



Transportation Safety Board of Canada

2002-2003
Estimates

Part III – Report on Plans and Priorities

Canada

Transportation Safety Board of Canada

**2002-2003
Estimates**

A Report on Plans and Priorities

Charles Simpson
Interim Chairperson
Transportation Safety Board of Canada

Stéphane Dion
President
Queen's Privy Council for Canada

The Estimates Documents

Each year, the government prepares Estimates in support of its request to Parliament for authority to spend public monies. This request is formalized through the tabling of appropriation bills in Parliament. The Estimates, which are tabled in the House of Commons by the President of the Treasury Board, consist of three parts:

Part I – The Government Expenditure Plan provides an overview of federal spending and summarizes both the relationship of the key elements of the Main Estimates to the Expenditure Plan (as set out in the Budget).

Part II – The Main Estimates directly support the *Appropriation Act*. The Main Estimates identify the spending authorities (votes) and amounts to be included in subsequent appropriation bills. Parliament will be asked to approve these votes to enable the government to proceed with its spending plans. Parts I and II of the Estimates are tabled concurrently on or before 1 March.

Part III – Departmental Expenditure Plans which is divided into two components:

- (1) **Reports on Plans and Priorities (RPPs)** are individual expenditure plans for each department and agency (excluding Crown corporations). These reports provide increased levels of detail on a business line basis and contain information on objectives, initiatives and planned results, including links to related resource requirements over a three-year period. The RPPs also provide details on human resource requirements, major capital projects, grants and contributions, and net program costs. They are tabled in Parliament by the President of the Treasury Board on behalf of the ministers who preside over the departments and agencies identified in Schedules I, I.1 and II of the *Financial Administration Act*. These documents are tabled in the spring and referred to committees, which then report back to the House of Commons pursuant to Standing Order 81(4).
- (2) **Departmental Performance Reports (DPRs)** are individual department and agency accounts of accomplishments achieved against planned performance expectations as set out in respective RPPs. These Performance Reports, which cover the most recently completed fiscal year, are tabled in Parliament in the fall by the President of the Treasury Board on behalf of the ministers who preside over the departments and agencies identified in Schedules I, I.1 and II of the *Financial Administration Act*.

The Estimates, along with the Minister of Finance's Budget, reflect the government's annual budget planning and resource allocation priorities. In combination with the subsequent reporting of financial results in the Public Accounts and of accomplishments achieved in Departmental Performance Reports, this material helps Parliament hold the government to account for the allocation and management of public funds.

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Section I: Chairperson's Message

Since its creation over eleven years ago, the Transportation Safety Board of Canada (TSB) has established a solid reputation, nationally and internationally, as a technically skilled and professional investigative organization. The TSB is one of only a few multimodal investigation agencies in the world, and it pursues its mandate within a framework of independence which makes it a global leader in that regard.

The TSB is committed to continuously enhancing its value to Canadians and to the world of transportation safety. The federal government's commitment to becoming more citizen-focused, values-driven, results-oriented and dedicated to responsible spending will form the basis for ongoing improvements.

This report portrays an organization fully engaged in the early stages of a major transition. Two essential prerequisites to future success are a strong resource management structure and an acute sense of Canadians' expectations of this agency and views on its current performance. For fiscal year 2002-2003, the focal points for the TSB's activities will be the development of a strategic planning and business management framework that is functional and clearly articulated and a stakeholder review and needs analysis. Achieving these fundamental activities will place considerable demand on an organization that is already challenged by contending with several thousand accidents and incidents every year.

The Transportation Safety Board reflects upon its achievements with great professional satisfaction and looks forward to the future with determination and resolve.

MANAGEMENT REPRESENTATION

Report on Plans and Priorities 2002-2003

I submit, for tabling in Parliament, the 2002-2003 Report on Plans and Priorities (RPP) for the Transportation Safety Board of Canada.

