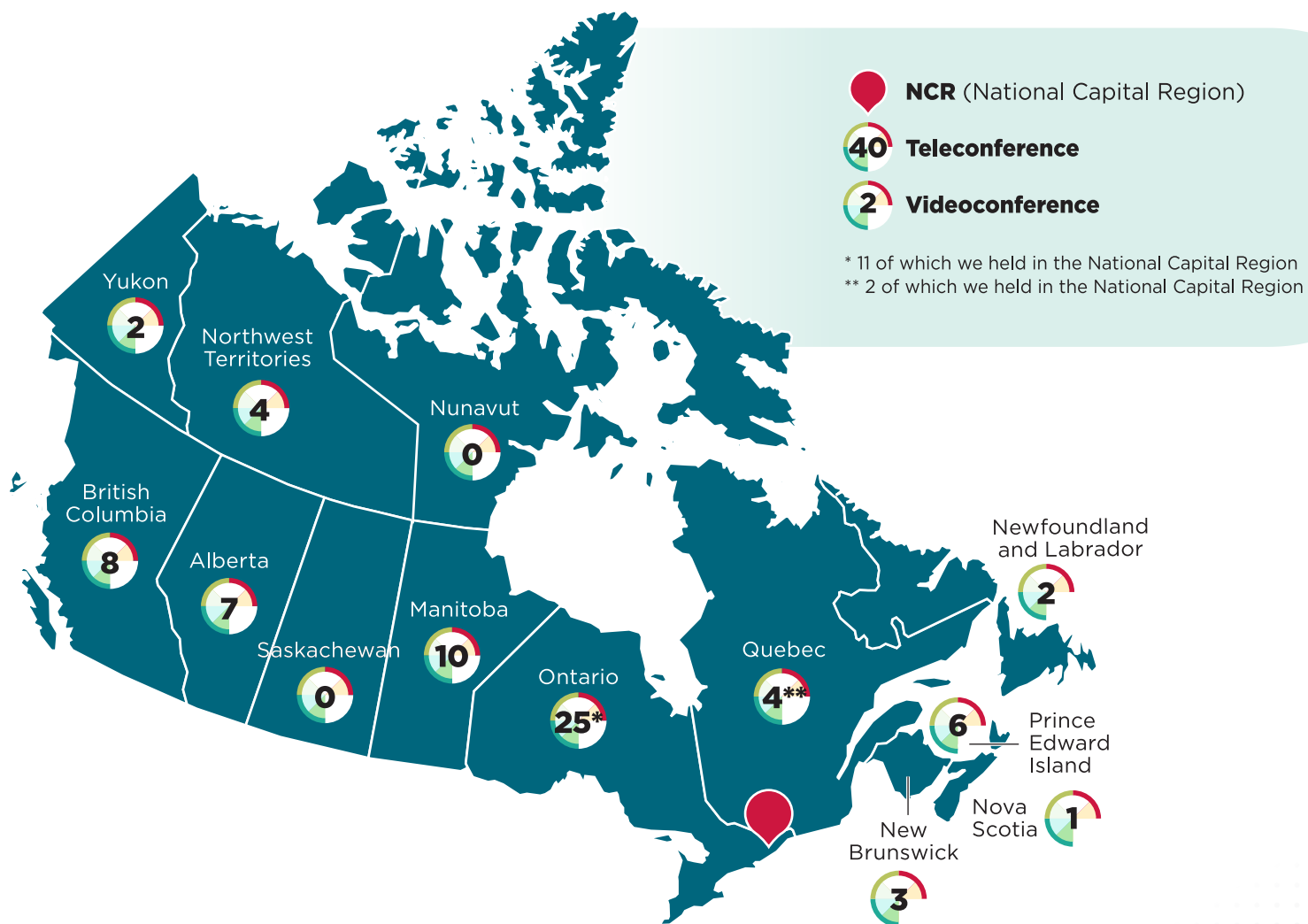
# 114

### SECTOR





## Conferences by Location







## Increased intergovernmental activity

The fall 2015 federal election marked the beginning of a new era in intergovernmental relations. The new administration, sworn in on November 4, 2015, framed its priorities with an increased focus on federal-provincial-territorial (F-P-T) relations. As such, CICS supported a significant increase in the number of intergovernmental conferences during the second half of the fiscal year, including a First Ministers' Meeting.

