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Chair

The Honourable John McKay

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• (1615)

[English]

The Chair (Hon. John McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood, Lib.)): Ladies and gentlemen, I call this meeting to order.

Again, I apologize to our witnesses for the interruptions, but both of you being sophisticated witnesses, you will know exactly what's going on here.

Colleagues, the likelihood is that we'll be interrupted again.

I propose to run the meeting to the next set of bells. Either at that time, or a little later if there's some interest in carrying on past the bells with unanimous consent, or before we all adjourn, I propose that we then move the motion as to whether we refer it back to the finance committee with or without recommendations or amendments.

With that, I think we will start and ask the officials for their opening statements. We'll watch the clock and hopefully get through some of the testimony and questions and answers.

Mr. Koops, are you going first?

Mr. Randall Koops (Director General, Policing Policy, Department of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness): Sure.

Good afternoon. I'm Randall Koops, the director general of policing and firearms policy at Public Safety Canada.

[Translation]

I am accompanied by Jacques Talbot. He is a lawyer and legal counsel for the Department of Justice.

[English]

We're happy to appear today to assist the committee in its examination of division 10 of part 4 of Bill C-97. This bill would make amendments to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Act to establish in law a new management advisory board to advise the commissioner of the RCMP on the administration and management of the force.

[Translation]

The bill sets out the Board's mandate, composition, administration, and other requirements.

In January 2019, the government accepted the recommendations contained in two reports on harassment at the RCMP: one from the

Civilian Review and Complaints Commission for the RCMP, or CRCC, and the other from the former Auditor General of Canada, Sheila Fraser.

These reports, as others have before them, identified governance change as a necessary part of stamping out harassment within the ranks of the RCMP.

The government agreed and committed to establishing a management advisory board to guide the RCMP transformation agenda, which proposes major points of intervention for the government to reshape the foundations of the RCMP and orient it towards better long-term outcomes.

The proposed management advisory board would support the Commissioner of the RCMP in accomplishing her mandate commitment to lead the force through a period of transformation, to modernize it, and to reform its culture; in ensuring the sound overall management of the RCMP; in protecting the health and safety of RCMP employees; and in making sure that the RCMP delivers high-quality police services based on appropriate priorities, to keep Canadians safe and protect their civil liberties.

[English]

The mandate of the board would be to advise the commissioner of the RCMP on the force's administration and management, including its human resources, management controls, corporate planning and budgets. The composition of the management advisory board would be up to 13 members, including a chairperson and a vice-chairperson appointed by the Governor in Council on a part-time basis for a period of no more than four years.

In selecting these members, the government has indicated that it will consider regional and gender diversity, reconciliation with indigenous peoples, and executive management skills, experiences and competencies, for example, human resources and labour relations, information technology, change management and innovation. The bill would permit the minister to consult provincial and territorial governments that have contracted the services of the RCMP about these appointments. Also, the bill sets out the grounds of ineligibility, most importantly to avoid real, potential or apparent conflicts of interest for board members.

[Translation]

Regarding its operations, the management advisory board would be able to set its own priorities, work plans, and procedures. The Deputy Minister of Public Safety Canada and the Commissioner of the RCMP may attend all board meetings as observers, but will not vote.

To make certain that the board is able to advise on anything in its mandate, the RCMP will be obliged to provide the board with information it considers necessary. In addition, the board would be able to share with the minister any advice given to the commissioner.

[English]

Most importantly, under this legislation the establishment of the management advisory board would not change the existing roles, responsibilities or accountabilities of the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, who will remain accountable to Parliament for the RCMP and retain the authority to direct the commissioner and to establish strategic priorities for the RCMP; of the commissioner of the RCMP, who will retain control and management of the force; nor of the existing RCMP review bodies and existing national security review bodies whose mandates will remain unchanged. Neither will it change the responsibilities of the Treasury Board, which will remain the RCMP's employer.

Bill C-7, which was assented to in 2017, provided for the unionization of RCMP members and reservists. This process is now under way. In C-7, Parliament has reaffirmed the Treasury Board as the force's employer and nothing in these amendments revisits Parliament's decision or disrupts those relationships.

