

**NCC 2002-2003 ANNUAL REPORT  
ON THE OPERATION OF THE  
CANADIAN MULTICULTURALISM ACT**

***Name:***

National Capital Commission (NCC)

***Mission:***

The mission of the NCC is to create pride and unity through Canada's Capital Region.

***Mandate:***

The Parliament of Canada created the National Capital Commission through the National Capital Act of 1958. The Act, which was amended in 1988, directs the NCC:

- To prepare plans for and to assist in the development, conservation and improvement of Canada's Capital Region in order that the nature and character of the seat of the Government of Canada may be in accordance with its national significance;
- To organize, sponsor or promote such activities and events in Canada's Capital Region as well as enrich the cultural and social fabric of Canada, taking into account the federal character of Canada, the equality of status of the official languages of Canada and the heritage of the people of Canada; and
- To co-ordinate the policies and programs of the Government of Canada respecting the organization, sponsorship or promotion by departments of the public activities and events related to Canada's Capital Region.

**1. Describe how your policies, programs and practices enhance the ability of individuals and communities of all origins to contribute to the continuing evolution of Canada. Please specify any measures or performance indicators used to assess your performance.**

### ***CULTURAL DIVERSITY ALLIANCE***

On Canadian Multiculturalism Day (June 27, 2003), it was announced that the newly-formed Cultural Diversity Alliance (CDA), represented by the heads of organizations that are part of the Canadian Heritage Portfolio had agreed to develop common initiatives and share expertise, resources and models of good practice, to ensure that these institutions respond to Canada's increasingly diverse society. Building on their commitment and experience, members of the CDA – which includes the National Capital Commission - will work together, sharing expertise, resources and experiences with the goal of achieving full inclusion in employment and professional services. They will also work together on the creation of content and programs and in the development and training of minority creative and business talent in their areas of concern.

### ***SCHOOL AND YOUTH PROGRAMS***

The school and youth programs section of the National Programming Branch granted a research contract concerning cultural diversity in primary and secondary schools across the country, focusing in particular on the tools available for new arrivals. The conclusions of this report, conducted by *Nostbakken and Nostbakken Inc* and submitted in February 2003, are being used to orient decisions on the content of youth programs.

**2. Describe how your policies, programs and practices enhance the understanding of and respect for the diversity of members of Canadian society. Please specify any measures or performance indicators used to assess your performance.**

### ***CORPORATE VALUES***

The employees of the National Capital Commission (NCC) are proud to enrich Canadian society. They realize their national mandate with dignity, integrity and passion. They embrace a spirit of open communication, cooperation and teamwork to foster a common vision, while professing and putting into practice the values of *respect, well-being and commitment*. They value and respect the diversity of their workforce by embracing tolerance and acceptance, and by promoting and recognizing individual and group achievement, expertise and contributions.

### ***EQUITY ENVIRONMENT***

There is an ongoing commitment to incorporate equity and diversity issues into human resources management. A General Orientation Program for all employees, which includes a number of Information Workshops covering a wide variety of topics (including a specific module on diversity and employment equity) is in place. This program is monitored and evaluated on an on-going basis to ensure that all employees achieve a common base of knowledge in an efficient and effective manner.

As part of the General Orientation Program, a session was offered to students working over the summer period at the NCC; this included harassment awareness, health and safety, Employee Assistance Program, employment equity and official languages.

## **DIVERSITY FORUM**

Several employees of the Human Resources Branch participated in the Diversity Forum organized by Canadian Heritage and Parks Canada in October 2002. The presentations and workshops which took place during this 3-day event served to increase their level of awareness of matters regarding employment equity and further reinforced the importance of diversity in the workplace.

## **AWARENESS CAMPAIGN**

An ongoing awareness campaign of matters regarding employment equity and diversity took place through the course of the year, including e-mails on Black History Month (February), International Women's Day (March 8), Aboriginal Awareness Week (May 21-24), Women's History Month (October), and National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women (December 6). In 2003, the NCC marked International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (March 21) with a special event for employees, which included a kiosk and the distribution of information.

## **CAPITAL INFOCENTRE**

The Capital Infocentre welcomes and informs Canadian and foreign visitors to Canada's capital. It is located across from Parliament Hill at 90 Wellington Street. It is intended to help visitors better understand the Hill's symbolic importance and provide visitors with information on a wide range of activities, national and local attractions and other interesting items. Multiculturalism is reflected in our displays (audio available in Italian, German, Japanese, Chinese and Spanish), our theatre presentations (illustrating Canadians of all ethnic origins) and in some of our temporary exhibits (photo exhibit on "the Faces of Winterlude"). Most Infocentre staff members are multilingual (an important hiring criterion) and during the summer we have representation from student staff members who are members of visible minorities.

