

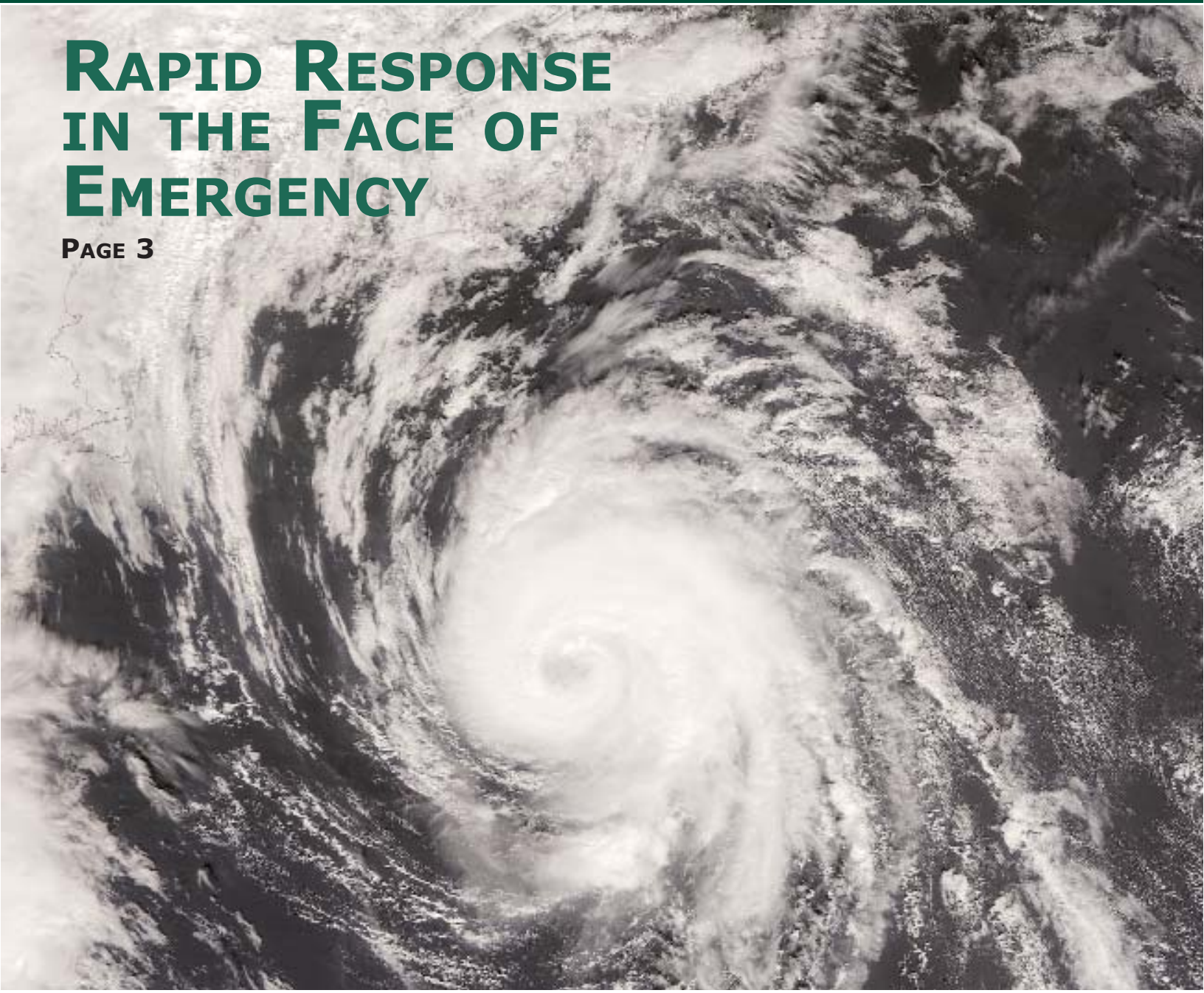
DOING BUSINESS

with Public Works and Government Services Canada

Fall/Winter 2006

RAPID RESPONSE IN THE FACE OF EMERGENCY

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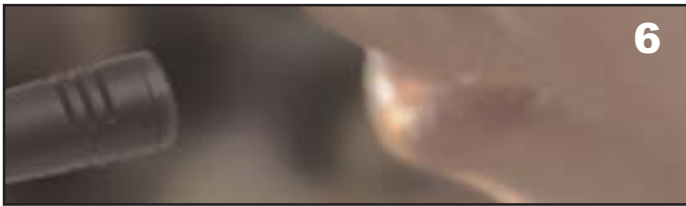
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COVER NASA satellite image of Hurricane Juan approximately 580 km south of Halifax, Nova Scotia, courtesy NASA-GSFC, MODIS Rapid Response

