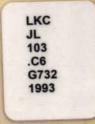


BEYOND HIERARCHY

A REPORT ON WOMEN IN THE FORMER DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS (DOC)

Management Summary

December 1993





This special study was conducted by Lyndsay Green and Associates of Toronto, with Hélène Bibeault, for the Department of Communications National Advisory Committee on Women's Issues.

The views expressed herein are the views of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views or policies of the former Department of Communications.

The study was prepared under the direction of Erica Claus and Anne Marie Giannetti, Co-chairs of the Consultant's Steering Committee, with the collaboration of Antonietta Calitri.

NOTE:

Under the restructuring of the federal government announced by Prime Minister Kim Campbell on June 25, 1993, the programs administered by the Department of Communications became part of the Canadian Heritage portfolio.

Cette étude spéciale a été effectuée par Lyndsay Green et Associés de Toronto, avec Hélène Bibeault pour le Comité national du MDC sur les questions concernant les femmes.

Les points de vue exprimés dans ce rapport sont ceux des auteurs et ne réflètent pas nécessairement ceux de l'ancien ministère des Communications.

Ce rapport a été préparé sous la direction d'Erica Claus et d'Anne Marie Giannetti, co-présidentes du Comité directeur des travaux des consultants, avec la collaboration d'Antonietta Calitri.

REMARQUE:

Dans le cadre de la restructuration du gouvernement fédéral annoncée par la première ministre, l'honorable Kim Campbell, le 25 juin 1993, les programmes administrés par le ministère des Communications font maintenant partie du portefeuille du Patrimoine canadien.

About the Title

We chose Beyond Hierarchy as the title for this report because it is both a finding and a recommendation. The National Advisory Committee on Women's Issues (NACWI) has been able to mobilize people in support of women's issues and activities by crossing traditional barriers created by structure and bureaucracy. The success of its ability to get beyond hierarchy to create an effective and dynamic organizational model should be recreated in future federal government organizations. Structures that reduce the levels of hierarchy and make greater use of cross-sector team-building and multi-division projects will be more effective and responsive. Such organizations will not only allow women's skills to flourish- optimum use of women's talents will be critical to success.



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 1

This report presents a summary of the findings and recommendations of Beyond Hierarchy: A Report on Women in the Former Department of Communications. The overall goal of the Department of Communications Women's Action Plan was to raise awareness of women's issues and create an environment supportive of women. The Plan's twenty-nine initiatives were intended to improve communications and people management, address issues of stereotyping and blockage, and remove barriers to women in non-traditional occupations. The National Advisory Committee on Women's Issues (NACWI), chaired by two Assistant Deputy Ministers, was established to support the implementation of the Plan, and promote and advocate women's issues across the department.

In April 1993, Lyndsay Green of Lyndsay Green and Associates was hired, with associate Hélène Bibeault, to assist NACWI to develop a strategy to ensure the implementation of the Women's Action Plan.

A critical component of the project was department-wide consultations. There were forty-one personal interviews and 181 people participated in twenty-two discussion groups.

Consultations revealed that the Women's Action Plan had not been integrated into the day-to-day operations of the Department and there is no structure for ensuring management accountability in its implementation. Findings resulting from this weakness include poor awareness of the Plan and of NACWI, inconsistent implementation, and uncertainty about official support for the Plan which has been hindering its implementation. On the other hand, NACWI is the Plan's greatest strength. Other notable strengths are that it addresses women's priority concerns, its initiatives encompass the concerns of women at all levels and career stages, it allows for regional and sector variation, and there is considerable scope for individual initiative.

"What you're essentially doing is establishing a culture. It needs to be lived everyday and be led by the top. This can only happen if the most senior managers put it in their personal agenda and "Walk the Talk".

Managers felt that the Action Plan initiatives should be part and parcel of good people management and expressed concern that managers are not being evaluated on their people management skills. There was widespread agreement that DOC's workaholic corporate culture is a major barrier to women. Changing attitudes was perceived as the toughest job in ensuring women's equality, and specific initiatives such as training in managing a diverse workforce and gender awareness were seen as fundamental. Senior managers emphasized that they must "Walk the Talk", and create an environment where women and men are treated equally. Technology is both a curse and a godsend for women in the workplace and training is required to ensure that people are in control of the technology. The belief is widely shared that future organizations will be flatter, with more team work, multi-tasking and multi-functional responsibilities.