The proposed legislation fully respects a fundamental principle of Canadian policing, which is that police independence underpins the rule of law. The board will not, in any way, impinge upon the independence of RCMP policing operations. It will not be authorized to ask for information that might hinder or compromise an investigation or a prosecution and personal information and cabinet confidences are also out of bounds.

Assuming the bill receives royal assent, the amendments will become effective on a date prescribed by the Governor in Council.

However, if the government creates an interim board in the meantime using its existing authorities under the Public Service Employment Act, then a transitional provision included here in Bill C-97 would continue the tenure of those appointments under the new provisions in the RCMP Act.

In conclusion, the commissioner of the RCMP has said that the creation of a management advisory board is a critical step to help modernize and support a diverse, healthy and effective RCMP. Bill C-97 would make that role permanent to support the current commissioner in her mandate commitment to lead the RCMP through a period of transformation and to support future commissioners in maintaining a force that is trusted by Canadians for its policing excellence.

• (1620)

We would be happy to respond to any questions the committee may have.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Koops.

Again, I'm conscious of our time limitations. My suggestion to colleagues would be that we do five minute rounds.

With that, we have Mr. Graham for five minutes, please.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham (Laurentides—Labelle, Lib.): Mr. Koops, would advice from the board be in any way binding on the RCMP?

Mr. Randall Koops: Not at all. The role of the board would be to support the commissioner by providing her with advice. The commissioner retains command and control of the RCMP under the direction of the minister and nothing in the bill would alter that relationship.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: What kind of experience is required for a board member to become a board member? What kind of training is provided to them once they're there?

Mr. Randall Koops: Training would be a question that the RCMP and the board will want to discuss once the board is in place. I think it would be open to the board to have views on what kinds of training would be useful to them, both about police operations and about management. It would also be open to the RCMP to offer that to the board.

On your first question about qualifications, the minister has said that the qualifications that would be considered would include representative qualifications, for example, to reflect the diversity of Canada and geographic representation. Also, the membership that are being sought are folks who have significant experience in leading and guiding transformation in major national institutions.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: The proposed changes would provide the right for the board to proactively provide advice that is not necessarily solicited, is that correct?

Mr. Randall Koops: That's correct. The bill would leave the board open to determine its own priorities and determine its own ways of working. We would foresee an arrangement similar to what would exist between many other advisory boards, or boards of management, and a deputy head, which is a healthy dialogue between the two about where advice would be necessary and welcome.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: What are some of the most pressing issues the board is looking at, or do you have sense of that? You mentioned harassment. Are there other things as well?

Mr. Randall Koops: If we look at the government response to the CRCC and Fraser reports that was made public in January 2019, the things that the Minister of Public Safety highlighted included transparent and accountable governance structures, trusted harassment prevention and resolution mechanisms, the leadership development within the RCMP and the RCMP's enterprise-wide commitment to diversity and inclusion.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: On harassment, do you think this board will help restore confidence among the rank and file?

Mr. Randall Koops: The board has a role to play in supporting the commissioner in ensuring that the HR practices that are in place within the RCMP build a healthy workforce and a safe workplace. It would provide the commissioner with guidance on the adequacy of any new arrangements and on adapting them, going forward.

I think, more broadly, the board can provide the commissioner with expertise and guidance on leading the kind of cultural transformation that needs to occur within the RCMP.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: You mentioned that board members would not have access to, for example, cabinet secrets. What level of access will they have?

Mr. Randall Koops: The bill would provide that the RCMP would provide to the board whatever information the board believes is necessary for it to do its job. There's a positive obligation in the bill on the RCMP to provide that information, subject to a few constraints. Those would include, as we discussed, personal information, cabinet confidences and information related to ongoing law enforcement investigations or prosecutions.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: Thank you.

I'm going to pass the bit of time I have left to Sven.

Mr. Sven Spengemann (Mississauga—Lakeshore, Lib.): Thank you very much, Mr. Graham.

• (1625)

The Chair: You have a little over a minute.

Mr. Sven Spengemann: In practice, how would the dynamics unfold? I suspect there are a number of different ways to structure that board to create an overall vision of which direction the board should go in.

Should it be a board that has previous policing experience and connections, or should it be a board composed of laypersons who inject a completely fresh perspective, or is that up to the government of the day to decide?

