

NSERC

INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

ACTION PLAN

17 NOVEMBER 2003

1. Background

a) Context and rationale

This Action Plan follows on the Assessment of NSERC's modern management practices carried out during the winter of 2003. It focuses on five aspects: planning, training, performance evaluations, lateral communications and service improvement. These were selected because: 1) they regroup a large number of the opportunities for improvement that were identified during the Capacity Assessment (CA) and 2) they are consistent with the current priorities and planned activities of NSERC. In addition, a significant proportion of the activities included in this plan will be lead by staff in the Common Administrative Services Directorate (CASD) shared by NSERC and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) and important synergies and economies of effort and resources will thus be achieved for both Councils.

b) Approach, methodology and timeframe for conducting the Capacity Assessment

The Capacity Assessment (CA) for NSERC was carried out by BDO Dunwoody and Associates (BDO) from January to April 2003. The KPMG model was used.

Following an orientation session to introduce all managers to the CA process, the assessment was conducted through individual interviews with all five senior managers of NSERC (the president, 3 vice-presidents and the director general of CASD) and two focus groups in which a total of 16 directors and managers participated. A consensus approach was used to determine the rating for each of the 33 assessment criteria during the focus groups. A draft report was prepared jointly by BDO and NSERC's project director for Integrated Management Practices (IMP) and validated through a session in which about 40% of the EX level managers participated. The final version of the CA was approved by the Management Committee.

A complete description of the approach and methodology used for the CA is included in the CA report.

c) Executive summary of CA observations

See Appendix 1. (www.nserc.ca/pubs/int_man_e.htm).

2. Commitment to an Integrated Agenda for Modern Comptrollership Implementation

a) Vision

As a small organization, NSERC has to be very selective when establishing its priorities and allocating resources to initiatives. Efforts to improve management practices will only be

successful if these are directly relevant to the organization's goals and perceived by employees as clearly facilitating their work and improving their environment.

Over all of NSERC's 25-year history, strategic planning, excellence in program delivery and striving to be an Employer of choice are three important principles that have guided the evolution of the organization.

The Action Plan for implementing modern comptrollership at NSERC must therefore articulate a vision that fits within this context. It must not only lead to better management practices in the five focus areas of the Plan but must directly help the organization while it is being implemented.

The Action Plan covers a timeframe of 3 years; most projects will however be completed by the summer of 2004. The desired outcomes for the five areas of focus are articulated below:

Planning: NSERC's strategic planning, operational planning and resource allocation processes are integrated. Multi-annual plans, which take into account risks and performance results, guide the allocation of both the Grants and Scholarships and the operational budget. NSERC is able to adjust its planning quickly to react to new needs or changes. The impacts of new projects and initiatives are carefully identified and integrated in the planning and resource allocation processes.

Training: Major investments are made in training. Managers have training plans that address their needs in the areas of modern management. All employees have the opportunity to benefit from training activities every year. Training calendars are harmonized with each division's business cycle. Current strengths in shared values and ethics are maintained through mentoring and the training of new employees. Sharing workload and people among teams is used as a tool to cope with intense periods, develop employees and increase employees' knowledge of other areas/divisions/ programs.

Performance Evaluation: Each year, managers prepare work plans that are linked to strategic and business priorities. These work plans are shared across the organization to facilitate communications and the integration of efforts. In many divisions, performance evaluations are conducted using a multi-source feedback process and the evaluation of managers strongly emphasizes achievements in the areas of human resource planning, employee satisfaction, budget management and accountability, client service and risk management.

Lateral Communications: Many mechanisms are in place to facilitate strong links between divisions (and with other Councils and organizations with similar or complementary mandates) and to ensure that knowledge, experience, best practices and lessons learned are continually shared.

Service Improvement: NSERC has identified and implemented a clear plan for service improvement priorities. Information on client satisfaction and client service is continuously monitored.

b) Links to current needs and priorities

Planning: As a small organization, NSERC is always struggling to cope with new priorities and initiatives that have a significant impact on human and financial resources. In June 2003, NSERC's Council approved a new vision proposed by the president. It involves five major new directions that will be implemented through significant corporate-wide projects. The findings of the CA will be taken into account and these new projects will serve as testing/implementation ground for the new planning processes being put in place to address the deficiencies identified (see Appendix 2)

Training: In the last year, as part of its Employer of Choice strategy, and in an effort to address the findings of the employee survey carried out in 2001, significant new resources were allocated to training. A learning team was created within the Human Resources division of CASD. The activities included in this Action Plan represent the first order of business for the new team. They were significantly shaped by the input recently received from staff when the results of the CA were presented.

Performance Evaluations: The integration of the planning and resource allocation processes described above will not be complete unless it also cascades to the work plans that frame the activities of managers each year. In addition, input from staff highlights the need for performance evaluations to be carried out in a consistent manner and with emphasis on a wide range of managerial elements.

Lateral Communications: An important conclusion of the 2001 survey of employees was that internal communications needed improvement. The Executive vice-president of NSERC recently met with employees to assess the impact of various measures implemented to improve communications and address the survey findings. These meetings revealed that while vertical and corporate-wide communications had significantly improved, effective lateral communications (between divisions) were still lacking. The goal of this Action Plan is to identify and establish new mechanisms and vehicles to facilitate communications between the program delivery divisions that share common interests and between these and the corporate divisions (e.g. finance, evaluation and audit, communications) that complement their work.

Service Improvement: NSERC has recently completed a major review of its program delivery processes with the goal of "lightening the load" for its clients and partners. In the short and medium term, important program delivery and client service changes will be introduced as part of the implementation of the Council's E-Business strategy. As well, information on client satisfaction and client service was recently obtained in the context of several projects and initiatives (e.g. formal program evaluations, tracking of inquiries to the on-line helpdesk). These initiatives and the information gathered through them will form the background and framework for the Service Improvement element of this Action Plan.

3. Setting Modern Comptrollership Up for Success

a) Governance Structure

The following figure (Figure 1) shows the organizational structure for Integrated Management Practices/Modern Comptrollership activities at NSERC.