All of the initiatives in the Women's Action Plan (with the exception of the course for women in non-traditional jobs) are for both women and men. Although the Plan supports men, they are not fully involved in its implementation.

The report analyses the Action Plan using a checklist on "Best Practices in the Employment of Women", developed by the Treasury Board's Consultation Group on Employment Equity for Women, as a benchmark to measure the comprehensiveness of the Plan. When the Women's Action Plan is combined with DOC's Employment Equity Program, Departmental initiatives currently address most of the practices in the Checklist, with the issue being one of degree of implementation. However, there are several major weaknesses. The areas in which the Women's Action Plan needs strengthening are recruitment and promotion, the provision of diversity/sensitivity policies and programs for managers, supervisors, recruiters and co-workers, good management practices, and progressive employee-management relations.

The objective of supporting individual initiatives has proven to be particularly opportune given the division of the department and its absorption into different structures.

The report concludes that the consultation process was extremely effective in mobilizing support for the Women's Action Plan and further strengthening the web of connections that NACWI was weaving throughout the Department in support of the plan's initiatives. The objective of supporting individual initiatives has proven to be particularly opportune given the division of the department and its absorption into different structures. The principle of "acting locally" means that virtually all of the commitments made by managers and employees during the consultation process may still be carried out in their own section, regardless of the changed superstructure.

Nevertheless, the full success of a project such as the Women's Action Plan can only be realised if the initiatives are institutionalized, supported by department-wide infrastructures, and, if senior management commitment is clearly communicated throughout the Department. Initiatives like the Women's Action Plan could go a long way to eliminating barriers that prevent both women and men from doing their best.

As we carried out this project, we were struck by the sense of an organization struggling with change. Virtually everyone interviewed felt that the Department was not yet a barrier-free environment and, indeed, had a long way to go. Most people felt, however, that there was movement, however slight, in the right direction. Initiatives such as the Women's Action Plan and the proposed mandatory management training were perceived as very positive steps to that end.

The following eight recommendations reflect the findings of this consultation process. The recommendations can be applied to any organization that is creating a barrier-free workplace for women.

Initiatives like the Women's Action Plan could go a long way to eliminating barriers that prevent both women and men from doing their best.

Recommendations

- 1. Establish a new National Advisory Committee on Women's Issues (NACWI) and strengthen it by broadening the net through:
 - the establishment of a sub-committee under each NACWI representative, and.
 - the rotation of representation in NACWI throughout the Department to prevent the initiatives from being too closely identified with any one individual or sector.
- 2. Integrate the Women's Action Plan initiatives into day-to-day operations by:
 - · including items on the Plan in staff meeting agendas at all levels,
 - · integrating the Plan into annual operational and strategic plans,
 - integrating the Plan into special division initiatives,
 - · setting up branch committees,
 - conducting periodic reviews of the status of the Women's Action Plan (e.g., 6, 9 and 12-month operational planning reviews), and,
 - bi-annually reporting to the Deputy Minister and the Senior Management Committee on departmental progress in integrating the Women's Action Plan initiatives into day-to-day operations.
- 3. Strengthen the role of women at work by treating the Women's Action Plan as an evolving tool which meets the needs of the organization and takes into account the current environment by:
 - expanding the Plan by filling the gaps which emerged during this study and adding initiatives which will eliminate barriers to women's recruitment and advancement, establishing recruitment vehicles, exploring mentoring programs, providing gender awareness training, and establishing employee/management feedback systems,
 - integrating into the existing Plan initiatives for women who are doubly challenged (women with disabilities, aboriginal women, women belonging to visible minority groups, and women in non-traditional occupations), and
 - reviewing the Plan and considering modifications to it according to the Plan's twenty-nine initiatives (pages 11-13 of this report).
- 4. Communications skills and the attainment of employment equity goals, especially those supporting and promoting women at all levels of the organization, should be visibly recognized and highly valued through such actions as:
 - performance appraisals
 - rewards
 - awards
 - profiles of successful women and their achievements
 - annual women's conferences
 - information sessions and kiosks
 - social events (luncheons, dinners, etc.)
 - special events

