



Thirteenth Annual Report

to

the Prime Minister

on

the Public Service of Canada

Kevin G. Lynch

Clerk of the Privy Council and
Secretary to the Cabinet

For the year ending March 31, 2006

Canada

Library and Archives Canada Cataloguing in Publication

Canada. Privy Council Office
Thirteenth annual report to the Prime Minister on the public service
of Canada

Annual.

1st (1991/92)-

Electronic serial in PDF format.

Mode of access: World Wide Web.

Issued also in French under title: Treizième rapport annuel au Premier ministre
sur la fonction publique du Canada

Available also in printed form.

ISBN 0-662-42964-8

ISSN 1494-5673

Cat. no. CP1-1/2006E-PDF

1. Civil service reform--Canada--Periodicals. 2. Civil service--Canada--
Personnel management--Periodicals. 3. Public Service 2000 (Canada) --
Periodicals.

I. Title.

JL106

354.71'0005

To obtain print copies:

Phone: (613) 957-5153

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Clerk of the Privy Council and
Secretary to the Cabinet



Greffier du Conseil privé et
Secrétaire du Cabinet

Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0A3

May 31, 2006

Dear Prime Minister:

I am pleased to submit to you the *Thirteenth Annual Report to the Prime Minister on the Public Service of Canada*. The report covers the period April 1, 2005 to March 31, 2006.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kevin G. Lynch".

Kevin G. Lynch

Canada

Introduction

It is with a deep commitment to public service and to the Public Service of Canada that I submit this *Thirteenth Annual Report to the Prime Minister on the Public Service of Canada*. It is both an honour and a great responsibility to have been asked by the Prime Minister to lead the Public Service as the 20th Clerk of the Privy Council. I see it as a vital national institution playing a critical role in the development of Canada, one of the best countries in the world in which to live, work and realize one's hopes and aspirations.

Throughout my career, I have witnessed the dedication to serving Canadians that defines our work as public servants. I have always been impressed by the expertise and resilience of public servants across departments and across our country. No matter how varied our work, we are drawn together by a commitment to upholding the public trust and serving with integrity.

Public service is a unique and rewarding profession, offering many challenges. There are few careers that allow one to directly impact the lives of fellow citizens in almost all aspects of one's work. The Public Service offers this. There are few workplaces that provide such a broad range of experiences. The Public Service offers this as well. We need to attract Canada's best and brightest, and excite them about the opportunities that public service provides.

"...being a public servant is not merely an honourable profession, but also vitally important to the well-being of our country."

Prime Minister Stephen Harper
March 23, 2006

Reflecting on the last year

For the last four years, Alex Himelfarb served as Clerk of the Privy Council and Head of the Public Service. On behalf of all public servants, I wish to thank him for his leadership during this time and, in particular, for his efforts over the last year during which the Public Service made advances on a number of fronts.

With the coming into force of the new Public Service Employment Act on December 31, 2005, the Public Service Modernization Act (PSMA) is now fully implemented. The modernization of the human resources regime sets an important milestone in public sector reform by reinforcing key elements of the public service culture, including accountability, fairness and transparency. The PSMA assigns greater flexibility to departments and agencies in managing people so that the right people are put in the right jobs on a timely basis. It supports more collaborative labour-management relations, providing a foundation for cooperation while generating trust between managers and employees. These changes underscore our fundamental commitment to merit and non-partisanship, and the importance of public service values in managing people.

The PSMA also created the Canada School of Public Service to help foster and develop a culture of learning for all public servants. With a mandate to identify the shared learning, training, leadership and professional development needs of all public servants, the school is beginning to put in place learning programs to help build core knowledge and skills. An orientation course available to all new employees as well as base training for new managers have already been developed and implemented. Much more will come.

The Service Canada initiative is now in place, launching a new approach to serving Canadians. Service Canada puts people at the centre of its mandate, ultimately making it easier for Canadians to obtain the help they need in one place. It will further streamline how government services are provided. Perhaps what is most interesting is its basic premise: government needs to make it easier for Canadians to receive services.