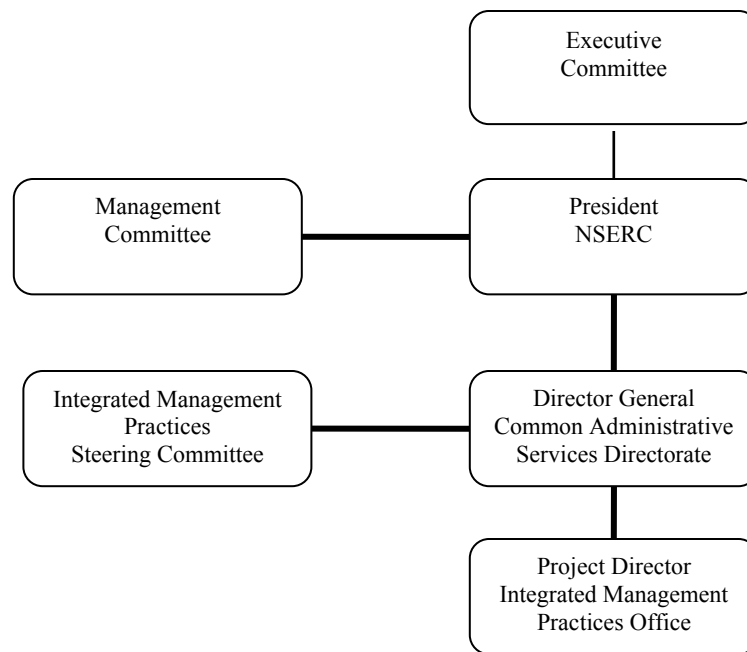


Figure 1

Integrated Management Practices Project (IMP) Office

Modern Comptrollership activities at NSERC are carried out under the banner of “Integrated Management Practices” (IMP). An IMP project office was created in the fall of 2002 to coordinate activities and manage the Modern Comptrollership initiative for NSERC. The IMP office was established within the Common Administrative Services Directorate (CASD) shared by NSERC and SSHRC and reports to the Director General of CASD.

IMP Project Director

The Project Director is a senior manager who is responsible for the IMP/Modern Comptrollership initiative at NSERC and SSHRC. The Project Director works under the guidance of the IMP Steering Committee and reports to the Director General of CASD. The Project Director coordinated the Capacity Assessment phase for both NSERC and SSHRC and is responsible for preparing the IMP/Modern Comptrollership Action Plan of each

Council. The Project Director is seen as visibly accountable for the coordination of all aspects of the initiative.

IMP Steering Committee

The Integrated Management Practices Steering Committee (IMP-SC) is a joint committee of NSERC and SSHRC dealing with the project on the integration of management practices/modern comptrollership. It is composed of managers from both Councils and is the mechanism for providing direction to the IMP Project Management Office and advice to the Management Committees of NSERC and SSHRC, on modern management issues and on the integration of management practices within each Council. The IMP-SC reports to the Management Committee of each Council through the Director General of the Common Administrative Services Directorate (CASD) who chairs the committee. Three of the seven members of the IMP-SC are also members of NSERC's Management Committee.

The IMP-SC reviews the documents/reports that are produced at the various stages of the project before they are brought for approval by the Management Committee and/or appropriate Council committee of each organization or submitted to the Treasury Board Secretariat.

The Committee was established as a joint initiative of NSERC and SSHRC because it became clear early in the project (i.e. during the Capacity Assessment phase) that a significant number of the issues raised were common to both Councils and that many of the projects included in the Action Plans of NSERC and SSHRC would be similar and would be lead by the same staff members from CASD.

Director General (CASD)

The Director General of CASD is a member of the Management Committee. He has overall accountability for the IMP/MC initiative. The DG-CASD is also a member of the SSHRC Management Committee. The Finance, Human Resources, Administration and Information Services Divisions which support both Councils all report to him. He is thus in a unique position to identify the synergies to be realized in the implementation of the IMP/MC initiative and to manage efforts.

President and Management Committee

The President of NSERC chairs the Management Committee. This group receives regular updates on activities related to the IMP/MC initiative and approves all final documents (e.g. the CA report, this Action Plan) before they are submitted to TBS.

The president also chairs the Executive Committee of the Council; this sub-committee of NSERC's governing board oversees matters related to the internal management of NSERC. It is composed of clients, partners and stakeholders of NSERC. The President ensures that progress on IMP/MC is reported to this group and that its input is sought at appropriate times.

The President has taken a special interest in the implementation of integrated management practices at NSERC and welcomes the opportunity to apply the conclusions of the CA and the main thrusts of the Action Plan in the context of a new strategic vision and initiatives/projects being launched in the fall of 2003.

As shown in Appendix 3, all senior managers of NSERC will be directly involved in several aspects of the Action Plan.

b) Priority-setting and risk management

A detailed Action Plan is presented in Appendix 3. It consists of 18 projects, of which 16 fall under the 5 priority areas described in section 2. These projects are the priorities that were distilled from the various improvement opportunities identified in the CA. The first priority, aimed at integrating and strengthening planning processes, acts as the integrating force for, and directly links with, most of the activities planned under the other four priorities. Consistent with NSERC's Employer of Choice Strategy, the Training and Performance Evaluation priorities are strongly focused on NSERC's employees. They aim to improve the work environment and to provide employees with better tools to do their work and with better career development opportunities. Activities planned under the priority on Lateral Communications will serve as a tool to further integrate planning processes and may also have important impacts on the work environment. Finally, the priority on service improvement is two-pronged: it aims to improve services to external clients as well as the internal management of corporate services. Figure 2 illustrates the links between the 5 priority areas in the Action Plan.