Establish a new National Advisory Committee on Women's Issues and strengthen it by broadening the net,



- 5. Implement a comprehensive communications strategy for the Women's Action Plan (page 13 of this report).
- 6. Make a link between the Women's Action Plan and the Department's mandate to ensure an appropriate profile for a culture which supports and promotes women.
- 7. Get beyond hierarchy ². Structure the newly organized departments to reduce the levels of hierarchy and make greater use of cross-sector team-building and multi-division projects in order to create more effective and responsive organizations. Women's skills will be critical to these new structures.
- 8. The first task of the newly structured NACWI within the Department of Canadian Heritage should be to formally address the recommendations in this report and to present an approach to addressing them to Strategy Committee for ratification.

Structures that reduce the levels of hierarchy will allow women's skills to flourish - optimum use of women's talents will be critical to success.



BEYOND HIERARCHY: A REPORT ON WOMEN IN THE FORMER DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS

MANAGEMENT SUMMARY



INTRODUCTION

This report presents a summary of the findings and recommendations of *Beyond Hierarchy: A Report on Women in the Former Department of Communications*. The overall goal of the Department of Communications Women's Action Plan was to raise awareness of women's issues and create an environment supportive of women. The Plan's twenty-nine initiatives were intended to improve communications and people management, address issues of stereotyping and blockage, and remove barriers to women in non-traditional occupations.

In April 1993, Lyndsay Green of Lyndsay Green and Associates was hired, with associate Hélène Bibeault, to assist NACWI in developing a strategy to ensure the implementation of the Women's Action Plan.

The following sections of the report outline the project's objectives, and background, describe the methodology and findings, and conclude with the recommendations. More detailed information about the findings and recommendations is available in the report Beyond Hierarchy: A Report on Women in the Former Department of Communications, August 1993. The full report on which this summary is based includes eight appendices which cover the entire history of the women's project at DOC, including a complete copy of the Women's Action Plan.

The goal of the project was to stimulate creative approaches to maintaining a barrier-free workplace for women.

OBJECTIVES

The goal of the project was to examine the degree of implementation of the Women's Action Plan and to stimulate creative approaches to maintaining a barrier-free workplace for women, coupled with practical methods for implementation.

BACKGROUND

In September 1992 the Women's Action Plan was approved by the DOC Strategy Committee, and the National Advisory Committee on Women's Issues (NACWI) was formed. NACWI was co-chaired by Barbara Bloor, Assistant Deputy Minister of Corporate Management, and Paul Racine, Assistant Deputy Minister of Communications Policy. Membership in the Committee was voluntary, open to employees at all levels and from all regions.

METHODOLOGY

The project was carried out through an analysis of the Women's Action Plan and department-wide consultations. Awareness of the Women's Action Plan was visibly heightened through the department-wide consultation carried out from April 26 to July 23, 1993. The consultation process was very effective in obtaining an extremely high degree of input over a fifteen day period (June 7-30, 1993). Forty-one personal interviews were held, and 181 people participated in twenty-two discussion groups in Ottawa, Vancouver, Winnipeg, Toronto, Burlington, Montréal and Moncton.

Feedback was obtained from management and employees on the status of the implementation of the Action Plan and recommendations were made for strengthening it. This approach was particularly successful in generating support for the Plan and encouraging women and men to commit themselves to individual and collective action.

FINDINGS

The need for a Women's Action Plan is confirmed by an examination of the Department of Communications data from Human Resources regarding female representation in the department. A comparison of DOC's record on equitable representation with the overall Public Service shows that DOC has been more successful in staffing women in management categories (24.5% women in management at DOC vs. 17.2% in the federal government as a whole) and less successful in placing women in scientific and professional jobs (13.2% women in scientific and professional categories at DOC vs. 28.2% in the federal government as a whole). The percentages of women in technical categories and in non-traditional jobs are much the same for both DOC and the federal government as a whole.