As Public Works and Government Services Canada's (PWGSC's) external newsletter, **Doing Business** supports the Department's role as a common service provider by informing colleague departments, Canadians and all other interested parties about interesting and innovative PWGSC services, activities, projects and initiatives. Written, designed and published quarterly by PWGSC's Communications Sector, it is also available on-line at www.pwgsc.gc.ca/db.

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Doing Business welcomes feedback and suggestions for future stories. Please address your comments to: Joe Boulé; Editor, Doing Business; Communications Sector, PWGSC; 16A1, Portage III; 11 Laurier Street; Gatineau, QC; K1A 0S5. Fax: (819) 956-0573. E-mail questions@pwgsc.gc.ca

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Always ready: PWGSC's Disaster Recovery Preparedness

These days, anticipating and preparing effective responses to disaster scenarios is an essential exercise for federal departments. This is especially true for PWGSC, which administers some of the government's most critical systems, affecting every Canadian directly or indirectly. These systems include the government's payment, payroll, superannuation, and accounting systems, as well as the system that supports the movement of about \$1.3 trillion every year.

"These programs are essential and must be provided without fail through any and all events," says Steven McLaughlin, Director, Payment Products and Services Directorate. "Approximately 60 per cent of Receiver General payments represent the sole, or principal, source of income for the Canadians who receive them." These include everything from Old Age Security and Canada Pension Plan payments to Child Tax Benefits and Employment Insurance.

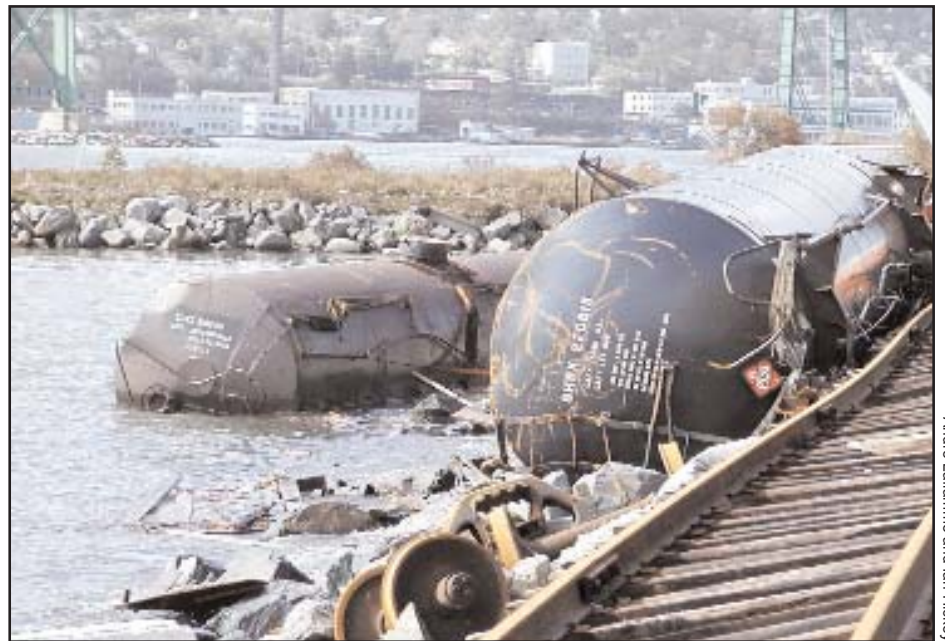
As part of their Business Continuity Plans, Accounting, Banking and Compensation (ABC) and Information Technology Services Branch (ITSB) already had a number of measures in place to protect its operations, including a disaster recovery site. However, in a partnership between the two branches, this was upgraded to a state-of-the-art solution that can respond to an emergency within 12 hours at most, with no loss of data and allows for greater fluidity in getting money to where it is needed.