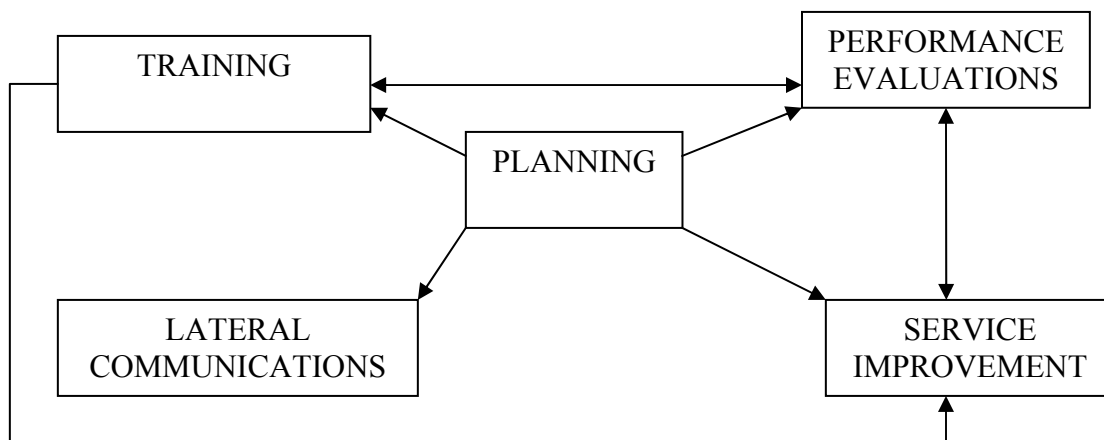


Figure 2

Planning: While NSERC has strong strategic planning and resource allocation processes for both the Grants and Scholarships budget and the operational budget, more needs to be done to integrate these two processes and ensure a strong linkage with business planning. NSERC has already experienced the risks and consequences of not carefully planning and integrating priorities: high workload, problems resulting from a lack of coordination, insufficient time and financial resources to achieve objectives. Most often, these have manifested themselves

in the context of significant corporate projects and the creation of new programs. The projects described under the Planning priority of the Action Plan involve few risks as they are mainly based on modifications to current internal management processes. They will have a significant positive impact on risk management at NSERC as all involve reducing the risks associated with making decisions and plans based on incomplete information. Figure 3 illustrates how planning activities will be coordinated and integrated.

Training: The main risk associated with the activities planned under this priority has to do with raising the expectations of employees and managers with respect to training and development and then not being able to meet these expectations because of insufficient time and other resources. This risk will be mitigated by the up-front annual planning of training activities as well as the integration of training into the planning of new initiatives and programs and in the performance evaluation of managers. The risks associated with not implementing the projects under this priority were identified during the CA. They relate directly to NSERC's succession planning and to its ability to attract and retain staff.

Performance Evaluation: There are few risks associated with this priority as the planned activities involve formalizing and improving processes that are already in place or have been initiated. This priority will also have an important impact on risk management, particularly with respect to ensuring that managers are not overstretched and are devoting their efforts to the right priorities. As well, the risks associated with employees' dissatisfaction with potential inconsistencies in the performance appraisal process will be reduced by the measures being undertaken. Staff in each division will be free to decide if they wish to proceed with the implementation of the multi-source feedback process and at what pace.

Lateral Communications: The activities planned under this priority involve few risks as they will mainly involve devising innovative mechanisms and vehicles to improve lateral communications. There are risks that some of these will not work or that their outcome will be disappointing. Care in the selection and design of the initiatives, to ensure that the conditions for success are in place, will help to mitigate these risks. The need to improve lateral communications is a persistent issue at NSERC. The risk associated with not addressing is high and relates to employee satisfaction and motivation.

Service Improvement: This is the priority that presents the most risks because activities are not yet specified and we can anticipate significant difficulties when trying to establish how baseline information will be gathered and how to define and measure service improvement targets, particularly for external clients. Here again, careful planning to set up realistic expectations will be our best tool to mitigate these risks.