### In their own words

LETTER EXCERPT FROM THE PREMIER OF NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR, HOST OF THE 2015 NEG/ECP CONFERENCE

**“...Each year NEG/ECP (New England Governors/Eastern Canadian Premiers) benefits greatly from your organization’s expertise in conference coordination and support. Your dedicated support to Newfoundland and Labrador as well as other governments throughout Canada, is integral to advancing intergovernmental initiatives and building solid working relationships.”**

”



First Ministers' Meeting in March 2016  
(Photo: Adam Scotti, PMO)



Annual Conference of New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers in St. John's, NL  
(Photo: Newfoundland and Labrador)



FPT Ministers of Justice and Public Safety  
(Photo: Louise Leblanc)

## Teleconference Service

The teleconference support services with 3-line simultaneous interpretation, introduced as a new service in 2013-14, has continued to show significant increase in popularity with clients. Support was provided to 40 teleconferences in 2015-16 at both the Ministers and Deputy Ministers' levels, or double the number from the previous year. There is no doubt that this technology will continue to be utilized as a responsive and very cost- and time-efficient alternative to face-to-face meetings.

### Number of teleconferences

2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
3	19	40

## In their own words

COMMENTS FROM THE 2015 CLIENT SURVEY


**“For someone who hasn’t done this before, CICS was brilliant at hand-holding and looking after the details I wasn’t aware of. They were a fabulous part of the team. I don’t know what I’m doing with technical stuff and CICS helped out with this.”**

## Online Conference Tools

CICS’ online system takes much of the work and worry out of registration for both delegates and organizers. In consultation with the client, a CICS Manager of Conference Services customizes the standard registration form (in both official languages) and posts it online, enabling delegates to register prior to the event.

A perfect way to complement online registration is to post conference documents to a secure website, enabling registrants to access and download the materials before and during an event.

Over the past year, the capabilities of the on-line registration portal and the secure document retrieval site have been enhanced, based in part on client feedback, and are now fully implemented. On-line registration has proven useful to meeting planners (host governments) to gauge interest in, and plan for delegates’ participation in the various components



of more elaborate conference program. In the past, this often required that delegates register separately with CICS (for the meeting itself) and with the host government (for various other conference program components), something that many delegates found unnecessarily time-consuming.

#### Percentage of conferences that used the service

Service	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Online Registration	72%	77%	73%
Online Document Retrieval	24%	30%	33%

## Employee Arrivals and Departures

*Thank you to our departing employees for your dedication and hard work during your time with us.*

#### List of departures:

- Daniel Racine
- Denis Simard
- Diane Chalifoux
- Louise Seaward-Gagnon
- Marc Laroche
- Pat Fagan
- Patricia Wilson
- Solange Pilon

*Welcome to all new arrivals. We hope you draw tremendous satisfaction from working alongside your colleagues and planning partners.*

#### List of new arrivals:

- André Viau
- Céline Lecordier
- Éric Paquette
- Luc Thériault
- Rodrigue Hurtubise
- Sonia Roy
- Thomas Walsh

#### In their own words

COMMENTS FROM THE 2015 CLIENT SURVEY

**“I appreciate what they do—especially after organizing a meeting without them. They handle some of the finer points that can be a real nuisance.”**

#### We're getting younger!

In 2013, the average age of a CICS employee was 49. In 2016, it's 43.





## Archives

The CICS archives, totalling over 50,000 documents, form a unique collection. The collection, including agendas, lists of delegates, records of decisions, news releases, presentations, reports, as well as all the documents tabled at meetings served by the Secretariat since 1973, is carefully inventoried and conserved.

Whether you need an overview of the last conference in order to prepare for the next one or want to establish a profile of intergovernmental initiatives in a given sector, the collection is a valuable asset. In fact, these records are for the use of federal, provincial and territorial delegates and all the documents collected are the legal property of the governments that issued them.

Nevertheless, researchers, analysts, students, journalists, institutions and members of the public have access to public documents, which are available every year through our website or on request.