Then, when the board makes recommendations and gives advice is there a reasons requirement? Is there some scrutiny that the RCMP would have to exercise to respond to those recommendations? What obligation is there to take on, at least, the thought process that the committee has developed?

Mr. Randall Koops: On the first point, the government of the day would be open to selecting board members that it felt responded to the current needs of the board, given the kind of experience that was necessary to help the commissioner.

For your example of police experience, I think the minister has said that the government would look for some measure of police experience on the board, but it should probably be broader than just former police officers.

You will note that in the bill there is a provision that current members of the RCMP are ineligible, as are employees of provincial or municipal governments, so it will not be a board of serving police officers.

The board is free to provide advice to the commissioner in the form that it best sees fit. How they do that would be open to discussion between the board and the commissioner.

The deputy minister of public safety will serve as an ex officio member of the board and, in that sense, the minister is represented at the board, even when the minister is not present at the board.

The Chair: Mr. Motz, you have five minutes.

Mr. Glen Motz (Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner, CPC): Thank you for being here today.

We know that there's a lot of oversight already with the RCMP, a lot of committees that they're involved in—the oversight committee, the review committee, their management committee, their committees related to security.

The challenges they face, as we know, are significant. It's unclear to me, and maybe to Canadians as well, how this new management committee is going to address those issues that face the RCMP.

One of the issues that I get in my riding is about being understaffed. I don't understand this—and I'm sure Canadians are going to be asking. How can the solution to the issues—severely understaffed rural detachments, poor communication, the lack of equipment, the internal harassment complaints that we continue to see repeatedly and the cultural challenges that they continue to face—be addressed by developing an advisory committee?

How do we see those issues being resolved with this new advisory committee?

Mr. Randall Koops: I think what the government is doing in response to a long series of recommendations going back many years about the need to fix cultural problems in the RCMP, in part, is by changing the governance of the RCMP.

In this instance, what the government has proposed is a board that can give the commissioner advice about leading enterprise-wide change in that organization. That will result, over time, in better management decisions and a healthier workforce, all of which contribute, in the long run, to fixing the kinds of issues that you've identified as things that need—

Mr. Glen Motz: You said, in response to my colleague's question, that the commissioner of the RCMP is not obligated to take any of the advice given by the advisory committee and implement it. Is that correct?

Mr. Randall Koops: That's correct.

Mr. Glen Motz: Are there repercussions if she doesn't?

Mr. Randall Koops: That is a discussion between the commissioner and the board and the commissioner and the minister. What the government has proposed is that rather than create a board that has decision-making or directive power over the commissioner—

Mr. Glen Motz: Straight advisory.

Mr. Randall Koops: —it has given the commissioner of the RCMP, in her mandate letter, a very clear mandate to lead transformation of the RCMP—

Mr. Glen Motz: No, that's true, and I—

Mr. Randall Koops: —and then to equip her with the tools to support her in doing that.

Mr. Glen Motz: Right, but having said that, what I find interesting is that this management advisory board has been asked to deal with these cultural issues, with the harassment. Internal harassment is one of those cultural issues that continue to be facing the RCMP. But as I hear what you say, and I see the legislation, the board doesn't have a direct mandate to deal with that issue specifically. I'm curious to know why that was silent.

•(1630)

Mr. Randall Koops: The board's mandate is not to fix those issues. The board's mandate is to give expert advice to the commissioner in her mandate to fix those issues.

Mr. Glen Motz: Okay, so I chose the wrong words when I talked about fixing those problems. Still, if the mandate of the advisory committee is that we would like you to look at this specific issue, because it's a cultural issue that's occurred for decades within the organization and that it's something to focus on, I find it intriguing that this legislation is silent on that.

Mr. Randall Koops: That's the choice the government of the day has made, to give that mandate very clearly to the commissioner and then to support her with tools to deliver on the mandate, rather than at this point upset or alter the existing relationships—

Mr. Glen Motz: Okay. Fair enough.

Mr. Randall Koops: —in relation to who is the employer and who has financial authorities, etc.