The following section presents study findings and is divided into two parts. Section One outlines the major findings which affect the overall strategy of the Women's Action Plan and Section Two elaborates on specific findings related to each of the twenty-nine Women's Action Plan initiatives grouped under five major categories.

Section One: Major Findings

- Lack of Integration is the Major Weakness
 The Women's Action Plan has not been integrated into the day-to-day operations of the Department. There exists no structure for ensuring management accountability in implementing the Plan. Several of the following findings result from this weakness:
 - Poor awareness of the Plan.
 - NACWI is not well known and some employees confused the committee with the National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC).



The Women's Action Plan has not been integrated into the day-to-day operations of the Department.

- Initiatives in the Action Plan are being inconsistently implemented.
- Uncertainty about official support for the specific initiatives in the Women's Action Plan has been hindering its implementation.

2. NACWI is the Major Strength

The Women's Action Plan is grounded in the National Advisory Committee on Women's Issues (NACWI) which brings together expertise and perspectives from all sectors, levels, and regions. The following strengths of the Plan can be attributed to NACWI's involvement:

- Initiatives in the Action Plan address women's priority concerns.
- Initiatives in the Action Plan are broad enough to encompass the concerns of women at all levels and career stages.
- The Action Plan is flexible enough to allow for regional and sector variation in implementation.
- The Action Plan has considerable scope for individual initiative.

3. No Evaluation of Managers on People Management Skills One of the strongest themes to emerge from the interviews is that managers do not feel that they are being evaluated on their employee management skills.

4. Workaholic Corporate Culture

The current workaholic corporate culture that exists at DOC's senior management level is viewed as being a major barrier to women.

5. Changing Attitudes is the Toughest Job

Both managers and employees emphasized that the toughest job to tackle is that of attitudinal change.

6. "Walk the Talk"

Senior managers strongly emphasized that managers must live by their credo. The message was strongly conveyed that senior management has a responsibility to set and maintain the standards for the workplace, and create an environment where women and men are treated equally.

7. Technology - Both a Curse and a Godsend

Technologies are expected to equalize training opportunities among government employees and improve access for women who may not be able to travel to off-site training programs. Communications between home and the workplace become feasible with new technologies. However, there is a need for support systems to ensure that people control technologies rather than the reverse.

"For years and years, it was only an old boy's network."

"A barrier-free environment is one where it isn't a factor whether you're a woman or a man." 8. Future Organizations Could be More "Women-friendly"
People feel that some of the problems that women face are inherent in DOC's hierarchical structure, and that down-sizing should result in a flatter organization, with more team work, multi-tasking and multi-functional responsibilities.

9. Plan Supports Men, Yet They Are Not Fully Involved
All of the initiatives in the Women's Action Plan (with the exception of the
course for women in non-traditional jobs) are for both women and men.
However, responsibility for making them happen has fallen disproportionately
on women's shoulders.

Section Two: Specific Action Plan Initiatives - Findings

The following section summarizes the consultation findings relating to the twenty-nine initiatives of the Women's Action Plan. The findings are organized according to the same categories as those used in the Action Plan.

1. Internal Communications

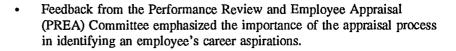
- There is an insufficient level of awareness of the Women's Action Plan.
- An informal "buddy" system was viewed as highly valuable.
- There was nearly universal support for mandatory training and gender awareness seminars for all employees.
- The practice of holding regular meetings with all staff is not universal.
- The Sponsorship Program for the Next Generation, which sponsors
 administrative staff or junior officers to attend annual meetings of
 CWRT, is viewed as a valuable tool in facilitating networking and
 improving knowledge of the industry.

2. People Management

- There is wide variation across the Department with respect to the use of flexible hours, compressed work weeks or Earned Day Off (EDO). Flexible working arrangements are perceived to be important in removing barriers for women in the workplace. Job-sharing was seen to be valuable by some employees and managers. The fact that full pension benefits are not available to part-time workers is seen as a major impediment to the use of this option.
- There was limited support expressed for a "work habits" study to examine the question of overtime, number of people doing overtime, numbers paid and amount of compensatory time taken.
- A draft report on the comparative use of telework arrangements in different countries has been prepared by the International Comparative Policy Unit.