To the best of my knowledge the information in this document:

- Accurately portrays the organization's plans and priorities.
- Is consistent with the reporting principles contained in the *Guide to the Preparation of the 2002-2003 Report on Plans and Priorities*.
- Is comprehensive and accurate.
- Is based on sound underlying departmental information and management systems.

I am satisfied as to the quality assurance processes and procedures used for the RPP production.

The Planning, Reporting and Accountability Structure (PRAS) on which this document is based has been approved by Treasury Board Ministers and is the basis for accountability for the results achieved with the resources and authorities provided.

Executive Director

Date

Section II: Raison d'être

The Transportation Safety Board of Canada (TSB) is an independent agency created in 1990 by an Act of Parliament (*Canadian Transportation Accident Investigation and Safety Board Act*). It operates at arm's length from other government departments and agencies such as Transport Canada, the Canadian Transportation Agency and the National Energy Board to ensure that there are no real or perceived conflicts of interest. Under the legislation, the TSB's only object is the advancement of transportation safety in the federally regulated elements of the marine, rail, pipeline, and air transportation systems. This mandate is fulfilled by conducting independent investigations including, when necessary, public inquiries into transportation occurrences. The purpose of these investigations and inquiries is to make findings as to the causes and contributing factors of the occurrences and to identify safety deficiencies which in turn may result in recommendations designed to improve safety and reduce or eliminate risks to people, to property and to the environment. The TSB has the exclusive authority to make findings as to causes and contributing factors when it investigates a transportation occurrence.

The jurisdiction of the TSB includes all transportation occurrences in or over Canada. The Board may also represent Canadian interests in foreign investigations of transportation accidents involving Canadian registered, licensed, or manufactured ships, railway rolling stock, or aircraft. In addition, the Board carries out some of Canada's obligations related to transportation safety at the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the International Maritime Organization (IMO).

A transportation occurrence is any accident or incident associated with the operation of an aircraft, ship, railway rolling stock, or pipeline. It also includes any hazard that could, in the Board's judgement, induce an accident or incident if left unattended.



Section III: Plans and Priorities

III.1 - Strategic Outcome

The TSB is committed to providing Canadians with advancements in transportation safety through independent, objective and timely investigations and resulting analyses of safety failures in the federally regulated transportation system. The TSB's success will be demonstrated by:

- Increased and justified public confidence in the safety of the transportation system
- Timely implementation of appropriate safety actions
- Increased awareness of safety issues and a strengthened safety culture on the part of government, industry and the public
- Increased level of safety through the reduction of risk
- Effective organizational performance.

III.2 - Priorities

The TSB's last two Departmental Performance Reports stated that the TSB generally achieved its published objectives as defined in earlier Reports on Plans and Priorities and was successful in fulfilling its mandate. Indeed, confidence in the mandate and overall performance of the organization seems to be well established amongst Canadians. However, the reports also identified some areas where the TSB did not fully achieve the objectives. For example, the established service standard for investigation report timeliness was not met. Observations were made to the effect that Canadians did not fully understand the TSB's role in advancing transportation safety. Attempts at establishing a performance measurement framework with solid performance indicators have not yet yielded the desired results.

After a few years of effort yielding mixed results, the TSB senior management determined that a different approach was required. Over the past few months, the TSB undertook a comprehensive strategic planning process with participation of a broad cross-section of departmental employees. An examination of the internal and external environment provided support to this planning process by identifying issues that must be resolved to maximize the potential for achieving the strategic outcome. These issues were used to elaborate the following strategies that provide the basic sense of direction for the activities of the TSB during the 2002 to 2005 planning period (see the TSB web site at www.tsb.gc.ca for the complete strategic plan):

1. Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of TSB products in terms of timeliness and quality.
 - The TSB will ensure that its products are developed in a manner that maximizes their potential to advance transportation safety and meets the needs of clients and the system as a whole.
2. Focus on the identification and communication of safety deficiencies in the marine, rail, pipeline and air transportation systems.
 - The TSB shall strike a balance in its effort and allocation of resources between investigating transportation occurrences for the identification and communication of safety deficiencies and managing effectively in a federal public service context.
3. Improve organizational effectiveness in terms of leadership in the conduct of TSB activities and ensuring that the organization is properly resourced.
 - Create a working environment which is properly managed and resourced and which fosters the continual improvement of the individual and the organization.
4. Optimize the use of alliances, partnerships and linkages to advance our mission.
 - To benefit from the efficiencies and economies accrued by the pooling of resources and expertise, the TSB will broaden and strengthen its strategic relationships with organizations within, and outside of, the federal government.
5. Enhance the national and international reputation of the TSB as an authoritative and independent resource in the area of transportation safety.
 - The TSB will position itself to be viewed with confidence by the public, industry and other departments, and thus enhance its ability to have a positive impact on transportation safety.

From these strategies, a list of essential activities has been derived. Although these activities are critically important to the TSB's longer term performance, they cannot all be addressed within one year. For fiscal year 2002-2003 the priorities for new activity are:

- surveying client needs and adjusting program delivery as a consequence, and
- implementing modern comptrollership.

These priorities are very broad because they are extracted from a work in progress as opposed to the outputs of a fully established formal planning process. The TSB is currently going through a transitional period aimed at renewing its internal planning processes and fully integrating them with the government's annual planning and reporting cycle. Over the coming year internal processes will mature and will result in a more detailed set of priorities for the next planning cycle.

III.3 - Plans

After defining the priorities listed above, the TSB undertook the development of a detailed business plan that will serve as the foundation to guide the activities and resource allocation decisions for the coming year. The complete business plan will be available shortly on the TSB web site at www.tsb.gc.ca.

In the coming year, the focus will be placed on review and analysis activities, as well as the planning and implementation of change in order to better position the organization to fulfill its mandate in a sustainable manner over the long term. This may involve a temporary diminishment or curtailment of certain ongoing activities to free-up resources that can be applied to the achievement of corporate priorities. It is therefore anticipated that the more visible outputs of the TSB, such as investigations, reports and publications will not increase and may, in some instances, decrease. A minimum of two years will be required to plan and implement changes before any significant benefits are realized. Throughout this period of change, the TSB will ensure that a high level of quality is maintained in its work and that proper attention is placed on other important issues such as occupational health and safety, employment equity and official languages.

Surveying Client Needs and Adjusting Program Delivery (linked to strategies 1, 4 and 5)

During the planning period a number of activities will be undertaken to engage TSB stakeholders in a consultative process. This consultation will provide the TSB with a broader assessment of how successfully it is achieving its mandate and how it is viewed from the outside. It will also aim at clearly identifying the stakeholders' needs and expectations. The results of the consultation process will then be used, along with other information, in the review of departmental operational processes and outputs. TSB outputs will be adjusted in order to better respond to the needs of stakeholders. Operational processes relating to the investigation of transportation occurrences, the identification of safety deficiencies, quality assurance and the management of information will also be modified where appropriate. This will include exploring organizational changes, alternate service delivery options, strategic partnerships and staff training requirements. Work will also be undertaken on the Government On-Line initiative in order to improve accessibility to the TSB's transportation occurrence data.

This more systematic approach has been identified as the best option for the TSB. Over the past few years a number of isolated initiatives have been implemented with limited impact. In the eleven-year existence of the TSB there has never been a comprehensive assessment of stakeholder view points vis-a-vis its outputs. Management has relied to a large extent on anecdotal evidence and informal feedback to guide its decisions. It is therefore appropriate to undertake such a process in order to focus the resources and priorities of the organization for the years to come.

Key milestones for the TSB will be: the completion of the stakeholder consultation process and the establishment of a revised list of outputs by late 2002; the review of operational processes and development of an action plan; and the implementation of changes starting in the 2003-2004 fiscal year. Results and the achievement of outcomes will be measured through a structured performance management framework and ongoing stakeholder consultation process starting in 2004-2005.