Mr. Glen Motz: Obviously, you believe there are benefits to the development of creating this management board. Obviously, there are probably some disadvantages as well. Do you believe the work of the management advisory board will lead to improved governance, and if so, how?

Mr. Randall Koops: As we said, the benefit comes to the commissioner in having a broader set of experts who can help her with very complex issues about a very complex national organization.

Mr. Glen Motz: But that goes back to Mr. Graham's question about what the composition is of this advisory board. If you don't have a broad section of experts to do that...and “broad” means not just policing, but you need to have a policing context to fall back on.

Mr. Randall Koops: Of course you do.

Mr. Glen Motz: You need a legal framework. You need HR expertise. You need corporate experience for the management of such a big organization with that mandate. Is that the goal, that we will have that breadth of experience on this committee?

Mr. Randall Koops: Very much so. Mr. Goodale has spoken publicly about the process under way to find the composition of a board that does those very things.

Mr. Glen Motz: Non-partisan, I hope.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Motz.

Mr. Dubé, you have five minutes, please.

[Translation]

Mr. Matthew Dubé (Beloil—Chambly, NDP): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you, sir, for being here today.

You answered in the negative when you were asked if the RCMP had to implement the advice they receive or to respond to it.

As indicated in the bill, the board's mission is to act “on its own or following a request of the latter”, the latter being the commissioner. In theory, the RCMP is not obliged to consult the board, unless they decide to share information or unless the RCMP decides to

proactively ask for any information, but not as a legal obligation. Is that correct?

[English]

Mr. Randall Koops: Or, in the third scenario, the Minister of Public Safety requests or directs the commissioner of the RCMP to seek the view of the management advisory committee.

[Translation]

Mr. Matthew Dubé: At the end of the day, neither side has a legal obligation to consult the board.

[English]

Mr. Randall Koops: Correct.

[Translation]

Mr. Matthew Dubé: Thank you.

I have another question for you. Maybe this is in your document and I did not see it. If that is the case, please forgive me.

Is there an obligation or a reporting mechanism, a public report that the minister or some other authority has to table, which would make the public and RCMP members aware of the advice that was given and the interactions that took place?

Mr. Randall Koops: The answer is no, because the board's goal is to make recommendations to the commissioner, not to have a public role.

[English]

It's not involved in the administration of a statute. It is not a review body. Parliament is not delegating to it the responsibility to administer a statute or carry out another role. Those are generally the things that attract the responsibility to make a public report.

[Translation]

Mr. Matthew Dubé: If RCMP members wished to lodge a human resources complaint based on the points in the board's mission that deal with human resources, they could do so by going through the union, as the situation evolved. Otherwise, they could go through the CRCC's other oversight mechanism. RCMP members have access to those mechanisms if ever they want to register a complaint.

Mr. Randall Koops: That's right.

Mr. Matthew Dubé: Okay.

Here are my last two questions. The management advisory board's mission is stated in paragraph 45.18(2) of the amended act. In paragraph 45.18(2)(a), you will find the implementation of transformation and modernization plans. In paragraph 45.18(2)(b), the effective and efficient use of resources; and in paragraph 45.18(2)(e), the development and the implementation of corporate and strategic plans.

Why were these terms chosen? This is all well and good for the current government, but it could also lead to workforce cuts or reductions that would have a harmful impact on the very employees that the board is apparently supposed to be championing.

•(1635)

Mr. Jacques Talbot (Counsel, Department of Justice): What is described here are the normal activities for any organization. The terminology is neutral and it applies to all organizations, be they departments, agencies or, in this case, the RCMP.

These are things that the RCMP is currently doing and will have to continue to do in 10 years and in 100 years.

Mr. Matthew Dubé: So I understand that the board's mission will be set based on the objectives of the government in office, with the resources...

Mr. Jacques Talbot: The board's mission will not change with time. It will have to notify and advise the commissioner based on the reality the commissioner will have to face.

Mr. Matthew Dubé: It could be a financial or political reality, or some other kind.

Mr. Jacques Talbot: That will depend on the government in place at that time.

Mr. Matthew Dubé: Here is my last question.

We haven't yet had the opportunity to study Bill C-98 in depth, because it was tabled yesterday. Will it affect the section of the omnibus bill that we are currently studying?