"As a result of the upgrade to the disaster recovery process, only data in flight (sent at the exact time the disaster occurs) would be lost," says Mr. McLaughlin.

Establishing the disaster recovery site meant twinning the data centre where these systems operate with another ITSB data centre. The upgrade included installing new lines, equipment and processes. "We were able to create the physical infrastructure to allow all information at the main data centre to be automatically sent to the other site," says Dale Heins, Senior

Director, Service Management and Delivery. "That way, all data is current in both locations, should one of them become inoperable."

Putting everything into place involved close collaboration between PWGSC's cheque printing facilities, which are located across Canada, Canada Post, the Bank of Canada and the country's major financial institutions. "We are prepared for an emergency and are able to respond effectively to disasters, ensuring Canadians get the services they need," explains Mr. Heins. **DB**



André Lallamne and Ian Hickey

Overtaken railcars wash into Halifax Harbour, illustrating some of the wreckage after the impact of Hurricane Juan in 2003. PWGSC recently upgraded its own disaster recovery process to ensure it can support the movement of hundreds of millions of dollars in payments to Canadians every year should a natural disaster interrupt its ability to deliver these payments.



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Working together for the homeless

From Gander, Newfoundland and Labrador, to Hay River in the North West Territories, to the Sunshine Coast in British Columbia, community groups supporting the homeless across Canada are benefiting from a Government of Canada initiative that turns over surplus federal real properties for nominal amounts.

The initiative is called the Surplus Federal Real Property for Homelessness Initiative (SFRPHI) and is operated jointly by Human Resources and Social Development Canada (HRSDC), Public Works and Government Services Canada (PWGSC), and the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC).

Under the SFRPHI, government departments and agencies, such as the RCMP and the Department of National Defence, contribute surplus properties that no longer support their operations. They are then made available to community-based organizations for \$1 to support projects helping to alleviate homelessness.

In operation since 1999, the program has distributed 76 properties, worth almost \$15 million. Most properties within the program have been residential buildings, but parcels of land and commercial buildings have also been offered. Potential uses for these properties include affordable and accessible housing as well as soup kitchens, drop-in centres and food banks.

An example of the initiative at work can be found in BC's Sunshine Coast region, where a surplus RCMP building will serve as a home and support centre for the homeless in the district of Sechelt.

The Arrowhead Centre Society has supported homeless adults and those suffering from mental illness since 1953, delivering peer support services, daily drop-in recreational programs, life skills training and hot lunches. Many of its services are volunteer-run and clients often help out as well. They will soon move into the RCMP building to continue providing its housing and social services.

"I think the SFRPHI is a great initiative because many municipalities or charitable organizations do not have a great deal of money to purchase properties to provide shelter and support services to those in need," says Tracy Wan, a Property Agent with PWGSC who worked extensively on the transfer.

homeless for five years, it can lease the property at a nominal cost.

In the case of the Arrowhead Centre Society, the Initiative has decreased its monthly rent from \$1,500 to \$1.

"We are excited about moving into

In operation since 1999, the program has distributed 76 properties, worth almost \$15 million

PWGSC manages a fund from which federal government departments are compensated for lost revenues associated with the contribution of the surplus properties. PWGSC also participates in the review of all proposals and provides expert real property advice.

CMHC assists in identifying sources of funding to help with construction and renovation costs. It also runs numerous programs such as the Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program, the Shelter Enhancement Program and Mortgage Loan Insurance that can help in developing a project.

As long as the recipient organization continues to provide housing for the

our new home as it will provide us with more space to increase programs, a stable location centered in Sechelt and a building in better physical condition," says John Lynch, a spokesperson for the Arrowhead Centre Society Board of Directors.

"We are extremely thrilled that our rent has decreased. That money can be put to better use through programs thanks to this Initiative." **DB**

For more information on the Surplus Federal Real Property Homelessness Initiative visit, homelessness.gc.ca/projects/index_e.asp

Overcoming the language barrier

at the World Urban Forum

With 6,000 delegates from around the world, PWGSC was on-site to make sure everyone understood each other

PWGSC's Translation Bureau provided its interpretation services and expertise to the third World Urban Forum (WUF3) held this past June in Vancouver, B.C.