Many managers are holding regular meetings with all staff, including administrative staff, but the practice is by no means universal.





- There is a high level of awareness and satisfaction with the Employee Assistance Program (EAP).
- The R. A. Fessenden Award to Canada Scholars in Engineering will
 provide ten \$1,000 awards to selected engineering students beginning in
 the 1993-1994 academic year with preference given to candidates from
 employment equity groups.
- Several of the "Best Cases" mentioned in the discussion groups emphasized DOC's support for relocation to provide assistance with family matters, i.e., to assist in finding a position in a new location when the spouse is transferred. One employee referred to this support as a "recognition that working women have working husbands". Maternity leave and leave for family-related responsibilities were praised. The one area where the benefits program seems to be a barrier to women is in the case of job-sharing and part-time work.
- There was nearly universal support for the role of the ombudsman, even though awareness of the ombudsman was not universal. There was, however, confusion about his role and the role of the Harassment Coordinators.

3. Stereotyping and Blockage

- The Junior Officer Development Program offered by one sector received high ratings.
- Training and development was rated as being very important by both employees and managers.
- Specific career counselling was often requested. The Department's "Inventory of Career Management Tools" should be beneficial to employees.
- The implementation of programs which facilitate intradepartmental and developmental assignments received the largest universal support.
- The Human Resources Branch automated Training Information Management System generated data on 1992-1993 training programs. This is used by managers to assess training needs.



4. Barriers to Women in Non-traditional Occupations

- There was strong support for the exit interview process and for guaranteeing assurances of confidentiality to increase participation. The Organizational Climate Surveys conducted in 1988 and 1992, and the Upward Feedback Project initiated in April 1992, received strong support.
- A pilot course designed to develop assertiveness and communications skills to cope with problems in the workplace was so successful that the Research and Spectrum sector offered similar courses and established WIN (Women's Information Network).
- The Department has hosted three annual dinners in Ottawa, the last two
 jointly with the Canadian Women in Radio and Television (CWRT).
 Approximately fifty support and junior officers were sponsored for each
 dinner.

5. Maximizing Women as a Resource at DOC

- The National Advisory Committee on Women's Issues (NACWI) was composed of women and men at all levels, regions and sectors.
- The Department held two national conferences on women's issues, Women at DOC: Today and Tomorrow in January 1991 and Sharing the Load: Finding a Balance in October 1992.
- All sectors and regions developed their first employment equity plans for 1992-1993 and were to report on their progress in the summer of 1993.

The report analyses the Action Plan using a checklist on "Best Practices in the Employment of Women", developed by the Treasury Board's Consultation Group on Employment Equity for Women, as a benchmark to measure the comprehensiveness of the Plan. When the Women's Action Plan is combined with DOC's Employment Equity Program, Departmental initiatives currently address most of the practices in the Checklist, with the issue being one of degree of implementation. However, there are several major weaknesses. The areas in which the Women's Action Plan needs strengthening are recruitment and promotion, the provision of diversity/sensitivity policies, and programs for managers, supervisors, recruiters and co-workers. The development and promotion of good practices and progressive employee-management relations should be an explicit goal of the Action Plan.





"For the first year it is okay to have the Plan stand alone, but if this Plan is important, then it should become part of the on-going management process."

RECOMMENDATIONS³

The following eight recommendations reflect the findings of the consultation process. The recommendations can be applied to any organization that is creating a barrier-free workplace for women.