To meet the needs of its clientele, the Infocentre publishes and distributes multilingual maps of the city (in German, Spanish, Italian, Japanese and Mandarin).

## **CANADA DAY 2002**

The *Cultures Galore* program of past years, in which multicultural dance groups presented stage shows, was replaced by a much more exhaustive program for the 2002 Canada Day celebrations. The Confederation Park site in Ottawa was completely dedicated to special programming focusing on the multicultural communities: *A Cultural Mosaic*. In addition to shows by dance groups and musicians on the park's two stages, several workshops offered insight into other cultures, among them:

- Workshops on the musical instruments of Africa and Australia
- Workshops on Japanese origami
- Workshops on yoga and spiritual awakening
- Workshops on jewellery making and hair braiding in the Afro-Canadian style
- Mehndi art of India
- Concessions with multi-ethnic culinary delights

The following multicultural groups appeared on stage at Confederation Park:

1. Turquoise Turkish Folk Dancers
2. Mexico Lindo
3. Canadian Floor Masters
4. The Jazz Hot Dance Company

5. Svitanok Ukrainian Dance Ensemble
6. Galitcha
7. Odyssey Dance Ensemble – Hellenic Community of Ottawa
8. Enan Egyptian Dancers
9. Venezuelan Folklore Dance Group “Churun Meru”
10. Reggae Cowboys
11. Orchid Ensemble
12. The Georges Sapounidis Group
13. Cheza
14. Success Lion Dance Troupe

### **WINTERLUDE 2003**

The opening ceremonies of the 25<sup>th</sup> Winterlude at the entrance to Major’s Hill Park officially launched the programming of the largest winter festival in North America. The celebration was both official and popular and gave the NCC Chairman, official guests, sponsors and Icehogs (the Winterlude mascots) the opportunity to communicate messages while entertaining the public and the media. A highly colourful show provided an audiovisual retrospective of the last 25 years of Winterlude celebrations. Among the artists in the opening program were the following two groups, both involving artists from the cultural communities:

- The Jazz Hot Dance Company
- Ottawa Rhythmic Gymnastics Club

As in previous years, families from the diplomatic corps were invited to a day designed to help them appreciate the pleasures of a Canadian winter. A guided visit of the various sites, ending with an impromptu breakfast, enabled participants to enjoy many activities planned for the occasion along with performances by two multicultural groups:

- The Thai Dance Troupe of Ottawa
- King David’s Peace Drummers

### **GUIDE-INTERPRETER SERVICES FOR OUR PROGRAMS**

All the guide-interpreters who work in the *Discover the Hill* and *Tulip Legacy* programs speak fluent English and French and interact directly with the public and may also serve a national and international multilingual clientele. These personalized service providers (including the *Infotent* on Parliament Hill) also make an effort to greet the public and bring out the diversity of visitors’ provincial and national origins.

### **RECRUITING OF STUDENTS**

Each year, five different programs of the National Programming Branch recruit some fifty students to provide various services to the public during the summer season. During our recruiting campaign, we pursue the NCC’s commitment to reflecting cultural diversity by presenting images of student employees at work. The candidates are all informed of the NCC policy on employment equity.

### **PARLIAMENT HILL**

Cultural and heritage interpretation often highlights the contributions, achievements and heritage Canadians have gained from Aboriginal peoples and minority communities. The precious contributions of Canadians from all areas and ethnic origins are featured. These achievements are communicated through publications, interpretive panels, guided visits, school programs and more informal custom interpretation activities.

## **INTERPRETIVE PROGRAMS AND PANELS**

Planning and development of our interpretive programs take into account the various needs, expectations and interests of our diverse publics to ensure they are receptive and able to understand what we are trying to communicate. To do this, they must be able to identify with what we are saying. For example, we celebrate the Capital by explaining the broad context of Canada and we are constantly seeking to inform people on the great diversity of the Canadian public.

Interpretive panels along Confederation Boulevard present the roles and contributions of Aboriginals in the Capital Region. Similarly, the Tulip Legacy show in Commissioner's Park demonstrates the longstanding friendship between the peoples of the Netherlands and Canada.