The World Urban Forum was established by the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT) to examine the critical issues that arise with rapid urbanization. Delegates from over 100 countries met to discuss the economic, socio-cultural and environmental impacts of more people living in cities. It is estimated that 4.2 billion people will be living in cities by 2020, with 1.4 billion of that amount living in poor or unsafe conditions.

Eighty-five conference interpreters supported the event, which included freelance interpreters accredited by the Translation Bureau. Even before the Forum began, translators from the Bureau were busy. Professional staff from the Human Resources Translation Unit teamed up with their colleagues from the Multilingual Translation Division to translate numerous documents for delegates, the media and event organizers into French, English and other languages. According to Rafael Solis, manager of the Multilingual Translation Division, translation for the Forum began as far back as July 2004 when the first promotional documents were received.

Participants from around the world – reflecting a multitude of languages – attended over 160 events and round





PWGSC / photos.com

table discussions on the topic of urbanization. The Translation Bureau was responsible for the interpretation services of the six languages of the United Nations: English, French, Spanish, Russian, Chinese and Arabic.

This isn't the first time that the Bureau has provided service to an event of this magnitude. International meetings such as the Quebec City Summit of the Americas in 2001, Team Canada trade missions and G8 Summits are all part of the Bureau's impressive resume.

"The UN-HABITAT conference in Vancouver in 1976 was one of the first big conferences that we supported," explains Nikita Kiriloff, Senior Interpreter for the Translation Bureau. "It established the Translation Bureau's reputation and showed an international organization that we could provide them with quality interpreters."

Conference interpreters have a number of methods to prepare for an event.

"Ideally, the interpreters will read documents provided in advance by the organizers of the conference, such as speakers' notes, slide presentations and background material. They will also do research on the Web and study documents obtained at the last minute at the conference," says Fabienne Youssef, Senior Interpreter. Interpreters must also become aware

of the topic-specific language of the forum, since some events can use very technical terminology and acronyms that do not directly translate.

According to Mr. Kiriloff, interpreters are left to their own resources to review the English text, find equivalent words, draft terminology and then memorize the new words. Usually these resources include dictionaries, documents from previous conferences and information from larger universal groups (such as the United Nations and the World Health Organization).

Conference interpretation is incredibly fast-paced and the results must be accurate. But it is also rewarding for the workers involved.

"At the end of each 12-hour day, we left both exhausted and elated," says Ms. Youssef of her experience at WUF3.

With another conference successfully completed, Translation Bureau's world-class services continue to set the standard both within government and abroad. **DB**

For more information about the Translation Bureau's translation services and conference interpretation, contact Fabienne Youssef at 613-996-1299 or fabienne.youssef@pwgsc.gc.ca

Language technology centre advances global communication

The Translation Bureau teamed up with the National Research Council and Université du Québec en Outaouais (UQO) earlier this year for the creation of the new Language Technologies Research Centre situated in Gatineau, Quebec. Language technologies are computer-based systems that process information in different languages, whether in verbal or written form.

"With globalization, there is more and more communication with other countries and we all have language barriers," says Donald Barabé, Vice-President of the Translation Bureau. "We need to transcend those barriers for the free flow of information, but at the same time conserve them, because language and culture are identity."

Academics, government specialists, entrepreneurs, technologists and researchers will all collaborate in this unique space, located at UQO's Alexandre-Taché campus. The building will ultimately accommodate 150 language researchers and experts, and is expected to train about 40 research scientists and create 50 positions a year.

The Next Generation of 'Green' Buildings

Part of PWGSC's role as the purchaser and property manager for the Government of Canada is to strive towards environmentally conscious decisions that will have a minimal impact on the environment.

This concept of "Greening Government" is designed to build sustainable communities to improve the health of the environment and Canadians. As one of the largest landlords in the country, PWGSC is working to reduce the "ecological footprint" of the buildings it manages.

Here are the latest examples where use of innovative technologies and materials in the construction or refurbishing of government buildings have helped to minimize the environmental impact:

CD Howe Building | Ottawa, Ontario

When it was determined that the 29-year-old building needed a roof replacement, PWGSC decided this new roof should provide the best long-term value and benefit to both the structure and the environment. As a result, PWGSC introduced its first "green roof" in downtown Ottawa to reduce the amount of energy required to heat and cool the building, lower greenhouse gas and sulphur dioxide emissions, and improve air quality.