Integrated Planning Cycle

February March April June October January

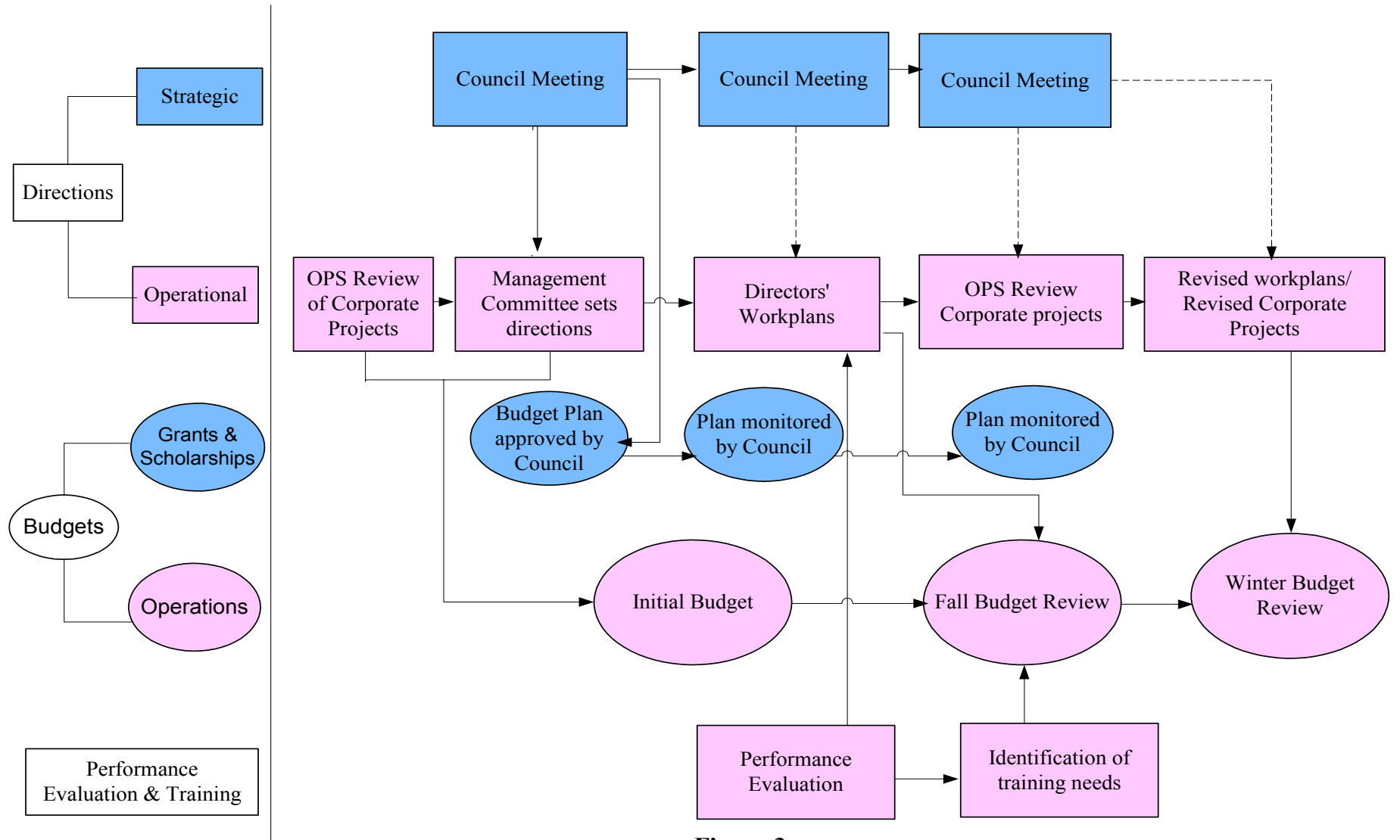


Figure 3

Improvement opportunities not pursued as part of this Action Plan: While a large proportion of the improvement opportunities identified in the CA have been integrated in this Action Plan, some have been left out. The improvement opportunities that are not covered in this Action Plan mainly have to do with various types of systems improvements. In some cases, commercial products to achieve these improvements do not yet exist (e.g. for the full integration of financial and human resources systems). In other cases, the improvement opportunities were not sufficiently detailed. Finally, improvements to systems are part of the continuous improvement of business processes undertaken in each division. In this Plan, we have chosen to focus on specific initiatives that are directly related to the findings of the CA.

c) Communications Strategy

Capacity Assessment Phase

Because of the structure and size of NSERC, and to ensure a corporate wide perspective for the self-assessment while respecting the assigned budget, the consulting firm that facilitated the CA (BDO Dunwoody and Associates) recommended that only EX level managers participate in the interviews and focus groups. All of them did. Because the CA took place during the most intense period of program delivery, a large proportion of staff below that level would not have been available to participate in any case.

In this initial phase, communications about Modern Comptrollership were limited to EX level managers.

In order to familiarize participants with Modern Comptrollership, a half-day orientation session was conducted by the consultants. The session started with an overview of Modern Comptrollership, followed by a description of the Capacity Assessment process. Following this, a discussion which focused on the interpretation of the MC concepts and CA elements in the context of NSERC's business took place.

A significant proportion of managers participated in the validation phase of the CA and the final report was approved by the Management Committee.

Presentation of CA results and consultations with staff

Normal practices at NSERC are to involve staff at all levels in significant projects that will have an important impact on the work environment. Since staff had not been involved in the CA, it was essential to organize a series of consultation meetings, in the spring of 2003, to ensure that all staff had an opportunity to learn about the results of the CA and to have input in the identification of priorities for the Action Plan. Meetings were organized with the following groups:

- OPS (the Operations Committee, which comprises all of the directors and a large proportion of the (EX minus 1) managers who report directly to the members of the Management Committee);

- Management Forum (a monthly discussion group involving all EX and EX minus 1 employees);
- CASD Forum (a bimonthly discussion group involving all CASD managers)
- SRAC (the Staff Relations Advisory Committee, which includes elected representatives from all the major employee classification groups).

There was also a session open to all employees which was attended by about 20 people.

The meetings started with a brief introduction on Modern Comptrollership. The CA results were then presented, followed by an open discussion. A list of all the opportunities for improvement identified in the CA was circulated to participants and feedback was tallied in order to obtain an organization-wide poll on the priority elements for the Action Plan.

The meetings provided an opportunity to validate the results of the Capacity Assessment (i.e. did we get it right?), to discuss the areas that employees felt were the most important to focus on in the Action Plan and to discuss specific suggestions and options to address the improvement priorities.

The various groups consulted confirmed the results and conclusions of the Capacity Assessment. Although the composition of these groups is quite varied, a high level of consensus emerged with respect to priorities for improvement.

Setting of priorities

In late June, based on the members' own assessment and the input from the meetings with staff, the IMP Steering Committee decided that the Action Plan would focus on the first four priorities discussed in the previous sections i.e.

- Integration of strategic planning and priority setting with business/operational planning and resource allocation;
- Training;
- Performance Evaluation; and
- Lateral Communication.

It was also decided to integrate efforts under the government's Service Improvement Initiative in the IMP Action Plan and therefore a fifth priority on Service Improvement was added.

Internal Methods of Communication

The following steps were taken in order to continuously communicate progress on the Modern Comptrollership initiative to all staff:

- An Intranet site was developed which contains:
 - background information and purpose of modern comptrollership;
 - a list of the committees and individuals directly involved in the project;

- the capacity assessment report and related documents;
- some links to relevant external information;
- methods for employee involvement
- An e-mail to all staff containing a summary of the project and links to Intranet information was circulated.
- An introduction to the project was featured on NSERC's Flash (an internal computer greeting)
- The Action Plan will include several elements in which managers will be directly involved
- The Action Plan will be posted on the Intranet and progress updates will be made.
- If resources allow, follow up meetings will be organized with the staff groups consulted after the Capacity Assessment. Sustainability of effort is an issue for an agency of this size. We are currently exploring how we can keep a sustained effort in IMP coordination and communications once funding for the project office winds down.

4. Accountability for Modern Comptrollership

a) Monitoring and Reporting Mechanisms

Progress on the IMP Action Plan will be mainly monitored by the IMP Steering Committee. Meetings will take place periodically, as needed, to evaluate progress on the various projects and provide direction. Reports to the Management Committee will be made through the chair of the IMP-SC. The IMP-SC is currently scheduled to wind down its activities in March 2004, coinciding with the scheduled closing of the IMP Project Office. The IMP project is however designated as a corporate project and, as such, follows a set monitoring and management regime. This includes progress reports to the Operations Committee three times a year and input into the reviews of the Operations budget which occur in the fall and winter each year.

Externally, a progress report will be presented to the Treasury Board in March 2004 and updates on the progress of the IMP project and descriptions of accomplishments will be reported annually in the Departmental Performance Report. Internally, periodic updates and progress reports will be posted on the Intranet.

b) Accountability Mechanisms

A project lead has been identified for each of the 18 projects in the Action Plan. In some cases, other people have specific responsibilities as well. The responsibilities and accountabilities included in the Action Plan have been integrated into the workplans of the project leads who will thus be accountable for progress. Their performance evaluation will take into account the extent to which they have met milestones and achieved their goals.