Resources dedicated to these priorities are expected to total \$400,000 and 3 full-time equivalents of staff involvement over this planning period.

Implementing Modern Comptrollership (linked to strategies 2 and 3)

In 2000, the TSB completed an assessment of its comptrollership capacity. This assessment was recently updated. The assessment report is available on the TSB web site at www.tsb.gc.ca. The assessment identified a number of areas of the management framework in need of improvement in order to achieve a state of modern comptrollership. The management team immediately recognized the importance and the benefits of such improvements and undertook specific initiatives, such as: strategic planning; a review of governance; a review of delegations; and the implementation of a more inclusive approach to management and decision making. A detailed modern comptrollership action plan is currently being developed and will be implemented over the next two years. The implementation of Human Resources modernization initiatives will also take place in parallel.

One of the most significant gaps in the TSB's management framework is the lack of a robust resource management framework. As a first step, a business plan that facilitates short-term (2002-2003) and ongoing resource allocation is currently being finalized. Secondly, a formal planning, budgeting and reporting process that conforms to the government-wide cycle will be implemented in time for the planning of the 2003-2004 fiscal year. This process will integrate all departmental planning and reporting activities (HR, budgets, capital assets, information technology, information management, training, and operational) in a cohesive manner.

The TSB's ability to effect substantial change has been hampered in large part by resource constraints and the absence of a formal resource management framework. The recent commitment to renewal activity will only place more pressures on available resources in the short term. However, implementation of modern comptrollership will provide the required framework to more effectively manage the TSB's limited resources. The elaboration of a long term vision for the organization, combined with the adjustment of its outputs and operational processes, will provide the essential elements required to assess the adequacy of the current resource base to fulfill the TSB's legislated mandate.

The TSB will then be much better positioned to discuss outstanding resource pressures with the Treasury Board Secretariat and find practical solutions to ensure the program's integrity.

Resources dedicated to these priorities are expected to total \$350,000 and 3 full-time equivalents of staff involvement over this planning period.

III.4 - Challenges and Risks

The TSB operates within the context of the very large and complex Canadian transportation system (see Transport Canada Internet site at www.tc.gc.ca for details). This system is very dynamic and in a constant state of change, resulting in particular challenges for the TSB.

Public Interest in Transportation Safety

Transportation safety has always been a matter of public concern in Canada. This is largely due to the essential social and economic role that the transportation system plays in this country. New information demands have evolved in the aftermath of such accidents as the crash of Swissair Flight 111 (SR 111) near Peggy's Cove, Nova Scotia, the April 2001 Via Rail train derailment in Stewiacke, Nova Scotia, the sinking of the "TRUE NORTH II" small passenger vessel near Tobermory, Ontario, and the February 2001 explosion of a gas pipeline compressor station in Quebec's Eastern Townships. News media expect real-time, round-the-clock, on-site coverage. The expectations of the next-of-kin for support from the investigating agencies have also increased. They have an enormous thirst for up-to-date factual information; most wish to follow closely the progress of the investigation. Given the loss they have suffered, great care must be exercised in communicating with them. The TSB also faces increasing demands for occurrence data from regulators, as well as for information through the Access to Information program, especially given the increasing trend toward litigation resulting from transportation accidents. Satisfying these evolving needs within existing resource levels is proving to be a major challenge.

Government Policy and Industry Environment

In recent years, partly as a result of government initiatives and partly in response to commercial imperatives, various changes have occurred that may influence transportation safety. Among the changes are the privatization of Crown corporations, the commercialization of many Transport Canada operations, in all modes, and the increasing consolidation and globalization of companies. The highly competitive environment in all elements of the transportation industry and the demands by the public and shippers for an almost accident-free transportation system are also significant considerations.