## **CHRISTMAS LIGHTS ACROSS CANADA**

Each year, the lighting ceremony for *Christmas Lights Across Canada* presents messages from the premiers of Canada's 13 provinces and territories in French and English, thus demonstrating the bilingual nature of Canada and providing representation from its various regions. In addition, the ceremony's programming always includes artists who reflect a variety of cultural traditions. Finally, messages throughout the evening relate to harmony and the richness of the various cultures within the Canadian family.

## **COMMEMORATION**

"The Man With Two Hats," a commemoration donated by The Netherlands, which recognizes both the contribution of Canadians to that country in WWII and the "everlasting friendship between Canada and the Netherlands" was installed on May 11, 2002 in Commissioner's Park. Princess Margriet of The Netherlands was in attendance for the unveiling ceremony.

The NCC is currently reviewing its commemoration procedures in an effort to make the Capital even more representative of Canada's diversity and to further facilitate participation by diverse groups in the commemorative process.

## **PUBLIC ART**

"The Iznik Tiles," representing traditional Turkish architecture, were incorporated into a monument and installed in Rideau Falls Park in 2002. The tiles were a gift from the Iznik Foundation and the Turkish Embassy to the NCC and all Canadians.

## **CANADA AND THE WORLD PAVILION**

The Canada and the World Pavilion, which promotes Canadian achievements abroad, ran its second season from May to October 2002.

In the summer of 2002, the Pavilion offered a series of special events that included the gift of the Iznik Tiles by the Turkish Embassy and the opening of the International Peace Garden in recognition of the bonds of friendship between various countries that have received peace gardens through the efforts of the Washington-based International Peace Garden Foundation. The team of guide-interpreters working at the Pavilion speaks fluent French and English and also serves a national and international multilingual clientele.

The main exhibit at the Pavilion celebrates the contributions and achievements of Canadians from all areas and cultural origins.

In April 2002, *Attractions Canada* — a partnership program that promotes cultural and educational activities — awarded the Canada and the World Pavilion its prize for best new attraction in Ontario.

And in May 2002, *Attractions Canada* awarded the Pavilion its prize for the best new attraction in Canada.

### **ADVENTURES IN CITIZENSHIP PROGRAM**

During the month of May, the NCC worked with the Rotary Club on the "Adventures in Citizenship" program. This program, now in its 52<sup>nd</sup> year, brings 200 Canadian young people from different cultures to the Capital to discuss the importance of Canadian citizenship. The participants included new Canadians and individuals from families long established in the country.

### **CELEBRATING CANADA IN THE CAPITAL**

In July 2002, the National Capital Commission organized a competition in schools across the country with a trip to the nation's Capital as the prize. Thirteen families, each representing a province or territory, enjoyed a stay in the Capital on Canada Day. An Internet product entitled « Canada, by Us » and developed by and for young people was then created on the NCC site. It provides pertinent facts about each province and territory.

### **3. Describe how your organization collects statistical data to enable the development of policies, programs and practices that are sensitive and responsive to the multicultural reality of Canada. Please describe any studies undertaken.**

#### **VOLUNTEER CENTRE**

The NCC Volunteer Centre coordinates volunteer initiatives for all of the NCC's public programs that require volunteer participation to successfully take place. In total, for the 2002-2003 period, more than 1,500 volunteer positions were filled by nearly 1,100 different volunteers. Of these 1,100 volunteers, 824 were directly recruited by the Volunteer Centre, with the others coming from service groups. To determine whether the Volunteer Centre is a diversified environment and whether the opportunities for volunteer work available with the NCC are attractive for the cultural communities, we added two optional questions to our registration forms (country of birth and date of arrival in Canada). The data from 824 individuals surveyed account for the following statistics for the 2002-2003 year:

- 146 of the 824 individuals were born in another country (17.7%);
- 66 volunteers arrived in the country within the last 5 years (8.0%);
- 29 volunteers arrived in the country within the last 5 to 10 years (3.5%);
- 20 volunteers arrived in the country within the last 10 to 15 years (2.4%) and
- 31 volunteers arrived in the country more than 15 years ago (3.8%).
  
- 47 different countries were identified as countries of birth; those identified most often were:
  - China (35 individuals)
  - Yugoslavia (8 individuals)
  - Lebanon (7 individuals)
  - India (6 individuals)
  - England (5 individuals)
  - Belgium (5 individuals)
  - Hong Kong (5 individuals)
  - Japan (5 individuals)

Canada Day 2002 was the program that drew the most volunteer participation from the cultural communities with 111 volunteers or 33.3% of the NCC volunteers for Canada Day.