Appendix 1	Executive Summary of CA observations
Appendix 2	Putting the IMP Proof in NSERC's Pudding: Applying IMP principles, the Capacity Assessment findings and the IMP Action Plan to the creation of NSERC Regional Offices

Appendix 3 Detailed Action Plan

Appendix 2

Putting the IMP Proof in NSERC'S pudding

Applying IMP principles, the Capacity Assessment findings and the IMP Action Plan to the creation of NSERC Regional Offices

(Note: The notations in brackets refer to the 33 elements of the Capacity Assessment)

Planning

- Integration of this element of NSERC's new vision into business and operational plans and resource allocation (SL 1,4)
- Development of a business plan for the project (SL 4)
- Identification of risks and risk management (RM 9)
- Involvement of specialists (Administration, ISD, HR, Finance, Evaluation) in the planning of the initiatives, the development of the Business Plan and identification of resource requirements (SL 3)
- Multi-year forecasting of the impact on the Grants and Operations Budget (SL 5)
- Prioritization among other new and on-going projects (SL 4)
- Consultations with clients and partners in the identification of the mandate/expectations for regional offices (SL 6,7)

Training

- 6-month Project Officer assignment as developmental opportunity and mechanism for Inter-divisional mobility (MP 11,13)
- Orientation Program for new employees to be available when staff in regional offices are hired (MP 13,14)
- Special plans needed for training and coaching during the first year for each office (SVE 8, MP 13,15, RS 29)

Performance Evaluations

- Performance agreement for project manager (CA 17)
- Implementation of multi-source feedback performance evaluation process for regional teams (MP 12,15)
- Sharing of workplans between regional offices and Ottawa office (MP 13, RS 29)

Communications

- Development of tools to facilitate and ensure good communications between Ottawa office and regional offices (involvement of staff from Ottawa in various aspects of regional offices, integration of role of regional offices into procedures used in Ottawa office, Intranet, regular meetings, etc...) (MP 13, RS 27,29)

Service Improvement

- Integration of role of regional offices into Service Improvement Plan (IPI 22,23)
- Role of regional offices in communication with clients, assessment of client satisfaction and knowledge gathering (SL 7, IPI 22, RS 29)

Appendix 3 – Detailed Action Plan

Major Thrust	Desired Outcome	Links to Capacity Assessment (codes refer to the criteria #s in the CA)	Links to Existing Projects	Actions to Take	Timeline & Resources Required	Lead
Planning <i>SL-1-7</i>	Stronger integration of strategic directions and priorities in business plans, performance agreements and the allocation of resources NSERC reacts more quickly to changes and opportunities in the environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SL-1, SL-4, CA-17 Could be better at identifying corporate priorities, integrating them into business plans and appropriately assigning resources. • SL-4, RM-9, MP-14 Improve the corporate project planning process, in particular, assessing risks, the capacity to carry them out and planning human resources for those projects. • SL-2, SL-3, MP-14, CA-16, CA-18 Continue to improve the upfront assessment of the management implications of, and roles and responsibilities in, new initiatives and programs through the early involvement of functional specialists. • SL-4, SL-5 Improve ability to plan realistically, challenge assumptions and historical resource allocations, use performance information and become more nimble in making changes to programs. • SL-7 Ensure an appropriate balance for the influence of clients and other stakeholders. 	Operations Budget planning and monitoring cycle Report on Plans and Priorities Planning for the E-Business Project Implementation of the new vision approved by Council in June 2003 Management of the suite of Corporate Projects through the Operations Committee Yearly allocation of the Grants and Scholarships budget by Council Reallocations Exercise	Through management retreats or other mechanisms and within the integrating framework of People, Discovery and Innovation and NSERC's new vision, develop clear strategic/business corporate priorities each year. Integrate these with planning and resource allocation activities of the Council. ----- Use these priorities in the development of documents related to the planning of the Operations budget for the upcoming fiscal year and in the preparation of performance agreements/workplans (see below under Performance Evaluation). ----- Develop a framework and process for the selection and monitoring of corporate projects by the OPS Committee. Develop a template for the description of new corporate projects that describes all their management implications and their impact on various divisions.	By March 2004 to be integrated into the 2004-05 planning cycle (.08 FTE based on 2-day annual retreat of mngt committee) ----- By April 2004 for Operations budget and July 2005 for workplans (.18 FTE based on 2 days for each director) ----- By May 2003 for framework and process. (0.10 FTE for working group)	President/ Mngt Committee/ Manager, Policy and Int'l Relations (D. Leclerc), Senior planning analyst (B. Laciak) ----- Manager, Budget planning (M. Leblanc) for development of framework. All executives for implementation ----- Chief – Evaluation (Susan Morris) leading a working group;

Appendix 3 – Detailed Action Plan

Major Thrust	Desired Outcome	Links to Capacity Assessment (codes refer to the criteria #s in the CA)	Links to Existing Projects	Actions to Take	Timeline & Resources Required	Lead
			Planning of the Operations Budget	Integrate this process in the planning and management cycle of the Operations budget. See additional action under Planning-risk management and Performance Evaluation	By November 2003 for first implementation. (0.06 FTE)	all project leads i.e. managers in various divisions (for implementation)
Planning <i>SL-5</i>	The Operations budget is planned and managed with a multi-year horizon (rather than one year at a time)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SL-4 Rolling integrated business plans could be useful. 	Analysis of the Operations Budget/ Business Case in 2002-03	Modify template and call letters associated with the Planning and review cycle of the Operations budget	By October 2003. Multi-year forecasting integrated in the 2003 Fall Budget Review (.03 FTE)	Manager, Budget planning (M. Leblanc)
Planning <i>RM-9</i>	Risk management is fully integrated into planning processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SL-1 There is a need to increase knowledge of risk management and adopt a more informed risk management approach. • RM-9 The organization could strengthen risk management for large corporate projects (e.g. e- business) 	<p>Recent development of a corporate risk profile</p> <p>Management of the suite of Corporate Projects through the Operations Committee</p>	<p>Integrate a discussion/consideration of risks in 1) the development of performance agreements and workplans (link to item below on the development of a template for workplans) and 2) the planning of the Operations budget</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Integrate a discussion of risks in the template for the description of new</p>	<p>By April 2004 for implementation in budget planning</p> <p>By July 2005 for implementation in work plans (0.10 FTE)</p> <p>-----</p> <p>By May 2003 (done within resources for</p>	<p>HR (J.A. Bourdeau) for the workplans; Finance (M. Leblanc) for planning and review of the Ops budget; (Internal Auditor (B. Laciak - acting); all managers for implementation</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Chief – Evaluation</p>