Impact of Technology on Transportation

Over the last 10 years, the rate of technological change in the transportation industry has been very rapid. This is largely due to significant advances in computer and electronics technology, the development of new materials, and their application to the transportation industry. These advances affect all modes of transportation, and while many of them enable investigators to perform their work more effectively, they also make the job of investigation and safety analysis increasingly complex and specialized. The increased reliance on automation poses particular problems for analysing failures at the human-machine interface.

Level of Activity

More than 3000 transportation occurrences are reported each year in accordance with federal reporting requirements. The TSB bases its decision to investigate on its Occurrence Classification Policy (see TSB Internet site at www.tsb.gc.ca for details) using a comprehensive risk management process aimed at evaluating the consequences of operational decisions. However, whether or not the TSB decides to investigate, agency resources are required to make that determination and to maintain a national database of transportation accidents and incidents. The prime criterion for deciding to investigate is whether an investigation is likely to lead to a reduction in risk to persons, property or the environment. Due to limited resources, the TSB does not investigate some accidents less likely to result in safety actions, even when they involve fatalities. This has resulted in some adverse public reaction, and the TSB has come under increased public scrutiny. The TSB is also carrying a backlog of investigations in progress. Approximately 170 investigations are currently in progress, of which close to half are more than one year old. The management of this backlog, combined with the sustained uptake of new cases, presents an ongoing challenge due to the limited resources available.

Swissair Flight 111 (SR 111) Accident Investigation

The crash of SR 111 near Peggy's Cove, 2 September 1998, severely tested the resources of the TSB. This is the most complex transportation accident investigation in Canadian history, requiring the mobilization of the majority of the TSB resources thereby creating backlogs in other work. Ongoing efforts to complete this investigation continue to consume considerable TSB time and effort, consuming time and human resources that could otherwise be applied to effecting improvement in some backlogged areas.

Human Resources

A key risk for the TSB in delivering on its priorities is related to its workforce. The TSB has already seen a significant turn-over within its management team and investigation staff. More staff departures are foreseen in the next few years as additional employees and

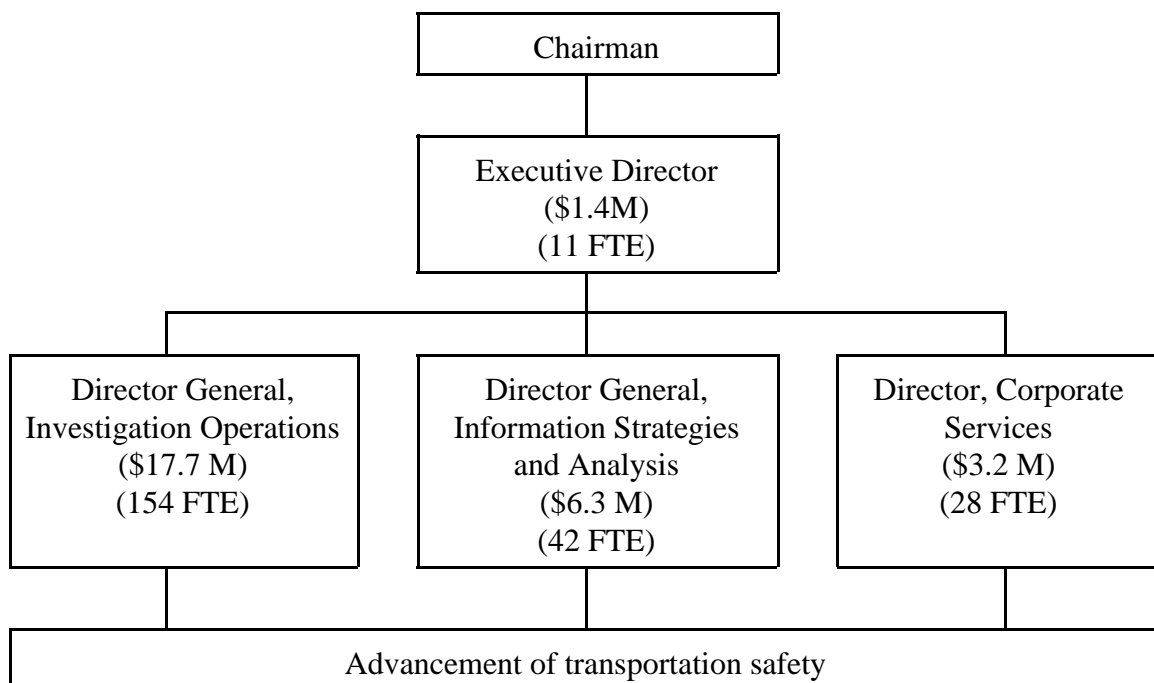
managers retire. This will leave the TSB with a significant loss of corporate memory and of well experienced staff in many facets of the operations. It is therefore imperative that the business plan be implemented very quickly so that the knowledge and expertise of these staff members can be utilized before they leave the TSB. In addition, succession planning measures need to be taken so that service delivery is not hampered by gaps left behind by these staff members.