[English]

Mr. Randall Koops: No. Nothing here would change the role of what's proposed in the following bill, or vice versa.

[Translation]

Mr. Matthew Dubé: Thank you.

[English]

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Dubé.

Mr. Picard, please, for five minutes.

[Translation]

Mr. Michel Picard (Montarville, Lib.): Thank you, gentlemen, for taking part in this exercise.

Is it common practice for a government institution or agency to use advisory boards like this one?

Mr. Randall Koops: Could I ask you to repeat the question, please?

Mr. Michel Picard: Is it common practice for government institutions and independent agencies to use advisory boards as part of their management?

Mr. Randall Koops: What is being proposed for the RCMP is indeed new. However, there are many advisory boards within the federal government.

Mr. Michel Picard: Do any of the advisory boards include the minister or a minister's representative among their members?

Mr. Randall Koops: No ministers, but there is often a representative, usually the deputy minister.

Mr. Michel Picard: So we can conclude that, among the members selected, there will be a member of cabinet, either the deputy minister or a person representing the minister. Is that correct?

Mr. Jacques Talbot: I want to point out that, in this case, it's a member who will not have the right to vote, so more of an observer than a member.

Mr. Michel Picard: Does the presence of the minister, through a delegate, not add to the balance of power within the advisory board simply because of the minister's presence, given that the RCMP is still trying to have independent management?

Mr. Jacques Talbot: In fact, observers will be available to board members to answer their questions, provide assistance and explain certain points or issues on which members are called upon to provide advice to the commissioner.

Mr. Michel Picard: Okay.

[English]

I'm done, Chair.

[Translation]

Thank you.

[English]

The Chair: As colleagues know, the bells are ringing. I propose that we go for another 15 minutes, if that's all right with people. They are half-hour bells.

Up until about three seconds ago, I had thought that there were going to be no amendments or recommendations. Ms. Sahota has some recommendations, and I would like to give the committee some chance to at least absorb those recommendations and think about them, so we can continue with questioning and come back another day and do that, or we can look at these amendments.

I've been working on the assumption that the opposition doesn't have any amendments or recommendations.

Mr. Matthew Dubé: I have one.

The Chair: You have one?

Mr. Jim Egliniski (Yellowhead, CPC): I'd rather deal with the questioning and come back to deal with the amendments on another day. Otherwise, we are being loaded down with everything again in a short period of time.

The Chair: We don't have to report until May 17, so we do have time. It may require a special meeting, because we are chockablock for the next two meetings.

We'll go to the next round, and then we'll deal with amendments at some future date.

Is that good?

Are you fine with that, Mr. Dubé?

•(1640)

Mr. Matthew Dubé: I'm just wondering how many questions colleagues have left, or if we could use that time to get to the amendments.

Ms. Ruby Sahota (Brampton North, Lib.): Yes.

The Chair: Mr. Egliniski certainly wants....

Do you want to go, Ms. Sahota?

Ms. Ruby Sahota: I wanted to speak to my suggestions in the motion.

After hearing from the witnesses, I think I have a fourth one to add from the floor, but we might be in agreement about what that fourth one is, because I'm actually picking it off of some of your questions, Mr. Motz.

The Chair: Let's go with Mr. Eglinski, and we'll see whether anybody else has any other questions.

After Mr. Eglinski, we'll start discussing these and then we'll go from there.

Is that fine?

Mr. Matthew Dubé: Yes.

The Chair: Mr. Eglinski.

Mr. Jim Eglinski: Thank you, and my thanks to both the witnesses.

In my past experience as an RCMP officer for 35 years, I think the majority of the membership would appreciate this committee, but I do have some concerns. The mandate of the board would be to advise the commissioner of the RCMP on the force's administration and management, including resources, management controls, corporate planning and budgets. What power would this committee have to advise the appropriate ministries within the government on funding for the RCMP?

They can make all the recommendations they want to the RCMP, but without the support of Treasury Board or the public safety minister's office to respect what they are saying to the commissioner and supporting the board on those recommendations.... I don't see anything in here saying that they have the authority to go back to the two ministries who are going to be responsible overall.

