

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING  
BETWEEN THE CANADIAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION  
AND  
THE TREASURY BOARD OF CANADA, SECRETARIAT**

**INTRODUCTION**

1. The principles of equality, inclusion, diversity and accessibility pervade the legislative and policy landscape of the Government of Canada. The *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, for example, guarantees equality and equal benefit and protection under the law without discrimination, particularly without "...discrimination based on national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability." The *Canadian Human Rights Act* was adopted by Parliament to give effect to the principle that all individuals should be treated equally.
2. In recognition of these important principles, and in support of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and the *Canadian Human Rights Act*, the Canadian Human Rights Commission (the Commission) and the Government of Canada strongly support preventive strategies aimed at eliminating discrimination in the workplace and in the provision of goods and services to the general public.
3. In August 2004 the Commission issued *No Answer: A Review of Government of Canada Telephonic Communication with People who are Deaf, Deafened, Hard of Hearing or Have a Speech Impediment*. *No Answer* includes four recommendations to the Government of Canada aimed at ensuring accessibility to Government of Canada telephonic communications for all Canadians.
4. In a letter dated December 16, 2005, the Secretary of the Treasury Board, responding on behalf of the President, agreed with these recommendations and welcomed the Commission's invitation to support these efforts by formalizing this process through a TBS-CHRC Memorandum of Understanding. He also invited CHRC's participation in the development of TBS' ongoing development of an overarching accessibility strategy. Consequently, consultations between officials of CHRC and TBS are underway to improve the accessibility of Government of Canada services for Canadians and to ensure that the Government of Canada is an accommodating workplace.
5. To that end the CHRC and the Treasury Board have agreed to this MOU to formalize the consultation and collaboration process and to facilitate the development of the accessibility agenda.
6. This Memorandum of Understanding outlines the steps to be taken to implement the recommendations contained in *No Answer* and to ensure accessible Government of Canada services for all Canadians.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

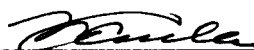
7. The TBS will include, as part of its comprehensive accessibility framework and strategy, a component that addresses the provision of telephonic communication services for people who are Deaf, deafened, hard of hearing or who have a speech impairment, consistent with the recommendations and analysis contained in *No Answer*.

8. The Commission undertakes to consult with TBS, as required, on the development of the strategy and other accessibility issues.

9. The Commission and TBS will convene a meeting with key organizations representing the interests of people who are Deaf, deafened, hard of hearing or have a speech impairment to brief them on steps being taken to implement the recommendations in *No Answer* and to seek their input.

10. Within six months of the signing of this Memorandum, the Secretary of the Treasury Board will write to the Chief Commissioner outlining the commitments, including time frames, for the implementation of a comprehensive strategy and other recommendations in the report.

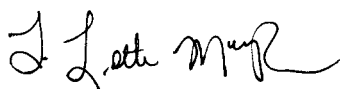
11. Recognizing that the issues identified in *No Answer* are illustrative of broader issues with regard to accessibility of Government of Canada program, services and employment to persons with a variety of disabilities, the Commission and the Treasury Board Secretariat agree to developing an on-going collaborative relationship to address such issues to the extent possible consistent with their statutory duties and responsibilities.



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Mary Gusella  
Chief Commissioner  
Canadian Human Rights Commission

Signed at Ottawa this 30<sup>th</sup> day of January 2006.



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Wayne G. Wouters  
Secretary of the Treasury Board  
Treasury Board of Canada

Signed at Ottawa this <sup>th</sup> day of January 2006.

FEB 24 2006