Management is aware of a level of frustration and impatience amongst employees in light of the growing resource pressures with no apparent relief in sight. If these sentiments are left unaddressed, the TSB could be faced with employee retention and morale problems that could detract attention and resources from the corporate priorities. Over the coming year TSB management will closely monitor this situation and will use the results of the upcoming Public Service employee survey to plan and implement specific measures to improve employee job satisfaction.

Section IV: Organization

The TSB's Planning, Reporting and Accountability Structure identifies a single business line: the advancement of transportation safety. The business line objective is to advance transportation safety by the independent investigation, analysis, study, and public reporting of transportation accidents, incidents or hazardous situations/conditions involving the operation of an aircraft, ship, railway rolling stock, or pipeline in the federally regulated elements of Canada's air, marine, rail and pipeline transportation systems for the purposes of: making findings as to their causes and contributing factors, identifying safety deficiencies and, making safety recommendations designed to eliminate or reduce those transportation safety deficiencies identified.

The Chairman, assisted by the Executive Director and three senior managers, is responsible for all activities associated with this business line.



Departmental Planned Spending

(thousands of dollars)	Forecast Spending 2001-2002*	Planned Spending 2002-2003	Planned Spending 2003-2004	Planned Spending 2004-2005
Budgetary Main Estimates (gross)	24,121	24,766	24,803	24,803
Adjustments **	7,088	1,000	1,000	1,000
Net Planned Spending	31,209	25,766	25,803	25,803
Plus: Cost of services received without charge	3,015	2,824	2,824	2,824
Net Cost of Program	34,224	28,590	28,627	28,627

Full-Time Equivalents	230	235	235	235
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*: Reflects best forecast of total planned spending to the end of the fiscal year and includes incremental costs of \$3,244,000 for the investigation of the Swissair flight 111 accident.

** : Adjustments are to accommodate approvals obtained since the Main Estimates, and include transfers from Treasury Board Votes and Supplementary Estimates.

Net Cost of Program for the Estimates Year

(thousands of dollars)	Total
Net Planned Spending	25,766
<i>Plus: Services Received without Charge</i>	
Accommodation provided by Public Works and Government Services Canada	1,556
Contributions covering employers' share of employees' insurance premiums and expenditures paid by Treasury Board Secretariat	1,221
Workers' compensation coverage provided by Human Resources Development Canada	27
Audit services provided by the Office of the Auditor General	20
	<u>2,824</u>
2002-2003 Net Cost of Program	28,590

Additional Information

Additional information about the Transportation Safety Board of Canada and its activities is available on the TSB's Internet site at www.tsb.gc.ca or by contacting us at:

Transportation Safety Board of Canada

200 Promenade du Portage

4th Floor

Hull, Quebec

K1A 1K8

telephone: (819) 994-3741

facsimile: (819) 997-2239