Mr. Randall Koops: Ultimately, the board would give its advice to the commissioner. As foreseen, the commissioner, in turn, supported by that advice, can help make better decisions and present better business cases. If we take the example in (f), "the development and implementation of operating and capital budgets", she has expertise available to her to present—

Mr. Jim Eglinski: But the expertise is only as good as the support that that expertise gets if they pass the information on. I remember that when I was in a force, we were always within the top three salary-wise in Canada. Things drastically changed over the years, and now we're somewhere around 50—I don't know, I can't count that far, as I don't have enough fingers and toes—but we need the two relevant ministries to support the committee they want to form, and yet you have nothing in here saying that they're going to give that support to the committee.

They're going to make recommendations and then the commissioner is going to have to come back and fight with the public safety minister and the Treasury Board to get the funding.

Mr. Randall Koops: The bill includes a provision that the management advisory board may also provide the minister with a copy of any advice that it is giving the commissioner. On those types of issues where there are large, difficult decisions being made—you used an example about capital budgeting and those kinds of things—

the board may well see fit to share that advice with the minister to ensure that they also know the advice it has given the commissioner.

Mr. Jim Eglinski: That's my main concern. I just wanted to hear it from you. I guess we have to wait to see what takes place.

Mr. Randall Koops: The other provisions are, as we mentioned in response to a question from the other side, that the deputy minister is also present in the meetings of the board and therefore is aware and informed by the discussions and deliberations of the board.

Mr. Jim Eglinski: I want to mention here on the record that one of the biggest problems facing the RCMP over the last 20 years has been funding and keeping up the resources to the level that they think they should be. They can't do that, though, because they don't have that funding. It all comes down to budgeting and putting the money where the best resources are.

Thank you, that's all I have for questions.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Eglinski.

Does anyone on the government side have questions?

Mr. Motz, you can ask one or two questions. You have a couple of minutes, and that's it.

• (1645)

Mr. Glen Motz: Am I to assume that the members of this advisory board, certainly the chair and vice-chair, would be covered under the Government Employees Compensation Act, which would mean they would be paid?

Mr. Randall Koops: All the members will be paid. They will be paid a per diem. That rate is fixed as part of the appointment process when the Governor in Council makes the appointment.

Mr. Glen Motz: That includes the chair and the vice-chair. They're not getting a salary; they're just getting a per diem.

Mr. Randall Koops: Correct. It's a part-time appointment, so they will be paid by the day, plus their travel expenses. In these types of arrangements, normally some degree of preparatory time or reading time will be paid.

Mr. Glen Motz: Has the department determined approximately what this committee would cost annually?

Mr. Randall Koops: The department has determined the cost of the committee at about, I believe, \$1.6 million per year, \$7 million over 5 years, and \$1.6 million ongoing to be funded from within the existing reference levels of the RCMP.

Mr. Glen Motz: So I guess our real crime issues, with being understaffed, are not going to be addressed that way. Anyway, redeploying some cash that could go elsewhere....

How long do you think it will take for this committee to be operational?

Mr. Randall Koops: The minister said that he hopes to see the committee operational soon. In January the government announced its intent to proceed with the establishment of an interim arrangement to get the board up and running. I believe the minister said in a scrum yesterday that he expected it would be very soon.

Mr. Glen Motz: Finally, do you think that a management advisory board will speed up the internal review process, the internal processes for resolving some of the matters when members have issues that need to be dealt with? Do you think that will speed up that whole process?

Mr. Randall Koops: When members have complaints, the board does not sit to receive members' complaints.

The Chair: We have to leave it there.

Mr. Randall Koops: I didn't mean that they investigate complaints; I know they don't investigate complaints. I'm talking about fixing the systemic issues. The goal is to help the minister do that.

The Chair: Mr. Spengemann now has one or two minutes.

Mr. Sven Spengemann: A minute....

The Chair: A minute is all you need. Okay.

Mr. Sven Spengemann: This board has some size—up to 13 members—and presumably some diversity of views. Is it your expectation that the board will, or may, split on some key issues, and if so, how would they express dissenting views on those issues?

Mr. Randall Koops: That would be very much up to the board to decide. The board will be free, under the proposed provisions, to determine its own procedures and its own method of working.

The Chair: Thank you.