- 1. Establish a new National Advisory Committee on Women's Issues (NACWI) and strengthen it by broadening the net through:
 - the establishment of a sub-committee under each NACWI representative, and,
 - the rotation of representation in NACWI throughout the Department to prevent the initiatives from being too closely identified with any one individual or sector.
- 2. Integrate the Women's Action Plan initiatives into day-to-day operations by:
 - · including items on the Plan in staff meeting agendas at all levels,
 - · integrating the Plan into annual operational and strategic plans,
 - · integrating the Plan into special division initiatives,
 - · setting up branch committees,
 - conducting periodic reviews of the status of the Women's Action Plan (e.g., 6, 9 and 12-month operational planning reviews), and,
 - bi-annually reporting to the Deputy Minister and the Senior Management Committee on departmental progress in integrating the Women's Action Plan initiatives into day-to-day operations.
- 3. Strengthen the role of women at work by treating the Women's Action Plan as an evolving tool which meets the needs of the organization and takes into account the current environment by:
 - expanding the Plan by filling the gaps which emerged during this study and adding Plan initiatives which will eliminate barriers to women's recruitment and advancement, establishing recruitment vehicles, exploring mentoring programs, providing gender awareness training, and establishing employee/management feedback systems,
 - integrating into the existing Plan, initiatives for women who are doubly challenged (women with disabilities, aboriginal women, women belonging to visible minority groups, and women in non-traditional occupations), and,
 - reviewing the Plan and considering modifications according to the Plan's twenty-nine initiatives grouped under the following five categories:

(i) Internal Communications

- Communications methods should be custom-designed to promote the Plan.
- Managers should define responsibilities of a "buddy" and set up informal suitable "buddy" systems for their divisions.

"There is a problem of gender communications. If I don't state my position carefully, I'm viewed as lacking confidence. If I state it forcefully, I'm considered aggressive."

Flexible working arrangements are perceived to be of the utmost importance in removing barriers to women in the workplace.

- Implement mandatory training on gender awareness, managing a diverse workforce and employment equity.
- The Women's Action Plan should be included on meeting agendas at all levels, and meetings should be held during office hours.

 Teleconferencing should be considered when addressing problems of balancing work and family responsibilities.
- The department should continue to sponsor the participation of administrative staff or junior officers in the Sponsorship Program for the Next Generation (attendance at CWRT dinners). Other sectors should make similar links with suitable organizations.

(ii) People Management

- The benefits program should be changed to eliminate barriers to flexible working arrangements, and seminars are required to explain the various flexible working arrangement options.
- Training for managers in setting priorities, estimating work loads and measuring resource requirements should be a component of mandatory management training.
- The availability of the International Comparative Study on Telework should be publicized.
- Modifications to the Performance Review and Employee Appraisal process should recognize that employees need to discuss their training needs and career prospects with their managers.
- The Employee Assistance Program should be continued.
- The R.A. Fessenden Award to Canada Scholars in Engineering is seen as being very important. Similar programs should be established where women are under-represented.
- The ombudsman should conduct seminars on his role and on management-employee relations.

(iii) Stereotyping and Blockage

- It is recommended that the Junior Officer Development Program be adopted throughout the Department.
- The three-day training entitlement should be treated as a minimum, not a maximum. The use of technology should be maximized to improve access for regional staff Headquarters training and to share training resources.
- Establish learning and career centres and make the "Inventory of Career Management Tools" available to all employees.

Communications skills and the attainment of employment equity goals, especially those supporting and promoting women at all levels of the organization, should be visibly recognized and highly valued.



- Establish an intradepartmental assignment program. Human Resources should establish a TAC Board to post the availability of interested employees and open positions. The inter-departmental assignment programs should also be expanded across the government and promoted extensively.
- The training data generated by the automated Training Information Management systems should show breakdowns by gender and level to monitor training program usage.

(iv) Barriers to Women in Non-traditional Occupations

- The voluntary exit interview process should be re-examined with the goal of increasing the response rate. The Organizational Climate Surveys and Upward Feedback Project should be continued.
- A sub-group of NACWI should be charged with developing an Action Plan that focuses on the needs of women in non-traditional occupations.
- The Department's annual dinners and events should continue and be expanded to other locations.