Appendix 3 – Detailed Action Plan

Major Thrust	Desired Outcome	Links to Capacity Assessment (codes refer to the criteria #s in the CA)	Links to Existing Projects	Actions to Take	Timeline & Resources Required	Lead
				corporate projects	working group and preparation of Business Cases noted above)	(Susan Morris) leading a working group
Planning <i>SL-4, CA-19, IPI-20,24</i>	NSERC has a strategic performance management framework. The results of its programs and activities are continuously monitored and used for reporting The use of performance information and the results of evaluations and audits are integrated into planning and decision-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SL-1, IPI-20 Improve integration of performance information with strategic objectives and resource allocation • CA-19 Improve reporting on impacts and outcomes (as opposed to outputs). • IPI-20 The Council could implement more rigorous performance indicators. • RM-9 Develop plan to address audit findings on recorded information, security and business interruption • RS-29 The recorded information system needs to be redesigned and the transition made from paper to electronic format. 	Development of a strategic RMAF Follow ups on recent audits Redesign of NSERC's Information Management System Recent development of NSERC's profile of corporate risks –	Develop RMAFs for each of the three program areas (Research Partnerships Programs, Research Grants, Scholarships and Fellowships Programs) ----- Research Partnerships Programs - Refine requirements for progress and final reports to include performance information and begin data collection ----- Follow up on recent audits (Security, Information Management). In both cases, new integrated strategies are being developed to address the findings. New organizational structure to be in place for Information Management. Implementation of the strategy to take place over next 3 years	By August 2004 for individual frameworks to be completed. By April 2005 for NSERC-wide Framework (.22 FTE) ----- Reports tested by April 2004 Data collection to start by December 2004 (.85FTE) ----- April 2004 – (\$150K over last 2 years for both NSERC and SSHRC, time of staff not evaluated)	All VPs, DGs and Directors of program areas; a Chief (I. Bourgeois) ----- Manager, RPP (A. Alper), VP-RPP(J. Walden) and Chief of evaluation (I. Bourgeois - acting) ----- Director-Admin (R. Quirouette, and IM manager); Internal Audit (B. Laciak - acting)

Appendix 3 – Detailed Action Plan

Major Thrust	Desired Outcome	Links to Capacity Assessment (codes refer to the criteria #s in the CA)	Links to Existing Projects	Actions to Take	Timeline & Resources Required	Lead
			Security/Business continuity and information management were identified as risks in that profile	----- Development of a Security/Business Continuity plan	----- By December 2004 (\$90K over last 2 years for NSERC and SSHRC; .33 FTE + time of Mngt Committee for review + on going resources for maintenance and field tests)	----- Security manager (M. Heyerdahl) Network manager (C. Moore) and Internal Auditor (B. Laciak -acting)

Appendix 3 – Detailed Action Plan

Major thrust	Desired Outcome	Links to Capacity Assessment (codes refer to the criteria #s in the CA)	Links to Existing Projects	Actions to Take	Timeline & Resources Required	Lead
Training <i>MP-11</i>	Managers are committed to their responsibilities and <i>training in modern management</i> (including strategic leadership, risk management, budget management, HR planning, performance management, program evaluation and audit) is an integral part of management development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SL-1,4,5; RM-9, MP-11, IPI-21,24 Include core competencies of Modern Management in the training for all Managers • MP-11 Use the results of the pilot project on skills gap analysis to identify learning needs for current and future Directors (succession planning) 	<p>Definition of core competencies for the EX level</p> <p>Pilot project on skills gap analysis</p>	<p>Validate the draft competency profile for executives, ensure completeness with respect to core modern management competencies and evaluate the assessment tools to identify skill gaps.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Develop a generic management learning framework for executives and potential executives addressing most important core competencies</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Ensure first time supervisors receive appropriate training</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Identify individual learning needs for executives and senior officers immediately below the EX group.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Report on learning activities to employees each year.</p>	<p>March 2004 (.08FTE)</p> <p>-----</p> <p>September 2004 (.06FTE)</p> <p>-----</p> <p>September 2004 (.04FTE)</p> <p>-----</p> <p>March 2005 (.08FTE)</p> <p>-----</p> <p>By June 2004 and yearly (.06 FTE)</p>	<p>Senior advisor HR (J.A. Bourdeau) + VPs/DG</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Senior advisor HR (J.A. Bourdeau) + VPs/DG</p> <p>-----</p> <p>HR (Learning Team)</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Executives and senior officers (EX minus 1)</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Senior advisor HR (J.A. Bourdeau)</p>

Appendix 3 – Detailed Action Plan

<p>Training <i>MP-15</i></p>	<p>All employees have opportunities for training and development.</p> <p><i>The organization fosters a culture of continuous learning and participation. Major investments are made in the development of people</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MP-11, 13 Continue with priority on training (assessment of skills gap, development of learning plans and increased time for training and development) 	<p>Training is an on-going priority; this is part of the workplan for the newly created Learning team.</p> <p>Seminar on training, open to all employees given in spring 2003</p> <p>President and CASD components of orientation program for new employees</p>	<p>Ensure that a formal process to identify group and individual training needs takes place in all divisions at least annually, for example by making this part of formal follow up procedures arising from the annual employee performance appraisal cycle. Training should be included in individual and divisional workplans. Develop process to ensure that training needs not addressed in one fiscal year are planned for the next one (see also link to Performance Evaluations)</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Consolidate individual training needs and identify common activities to optimize use of central learning budget.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Develop a more comprehensive orientation program for new employees</p>	<p>By June 2004 and yearly. Learning Advisors to follow-up with management teams each spring to promote divisional training activities (0.22 FTE)</p> <p>-----</p> <p>By June 2004 and yearly (.04 FTE)</p> <p>-----</p> <p>September 2004 (.08 FTE)</p>	<p>All managers and employees, Human Resources (J.A. Bourdeau)</p> <p>-----</p> <p>VPs/DG/ Directors, HR (J.A. Bourdeau)</p> <p>-----</p> <p>HR (J. A. Bourdeau) + working group composed of staff in all directorates</p>
<p>Training <i>SVE-8</i></p>	<p>Current strengths in the area of Shared values and Ethics are maintained</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SVE-8 Ensure all staff participate in training on values and ethics 	<p>Communication of the new Statement of Values</p> <p>Development of an orientation program for new staff</p>	<p>Communicate the Statement of Values throughout NSERC by various means</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Include values and ethics in the orientation of new employees</p>	<p>By June 2003 (.04 FTE)</p> <p>-----</p> <p>By September 2004 (done within resources for orientation program noted above)</p>	<p>Manager, Communications (M. Martin)</p> <p>-----</p> <p>HR to coordinate (J.A. Bourdeau)</p>