The Volunteer Centre's website presents photos of volunteers from the cultural communities to demonstrate that people of all origins participate in NCC programs as volunteers.

**4. How does your organization make use, as appropriate, of the language skills and cultural understanding of individuals of all origins? Please provide any examples.**

***PROGRAMMING***

The *Cultures Galore* program within the Canada Day programming has become so popular over the years that the NCC devoted an entire site to multiculturalism in 2002. The new program *A Cultural Mosaic*, in addition to presenting stage shows, offers a plethora of workshops and participatory activities developed in conjunction with artists and sub-contractors from the cultural communities.

**5. How does your organization ensure that Canadians of all origins have an equal opportunity to obtain employment and advancement?**

The NCC strives to position itself in the Canadian workforce as an employer of choice. Being a small organization, the NCC needs a broad range of specialized and highly-skilled employees (for example, land-use planners, architects, biologists and recreologists). The present challenges continue to be retaining, developing, inspiring and recognizing employees, along with increasing the rates of representation of designated group members.

***EMPLOYMENT EQUITY PLAN***

The NCC Employment Equity Plan mostly contains actions to foster employment equity, but it also covers some diversity initiatives that are all linked to the Corporate Planning Process which includes as part of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), a Human Resources Management Component that makes equity issues one of its priorities. The plan is such that it would result in reasonable progress toward employment equity, if it were fully implemented.

The Plan outlines the NCC's most critical challenges. These are the hiring and retention of designated group members, as well as training and development activities. The completion of other employment equity and diversity-related initiatives is also essential in order to support the NCC's vision of a working environment that recognizes diversity as a strength for the organization.

NCC managers have a responsibility to encourage the recruitment and full participation of designated group members within their areas of responsibility. As a result, additional emphasis will need to be placed on managerial accountability for the ongoing administration of the Employment Equity Program. This will ensure that the strategic objectives as outlined in the EE Plan are implemented in a timely fashion and that the recruitment, retention and promotion targets are achieved.

***RECRUITMENT***

The NCC posts its external competitions through a variety of networks, including its own website, the Public Service website and a number of designated groups organizations.

In an effort to further make known its commitment to the principles of employment equity and to encourage candidates from the designated groups to apply, the NCC bolstered its statement on all employment opportunity posters to read as follows:

*The National Capital Commission is committed to the principles of Employment Equity and to achieving a workforce which is representative of the diversity of the Canadian population. We strongly encourage candidates to self-identify if they are an Aboriginal person, a member of a visible minority group or a person with a disability.*

A numerical target of striving to appoint one out of every ten new hires with members of visible minorities is being maintained and consideration is being given to strengthen this objective in keeping with the 1 in 5 goal of the Embracing Change Action Plan of the Public Service.

### **STUDENT EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM**

The NCC is committed to augmenting the numbers of students hired from the employment equity designated groups, as this not only serves to increase employees' awareness of employment equity, but it also offers the opportunity to the NCC to recruit qualified students from the designated groups into permanent and term positions upon completion of their studies. The Federal Student Work Experience Program (FSWEP) is beneficial in assisting managers at the NCC to recruit students from the designated groups. This initiative is in keeping with the numerical targets which were established to increase the rate of representation of students from the designated groups.

The NCC offers a variety of programming aimed at our public clientele, especially during the summer months. During our recruiting campaign, we pursue the NCC's commitment to reflecting cultural diversity by presenting images of student employees at work.

**6. Does your institution have a process of reviewing existing policies and programs in light of the multiculturalism policy? If such a process exists, have any adjustments been made to policies or programs in light of that review?**

### **EMPLOYMENT EQUITY POLICY**

As is stated in the Employment Equity Policy, the NCC shall implement employment equity and diversity in a unified and coordinated manner. Furthermore, the NCC shall endeavour to provide quality service to all Canadians by establishing a workforce of qualified employees that reflects the diversity of Canadian society.

Efforts are underway to revise and update the Employment Equity Plan, including consultations which will take place with representatives of employees.

### **STUDENT EMPLOYMENT POLICY**

The student policy was revised and updated, including the reference to provide a framework for the employment of students that encourages the hiring of students in order to develop a pool of candidates, *representative of Canada's diversity*, for future appointments to the NCC.

The NCC facilitates the bridging of students into full-time employment upon completion of their program of studies.

**7. Describe your future priorities and steps to be taken to implement better the Canadian Multiculturalism Act.**

The National Capital Commission will continue its efforts to reflect Canada's cultural and linguistic diversity in its policies, programs, services and activities.

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