Over the past year, the Public Service also made important changes to strengthen its internal management. The re-established Office of the Comptroller General of Canada is in place and operational, having added a new policy on internal audit in the fall of 2005. Taking a comprehensive, government-wide approach, the policy further strengthens and professionalizes this core management function, increasing its independence within departments, while enhancing its assurance and reporting role. We have also strengthened procurement processes, and increased transparency in reporting to Parliament through changes to the Estimates process.

A time to look ahead

One of the keys to the future of the Public Service is embracing change as a defining characteristic of Canadian society. Our country and the world in which we live are changing faster than ever before. Public servants understand this and are ready to assist the government in addressing the opportunities this offers. Attributes such as flexibility, agility and collaboration are increasingly becoming the hallmarks of successful organizations in this new environment, and we will work to continue to develop these skills.

When asked why they joined the Public Service, public servants offer many answers, but there are common themes. For some it is the breadth of career opportunities. For some it is an avenue to develop professionally and gain experience. For still others it is a workplace that allows them to balance their personal and professional lives. But the most common theme is a shared desire to make a difference in people's lives and in our country's future.

The changes that have been made over the past year, and those that preceded them, provide a foundation on which to continue to strengthen the Public Service. The organization adapts and evolves as any healthy organization should; it is how we renew ourselves. In the same way, the unforeseen challenges and setbacks we experience from time to time provide the opportunity to learn and grow. We do this confident in the belief that we can and will develop new and better ways to meet the needs of Canadians.

I am proud of what the Public Service has accomplished for Canadians over the thirty years that I have been a part of it. These years have taught me that excellence is a quality to be nurtured and developed, not taken for granted. We are rightly judged on our ability to generate ideas and to implement and deliver on the government's decisions. It takes people to make this happen. The Public Service is in a process of renewal as its workforce ages and new public servants join the ranks. For this reason, more than ever before, now is an ideal time to improve our approaches to the recruitment, development and management of our people.

One essential characteristic of a dynamic public service is leadership. There are outstanding leaders across the Public Service—and at all levels of the institution. We have a good base upon which to build, but much more can be done to support leadership. Our recruitment of public servants

should not only be about finding and retaining persons with this quality, but also about creating an open culture in which leadership flourishes. Mentoring, training, developing and celebrating are all ways to promote leadership—and through it, excellence—and we will focus on these areas.

While our organization is diverse, more can be done here as well. Good ideas are nurtured by a diversity of opinion. That diversity is very much a function of who we are as individuals—our experience, culture, language and even where we were born and raised. As with leadership, these factors will be important in the strategies we employ to recruit the next generation of public servants.

The Government has put a strong emphasis on the importance of accountability. The Public Service understands this—both in terms of the Government being accountable for its decisions, and public servants for theirs. We appreciate the importance of accountability in maintaining the public trust, and will focus on the role of accountability in the everyday lives of public servants.

In this context, the Government has also spoken about the need to serve Canadians more efficiently and effectively, recognizing that excessive rules and regulations can create obstacles to achieving these goals. The Public Service knows that principles and policies that enhance effectiveness and reward integrity, but that also assign responsibility and require accountability, are at the heart of a professional, non-partisan public service. Fairness, merit, openness and transparency are words and values that must be at the very core of our Public Service.

Conclusion

Over the next year, we will continue to improve accountability, strengthen our culture of teamwork, promote leadership and make excellence our benchmark. Our progress on renewal will be steady, our actions concrete and coordinated, and our success measured by sustained results.

As we renew ourselves, we know it is the actions of public servants, and in particular of those who lead others, that will foster a healthy, dynamic workplace and a culture of excellence. Our commitment to shared values and excellent public service will help determine how well we perform and, consequently, how effectively we can continue to inspire confidence in the Public Service. As we move forward, we will look at our past with pride, and to our future with hope and expectation.

“Modern economies and societies need a professional, non-partisan public service for society to function properly. One only need look to countries that do not have such a public service to see evidence of this. But that is not all. It only takes a moment’s reflection to see that the Public Service is an important part of the glue that keeps the country together. The point is that you are playing an extremely important role and do not let anyone tell you otherwise.”

Donald Savoie
APEX 2004