Should you have any questions concerning CICS records, please contact [info@scics.gc.ca](mailto:info@scics.gc.ca). We would be pleased to help you.

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**Press Releases get posted to the CICS website immediately after they are issued. This section of our website received the highest level of activity with over 4,000 user views in 2015-16.**



**We responded to 47 requests for information in 2015-16 and our website received more than 30,000 views.**

## Our Performance

In 2015-16, CICS provided its services to 114 senior-level intergovernmental conferences, a 20% increase over the previous year's total. This included 72 face-to-face meetings, 40 teleconferences and two virtual conferences. While the number of face-to-face meetings essentially remained unchanged from the previous year, the numbers of teleconferences and videoconferences each doubled, indicating a definite interest in these technologies (especially teleconferencing) as a viable, cost- and time-effective way for governments to confer. It is interesting to note that nearly two thirds of the 41 teleconferences and videoconferences took place in the second half of the fiscal year.

## In their own words

COMMENTS FROM THE 2015 CLIENT SURVEY

**“We were absolutely pleased with their service. They are very supportive, the staff is great. They were good at meeting all of our needs even on short notice. Their support is valuable and we wouldn’t be able to do this without them.”**

**“CICS collaboration has been invaluable! Was very nice to deal with the entire team and they went beyond their duties to accommodate all of our requests. Thank you again for every single thing that you did... plus it was always with a smile!”**

Performance is assessed using internal data and documents as well as two surveys of clients; one an annual sampling of conference planners and the second of conference delegates who attend the events.

Overall, client satisfaction levels continue to be very high. For conference delegates, our target of 90% satisfaction was met while with conference planners, the target was exceeded with a satisfaction rate of 92.5%. The words *professional*, *efficient* and *organized* were used most often by planners and delegates alike to describe the quality of services provided by CICS in support of intergovernmental meetings.

”



CICS employees and other logistics staff with conference delegates at the Meeting of the Canadian Council of Tourism Ministers (Photo: John Woods, Canadian Press Images)

There was a marked increase in the degree of satisfaction of meeting planners regarding our ability to identify protocol as well as conference media coverage requirements and to recommend options to address these requirements. Getting planners to visit the CICS website for service information remains a challenge which we hope to address in the coming year through a re-design of the site and better promotion.

Flexibility and adaptability must continue to be a main focus for the organization, to ensure that we continue to be nimble and to adjust quickly to changing client needs and requests during the planning and conduct of conferences. However, this will continue to be balanced with the need to deliver our services in the most cost effective way possible.



# FINANCIALS

## Budget

The Canadian Intergovernmental Conference Secretariat (CICS) is financed by both the Government of Canada through parliamentary appropriations and by the provinces through contributions under a shared cost agreement. The amount requested from the provinces last fall, for the 2015-16 budget, was calculated by taking the difference between CICS's total budget and the federal government contribution<sup>1</sup> and adjusting it on the basis of the funds that were not used in 2014-15, as shown in Table 1.

**TABLE 1. 2015-16 CICS Budget (\$ thousands)**

Proportions of CICS Budget	2015-16 Budget	Less: 2014-15 Budget adjustment <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted Budget
CICS Main Estimates Budget	5,967.5	(990.8)	4,976.7
Less: Federal Share <sup>1</sup>	3,427.5	(922.9)	2,504.6
<b>Total Provincial Share</b>	<b>2,540.0</b>	<b>(67.9)</b>	<b>2,472.1</b>

# Provincial Contributions

The total provincial share of the CICS budget is then split among the provinces on a pro rata basis, according to their population as determined by the last Population Census. Table 2 shows the provinces' shares for the 2015-16 budget, as well as the actual amounts received.