(v) Maximizing Women as a Resource at DOC

- NACWI should be considered an essential component of a Women's Action Plan.
- The national conferences on women's issues were highly regarded by participants and should become institutionalized annual events. Both women and men should be encouraged to participate.
- Employment equity targets should be established and set by managers on a division basis. Also, reporting on employment equity should be linked to reporting on the Plan.
- 4. Communications skills and the attainment of employment equity goals, especially those supporting and promoting women at all levels of the organization, should be visibly recognized and highly valued through such actions as:
 - performance appraisals
 - rewards
 - · awards
 - · profiles of successful women and their achievements
 - · annual women's conferences
 - information sessions and kiosks
 - social events (luncheons, dinners, etc.)
 - special events

5. Implement a comprehensive communications strategy for the Women's Action Plan.

NACWI and its sub-committees should develop methods to communicate the on-going implementation of the Action Plan as well as NACWI's other associated activities through the following:

- A videotape should be produced to illustrate innovative examples of workplace initiatives that support women in the workplace.
- NACWI sub-committees should run mandatory seminars for employees using the videotape, accompanied by a discussion package.
- A handy checklist should be developed, as requested by several managers, to remind both managers and employees of the key elements of the Plan.
- A special Women's Action Plan TAC Board should be set up.
- A NACWI newsletter comprising input from regional and divisional correspondents should be published, in a size suitable for reading while commuting.
- Brown bag lunch sessions should be held with speakers and special events, making use of videos and films.
- 6. Make a link between the Women's Action Plan and the Department's mandate to ensure an appropriate profile for a culture which supports and promotes women.

The Department has demonstrated leadership in telework through such initiatives as the off-site work-centre in Burlington and the telework pilot project in the Heritage Division. The Government Telecommunications Agency (GTA) is playing a lead role in the Public Service Learning and Communication Network which will increase training opportunities to employees through the use of training technologies such as distance education.

- 7. Get beyond hierarchy. Structure the newly organized departments to reduce the levels of hierarchy and make greater use of cross-sector team-building and multi-division projects in order to create more effective and responsive organizations. Women's skills will be critical to these new structures.
- 8. The first task of the newly structured NACWI within the Department of Canadian Heritage should be to formally address the recommendations in this report and to present an approach to addressing them to Strategy Committee for ratification.

To conclude this section, there were two overall recommendations made regarding the Plan. Firstly, the Plan could benefit from a more logical and consistent framework such as that provided by the Checklist on "Best Practices in the Employment of Women" developed by the Consultation Group on Employment Equity for Women, reporting to Treasury Board. Secondly, many people stressed that the term "support staff" should be replaced with "administrative staff" in the Women's Action Plan.



CONCLUSION

The consultation process was extremely effective in mobilizing support for the Women's Action Plan and in further strengthening the web of connections that NACWI was weaving.

The consultation process was extremely effective in mobilizing support for the Women's Action Plan and in further strengthening the web of connections that NACWI was weaving throughout the Department in support of the plan's initiatives. The objective of supporting individual initiatives has proven to be particularly opportune given the division of the department and its absorption into three different structures. The principle of "acting locally" means that virtually all of the commitments made by managers and employees during the consultation process may still be carried out in their own section, regardless of the changed superstructure.

Nevertheless, the full success of a project such as the Women's Action Plan can only be realised if the initiatives are institutionalized and supported by department-wide infrastructures, and if senior management commitment is clearly communicated throughout the Department. Initiatives like the Women's Action Plan could go a long way to eliminating barriers that prevent both women and men from doing their best.

As we carried out this project, we were struck by the sense of an organization struggling with change.

As we carried out this project, we were struck by the sense of an organization struggling with change. Virtually everyone we interviewed felt that the Department was not yet a barrier-free environment and, indeed, had a long way to go. Most people felt, however, that there was movement, however slight, in the right direction. Initiatives such as the Women's Action Plan and the proposed mandatory management training were perceived as very positive steps to that end.

FOOTNOTES

- ¹ The citations in the left margin are drawn from the report and from discussion groups or interviews.
- ² "Beyond Hierarchy" is a chapter title in <u>Liberation Management : Necessary</u> <u>Disorganization for the Nanosecond Nineties</u>, by Tom Peters, 1992.
- These recommendations are more fully developed and expanded upon in the report Beyond Hierarchy: A Report on Women in the Former Department of Communications, August 1993.