Ms. Sahota has three or four suggested amendments, since we're not amending a bill as such.

We have 19 minutes. I propose that we run this for five minutes, because the whip will have a heart attack if we don't leave within 15 minutes. Lock him up and we don't have a problem.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Chair: We'll run until 4:55.

Ms. Sahota has presented these amendments, but they're not in both official languages, so I can't distribute them. I'm going to have to have you read them into the record and make your arguments as to why you think these should be considered as suggested amendments.

Ms. Ruby Sahota: This piece of legislation is really appreciated. The spirit of it is exactly what is appropriate. I just think it's a little vague.

I understand that perhaps that's been done so that the board will have the ability and flexibility to act differently when addressing different issues. However, I think some of the core things, which you mentioned in your opening remarks....

I'll just read out my proposals and then I'll explain them:

The Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security recommends that the Standing Committee on Finance consider amending Division 10 on the Budget Implementation Act to:

1. Require full reports prepared by the Management Advisory Board, per 45.18 (3), to be automatically provided to the Minister;

In the legislation, it says that they “may” provide them, so this is more of a “shall”. I know that the minister receives a lot of reports, but I think it's important, especially if it's an official report, for him

or her to be seized of the issue moving forward. That's been recommended. I further propose:

2. encourage diverse representation on future iterations of the Management Advisory Board, including but not limited to women, Indigenous persons, persons with disabilities, members of the LGBTQ+ community and members of visible minorities; and

3. require that Gender-Based Analysis+, or any future program that may reasonably be viewed as its successor, be incorporated into the Management Advisory Board's work.

Number four is on the fly. After our discussion today, I'm thinking that the mandate of the advisory board lacks any specific mention of harassment and cultural change. I think that should be encompassed in proposed paragraph 45.18(2)(a) of the mandate, but it's very vague. I would recommend that the finance committee figure out what language they want to use, but specifically mention that is the transformation or a part of the modernization plans.

Although you've mentioned in your introductory remarks that they are trying to achieve regional diversity—all of those different things—it's not actually stated in the legislation. This government may intend to make appointments based on that—or the council—but that might not be the case in the future. I think putting that language in would make the person who needs to make appointments aware that he or she must make sure that the board comprises all of those factors.

I haven't listed if there needs to any kind of mandated specific... What's the word I'm looking for?

● (1650)

Mr. Glen Motz: Quota.

Ms. Ruby Sahota: Quotas or anything like that. They should be viewing it from that perspective, that there should be as much diversity as possible, so that the recommendations that are made are good, right? The work that's done by a more diverse board would be good.

Those are my recommendations to the finance committee.

Is there any discussion by any members?

The Chair: In the two or three minutes that we have left, is there any commentary, either from the officials or from members of the opposition parties?

Mr. Glen Motz: I would think that the composition of any board, any management committee, any commission, would be on merit, based on the competency skills you're looking for to do the job of whatever they're asked to do. That should be the number one requisite.

Ms. Ruby Sahota: That's not mentioned here either. I would think that anyone they select would be merit-based, of course. That's a given.

The Chair: Do you want to move that as an amendment, Mr. Motz?

Mr. Glen Motz: Sure, so moved.

Ms. Ruby Sahota: Sure.

The Chair: You didn't mention anything about religious communities.

Ms. Ruby Sahota: No.

Basically, number 2 is saying that I encourage diverse representation on future management advisory boards: “including but not limited to”. It's just throwing out some ideas basically, of gender, of minorities, those with disabilities. It's not limited.

Mr. Jim Eglinski: Why do you have to break it down? Why can't it just be “diverse”?

Ms. Ruby Sahota: I think that word could be taken in different ways. It could mean diversity of opinions. I think giving a few examples sets the readers!.... The finance committee would know better what I'm speaking of.

The Chair: Unfortunately, I have to bring this to a conclusion, since we're under 15 minutes, and we are always concerned about the health and welfare of our whip.

We're going to have to bring this up again, because I'm assuming —

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: Are we coming back after the vote?

The Chair: I'm assuming there's still wish to discuss this further before we write the letter.

With that, I think we are going to have to adjourn. We'll have to figure out a time to bring it back. Thank you very much.

The meeting is adjourned.

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