**TABLE 2. Distribution of Provincial Contributions towards CICS' 2015-16 Budget (\$ thousands)**

Provinces	% based on 2011 Population Census	Distribution of Provincial Share of CICS 2014-15 Budget	Distribution of Provincial Share of the Adjustment <sup>2</sup>	2015-16 Requested Contribution	2015-16 Actual Contribution Received
Newfoundland and Labrador	1.5	38.1	(4.7)	33.4	33.4
Nova Scotia	2.8	71.1	(8.8)	62.3	62.3
New Brunswick	2.3	58.4	(7.3)	51.1	51.1
Prince Edward Island	0.4	10.2	(1.3)	8.9	8.9
Quebec	23.7	602.0	-	602.0	131.3
Ontario	38.5	977.9	-	977.9	265.0
Manitoba	3.6	91.4	(11.4)	80.0	80.0
Saskatchewan	3.1	78.7	-	78.7	23.0
Alberta	10.9	276.9	(34.4)	242.5	242.5
British Columbia	13.2	335.3	-	335.3	95.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2,492.4</b>	<b>(37.6)</b>	<b>2,454.8</b>	<b>1,012.6</b>

<sup>1</sup> The Federal share includes fifty percent of the total budget plus the employee benefit plans for federal, provincial and territorial employees, the translation costs, the tenant services, the capital costs and any revenue shortfalls resulting from the non-payment or partial payment by the provinces of their respective share.

<sup>2</sup> The 2015-16 Budget adjustment represents the difference calculated from the Main Estimate less actual expenditures. The provincial share of the budget adjustment is distributed between provinces which fully contributed towards CICS operational budget.



## Financial Results

A summary of CICS's financial results are presented in table 3. The total funding is composed of the Main Estimates budget and adjustments. The Main Estimates are the voted appropriations at the beginning of the fiscal year, which started on April 1, 2015. Total funding for CICS has not varied significantly compared with the previous year.

Total spending for 2015-16 is substantially the same when compared with 2014-15. The variance is approximately \$0.1 million dollars (or 2%).

**TABLE 3. 2015-16 CICS' Financial Results (\$ thousands)**

<b>CICS Budget</b>	<b>2015-16</b>	<b>2014-15</b>
Main Estimates	5,967.6	5,957.2
Adjustments and Transfers	174.1	203.1
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>6,141.7</b>	<b>6,160.3</b>
Salaries and Wages	2,407.1	2,381.6
Employee Benefit Plans	314.6	318
<b>Sub-total: Personnel Costs</b>	<b>2,721.7</b>	<b>2,699.6</b>
Other Operating Costs	2,506.4	2,448.6
Capital Costs	42.5	21.3
<b>Sub-total: Other Operating and Capital Costs</b>	<b>2,548.9</b>	<b>2,469.9</b>
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>5,270.6</b>	<b>5,169.5</b>
<b>Lapsed (over expended)</b>	<b>871.1</b>	<b>990.8</b>

# LOOKING AHEAD

## **CICS is fully committed to delivering quality, cost-effective conference services to federal, provincial and territorial governments.**

Our impartiality, expertise in service delivery, commitment to official languages as well as our 40 plus year history make us the conference service provider of choice for senior level intergovernmental conferences. Maintaining this status will continue to be our focus.

Over the next five years, the Secretariat's priorities will focus on:



### **Enhancing and expanding strategic partnerships**

Since its creation, CICS has been able to rely on a well-established clientele made up of the various governments. In the interest of validating its mandate, CICS plans to enhance current partnerships by improving dialogue, assessing service offerings and evaluating client feedback. CICS is also planning on developing new and existing strategic partnerships by implementing new marketing initiatives.



### **Ensuring a client-focused, responsive service delivery model**

In order to ensure continuous improvement in the service delivery model, CICS will continue to align people, processes and technologies to reflect the current environment, the demands of the future and the changing needs of clients.



### **Maintaining the effective and efficient use of resources**

Although legally CICS is a federal agency, it is funded by the two levels of government (federal and provincial). The current context of fiscal austerity and budget reductions means that CICS will continue to pay special attention to its management practices. It will need to identify measures offering a better cost/benefit ratio in everyday operations, such as the organization of conferences and the allocation of our resources internally. CICS aims to be an agile department, where internal processes are continuously reviewed, improved and streamlined to be end-to-end, integrated and efficient.



### **Cultivating a continuous learning environment for our employees**

The Secretariat's greatest asset remains its personnel. This priority focuses on seeking ways to empower and motivate employees, build internal capacity and recognize their efforts in order to foster a culture of continual improvement and innovation. CICS will continue to invest in the well-being of its employees by providing a mentally healthy workplace. In addition, encouraging employee development by offering training, on both an individual and corporate level.