Appendix 3 – Detailed Action Plan

<p>Training</p> <p><i>MP-13, 14, 15</i></p>	<p><i>Sharing workload and people among teams</i> is used as a tool to 1) cope with intense periods, 2) to <i>develop employees</i> especially in areas where corporate expertise is thin, and 3) <i>to increase employees' knowledge</i> of other areas/divisions/programs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● MP-14 Additional sharing amongst teams (individuals and workload) could be investigated. This should be for all levels of staff. It should also take advantage of the fact that CASD employees have knowledge of the practices of both Councils ● RS-29 The Council could explore reciprocal arrangements for staff visits with foreign organizations. 	<p>Formal “time sharing” of staff between RGS and RPP directorates</p> <p>Recent visit by staff member from the UK’s EPSRC</p>	<p>Identify expectations and realistic goals for this initiative and link it to succession planning. Introduce formality into currently ad hoc process.</p> <p>See also other activities under Communications.</p>	<p>Link to Budget Review process and other HR planning opportunities</p>	<p>V-Ps and DG</p>
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Appendix 3 – Detailed Action Plan

Major thrust	Desired Outcome	Links to Capacity Assessment (codes refer to the criteria #s in the CA)	Links to Existing Projects	Actions to Take	Timeline & Resources Required	Lead
Performance Evaluation <i>CA-17</i>	Performance agreements/ workplans are prepared annually for VPs/DG/directors and (EX minus 1) level managers. These are linked to corporate strategic and business priorities and objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CA-17 Performance agreements should be in place for all managers at the beginning of the fiscal year and should be prepared on consistent basis for all. • CA-17 Performance agreements should be linked to strategic priorities and cascaded down from the President to all managers. 	On-going project to modify Performance Evaluation process	<p>Following the budget exercise, develop performance agreements/ workplans for the upcoming year to be discussed and prepared no later than one month following the completion of annual performance evaluations for EX and (EX minus 1) managers. These should include a link between objectives and training.</p> <p>Ensure that this process integrates the corporate strategic and business priorities identified during meetings of Council and Management Committee</p>	July 2005 (.08 FTE)	V-Ps, DG, Directors, (EX minus 1) managers
Performance Evaluation <i>SL-5, MP-12, CA-17</i>	<p>The evaluation of managers includes an important emphasis on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning for HR requirements / training/employment equity/ monitoring workloads/ Employee satisfaction • Budget management and accountability • Monitoring service levels • Risk Mngt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SL-4 Improve planning for human resource requirements • SL-5 Greater emphasis on accountability in budget management could be incorporated into performance evaluation • MP-12 Recognize managers for good management leading to employee satisfaction. • CA-17 The organization should explore linking information on service standards and service level expectations to workplans and performance evaluation 	On-going project to modify Performance Evaluation process	<p>Modify instructions and template for performance evaluations as required to ensure that these elements are specifically addressed and rated as part of the performance evaluation of EX and (EX minus 1) managers.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Ensure that the impact of training and development activities is also noted in Performance Evaluations.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Ensure that collectively, directors and senior management take these aspects into account when deciding performance pay allocations</p>	<p>By April 2004. Implementation during the 2004-05 evaluation cycle (.06 FTE)</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Start in 2004 but full implementation in June 2005 (included in time normally allocated to these activities)</p>	<p>Senior advisor HR – J.A. Bourdeau for framework, all managers for implementation</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Senior Management, Directors</p>

Appendix 3 – Detailed Action Plan

Major thrust	Desired Outcome	Links to Capacity Assessment (codes refer to the criteria #s in the CA)	Links to Existing Projects	Actions to Take	Timeline & Resources Required	Lead
Performance Evaluation <i>MP-13, CA-17</i>	Performance evaluations are conducted using a multi-source feedback process involving the supervisor, colleagues, employees and other third parties such as clients	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CA-17 Revisit the feasibility of conducting MSF evaluations. 	--	<p>Following decision at OPS in spring 2003, devise a mechanism and process for multi-source feedback.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>All divisions to decide if/how they will use multi-source feedback in the next cycle</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Organize workshops to explain the new process to all managers and employees and ensure consistency in the way appraisals are done.</p>	<p>By October 2003 (.16 FTE)</p> <p>-----</p> <p>By December 2003 (No estimate)</p> <p>-----</p> <p>By March 2004 (.04 FTE)</p>	<p>Senior advisor HR (J.A. Bourdeau) /ATIP coordinator (V. Wallwork)</p> <p>-----</p> <p>V-Ps/DG</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Senior advisor HR – J.A. Bourdeau</p>
Performance Evaluation <i>SL-4</i>	Directorate workplans are shared across the organization to facilitate communication and the integration of efforts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CA-17 Consider sharing directorate (VP, DG level) workplans across the organization. 	--	<p>Consider whether and how the workplan of each V-P and DG should be circulated and whether each director's workplan should be circulated as well.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Workplans are discussed at OPS at least annually to identify overlaps, synergies, collaboration opportunities</p>	<p>Fall 2003 (no estimate)</p> <p>-----</p> <p>By September 2005 (.02 FTE)</p>	<p>OPS, V-Ps and DG</p> <p>-----</p> <p>OPS, Management Committee</p>

Appendix 3 – Detailed Action Plan

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Lateral Communications / Knowledge Management <i>MP-13, RS-29</i>	Strong links exist between divisions (and with other Councils) to ensure that <i>knowledge, experience, best practices and lessons learned are continually shared</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SL-2, SL-3, SL-7, MP-13, CA-16, RS-27, RS-29 There is a need for greater communication and sharing of knowledge, experience, best practices and lessons learned across divisions (including between program staff and functional specialists) and with outside organizations. • RS-29 The emerging area of knowledge management is very relevant to NSERC’s business and therefore, NSERC should embrace it. 	Brown Bag Lunch, Management Forum	<p>Organize a brainstorming session to discuss internal communications and create a focus group to follow up on suggested actions.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Prepare and conduct a survey of all staff regarding options to improve internal communications.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>From the results of the survey, prepare an Action Plan to improve internal communications.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Based on material prepared for the Orientation Program for New Employees, develop an “About the Division” module for each division for posting on the Intranet.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Experiment with Intranet discussion forums and other “Communities of Practice” tools to determine how useful and effective they can be for Knowledge Management.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>See additional action under Training</p>	<p>Fall 2003 (.02 FTE)</p> <p>-----</p> <p>By December 2003 (.04 FTE)</p> <p>-----</p> <p>By February 2004 (.04 FTE)</p> <p>-----</p> <p>By September 2004 (.02 FTE)</p> <p>-----</p> <p>By June 2004 (resources not estimated)</p>	<p>Exec V-P (N. Lloyd)</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Exec V-P (N. Lloyd), Communications (C. Boucher)</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Exec V-P (N. Lloyd) with working group</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Coordinator, Data Administration (C. Trites)</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Coordinator, Data Administration (C. Trites)</p>

Appendix 3 – Detailed Action Plan

Major thrust	Desired Outcome	Links to Capacity Assessment (codes refer to the criteria #s in the CA)	Links to Existing Projects	Actions to Take	Timeline & Resources Required	Lead
<p>Service Improvement (external clients)</p> <p><i>SL-7, IPI-22, RS-27</i></p>	<p>NSERC has a clear plan for service improvement priorities for the next 3 years</p> <p>NSERC has an integrated system to regularly collect and track information on client satisfaction, monitor progress toward improvement objectives and measure performance of client service against predefined standards</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IPI-22 Follow up on recommendations in the report commissioned regarding client satisfaction assessment processes. • SL-7 Improve the seamlessness and transparency of program and service delivery; avoid compartmentalizing and better tailor communications to different types of clients. • MP-13, IPI-20, IPI-22 Improve measurement of results for external client services. Create a database to record and maintain consolidated client satisfaction information. Explore if NAMIS and other systems can be used to provide better information on service to clients. 	<p>E-Business initiative</p> <p>Monitoring client satisfaction with On-Line Services</p> <p>Lightening the Load (multi-agency project)</p> <p>Service Improvement Initiative</p>	<p>Continue to progress on E-Business initiative with NSERC specific (esubmission of Grant applications, extranet development, web rejuvenation and portal development) and multi-agency (implementation of common cv at NSERC, Financial Data Submission and reconciliation system, Extranet for university administrators) projects</p> <p>Development and implementation of an Integrated Service Support Strategy</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Multi-agency Lightening the Load: Identify actions already taken to lighten the load, by NSERC and in collaboration with other agencies</p> <p>In collaboration with other agencies, agree on joint initiatives to be pursued</p>	<p>Next 3 years (resources TBD)</p> <p>Fall 2004 (resources TBD)</p> <p>-----</p> <p>By January 2004 (.05 FTE)</p> <p>-----</p> <p>By April 2004 (.05 FTE)</p> <p>-----</p>	<p>Director, E-Business (C. Villemure) with working group</p> <p>Director, E-Business (C. Villemure)</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Director, Special projects (E. Boston)</p>
<p>Service Improvement (internal clients)</p> <p><i>CA-17, IPI-23</i></p>	<p>Service standards for internal clients are developed, widely communicated and performance is continuously</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MP-13, IPI-20, IPI-22 Improve measurement of results for internal client services. • CA-17, IPI-23 Create a more formal process for setting service standards, communicating them to staff and clients, and measuring adherence 	<p>Development of Service level agreements in ISD and Translation</p>	<p>Develop service standards/service agreements where they don't yet exist, communicate to staff, monitor adherence and report on results</p>	<p>September 2004 (.04 FTE)</p>	<p>DG of CASD (M. Cavallin) with CASD directors, Corporate Secretary (M. Dupré),</p>

Appendix 3 – Detailed Action Plan

Major thrust	Desired Outcome	Links to Capacity Assessment (codes refer to the criteria #s in the CA)	Links to Existing Projects	Actions to Take	Timeline & Resources Required	Lead
	monitored					Director, Communications (T. Nau)
Service Improvement <i>SL-7, IPI-22</i>	Information on clients and client satisfaction is continually tracked and used to tailor communications intended to non-university clients	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SL- 7 Systems to track information on clients could be improved (e.g. industrial clients). • IPI-22 NSERC could increase its focus on better understanding/selecting information on non-university clients (industry and other government departments). 		Develop service standards and incorporate them in procedures Develop client survey for university researchers Begin data collection on the survey Develop client survey for industrial partners Develop post-project survey	By November 2003 (.10 FTE) By December 2003 (.06 FTE) .By April 2004 (.02 FTE)	Manager, RPP (A. Alper)

Appendix 3 – Detailed Action Plan

Major thrust	Desired Outcome	Links to Capacity Assessment	Links to Existing Projects	Actions to Take	Timeline & Resources Required	Lead
Other – Human Resources <i>MP-12</i> <i>MP-14</i> <i>MP-15</i>	Processes are in place to continuously monitor employee satisfaction Recognition systems are regularly reviewed and improved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MP-12 Continue to monitor and address employee satisfaction issues as they arise • MP-15 Ensure that the new instant awards program is effective and applied consistently throughout the organization. 	Plans for a second Employee Survey Revamping of the Employee Awards and Recognitions Programs	Conduct next Employee Survey ----- Review and revamp the Instant Recognition program. Communicate the changes to all employees Promote the consistent use of this program to all staff	By Spring 2005 (0.20 FTE) ----- By November 2003 (0.08 FTE)	HR (S. Squires + J.A. Bourdeau) ----- Manager, Compensation (J. Windsor)
Other – Roles and Responsibilities <i>RM-10, CA-16</i>	Authority charts exist which define the delegation of authorities for various aspects of the management of financial and non financial resources and issues; managers are aware of them and decisions are made at the appropriate level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RM-10 There is a need to integrate financial and non-financial control frameworks and to increase awareness, use and application of control systems • RS-27 Continue to review and improve processes and procedures 	---	Update HR chart, create charts for authorities related to administration and ISD and ensure that all managers who have delegated authorities are aware of their responsibilities	By December 2003 (.04 FTE)	Director, IMP (D. Ménard) and working group