An innovative strategy was adopted where shrubs, plants and flowers now cover more than 30 per cent of the rooftop. Green roofs allow pollutants and nutrients from rainwater to be absorbed by the soil, rather than entering storm drainage systems.

"We've created a space that is environmentally friendly, is a

pleasant place for people working in the building to visit and can serve as a model for future federal government roof renovations," PWGSC Minister Michael M Fortier explained at the rooftop's opening ceremony.

RCMP Detachment | Chester, Nova Scotia

This new energy and water efficient RCMP detachment features high-performance windows, in-floor radiant heating, automatic dimming light fixtures, an elevated centre roofline, low-flow plumbing fixtures and environmentally friendly building materials.

"These energy efficient upgrades will pay for themselves in under 5 years; achieving nearly \$250,000 in savings to the RCMP and Canadian taxpayers," says Bill Fioratos, Client Services Director for DND/RCMP/CSC Atlantic Region.

Normand Maurice Building | Montreal, Quebec

Named after the UNESCO-honoured pioneer of environmental awareness and sustainable development, the building features heating and air conditioning systems that use geothermal and solar technology. Natural light and ventilation also reduce energy consumption and improve personal comfort for occupants. Nearly \$2 million of the \$46 million invested in the construction went towards sustainable development components. In the demolition of the old building, 100 per cent of the steel, 82 per cent of the wood and 92 per cent of the brick were saved and reused on the new facility.

The features will result in a nearly 50 per cent savings in energy costs in comparison to conventional buildings, representing an annual energy savings of \$200,000. **DB**

RCMP Detachment, Chester, Nova Scotia

Peer Maintenance for Better Communities

PWGSC's Atlantic Region has teamed up with Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) to create a program aimed at improving the quality of life in Aboriginal communities. The Aboriginal Peer Maintenance Training Program was formed in 1999 in partnership between the Region's Real Property Services and INAC. Its goal is to create maintenance programs in Aboriginal communities and provide ongoing training for the technicians working in these areas.

As is the case for any community infrastructure, continuous maintenance on ventilation, heating, water, waste and electrical systems is an absolute. Not only is it required by law, it creates safer living and working conditions and extends a building's lifespan. In some Aboriginal communities, these responsibilities can sometimes rest on the shoulders of a few technicians.

Because technicians in Aboriginal communities are scarce and resources are limited, the Peer Maintenance Training Program establishes a long process of support so they can do their jobs safely and effectively.

The program is already underway in 15 of 32 Aboriginal communities in the Atlantic Region. The communities range in size from 20 to 3,500 people. In most of these areas, three or four technicians are doing the work of 12 people.

"The program has earned a lot of interest within the communities," says Phillip Nelson, Senior Maintenance Management Specialist for Real Property Atlantic Region. "It is providing formal training and helping participants to become more well-rounded in maintenance practices."

The program provides a checklist of maintenance routines for technicians to implement in their respective communities.



Because technicians in Aboriginal communities are scarce and resources are limited ... responsibilities can sometimes rest on the shoulders of a few technicians

Hands-on training is provided in Summerside, Prince Edward Island, where Aboriginal technicians train in a peer mentoring relationship with PWGSC maintenance technicians. PWGSC employees then go to Aboriginal communities and work with their counterparts on the maintenance routines.

"Success of this program in First Nations communities has a great deal to do with working on-site with the maintenance personnel and being available to act as support on a continuous basis when called upon. Another major element is trust and respect for those you are mentoring and working with," says Brendon Drake, Project Engineer for Real Property, Atlantic Region.

The Peer Maintenance Training Program also held a workshop this past March that provided an overview of general maintenance practices, safety and cost-efficiency in delivering a maintenance program. Thirty-six participants from the Atlantic provinces met in Halifax for the three-day event.

It proved to be an excellent opportunity for technicians to network and share experiences.

"What we have learned here is very valuable to our community. It helps us find out where our resources are of most benefit," says John R. Prosper, Director of Operations for the Paq'tnkek First Nation, Nova Scotia.

In the future, program co-ordinators hope to successfully implement maintenance procedures in the remaining 17 communities. **DB**

For more information, contact Phillip Nelson at 902-496-5337 or phillip.nelson@pwgsc.gc.ca

PWGSC helps reduce energy costs

The Government of Canada will soon save millions in energy costs thanks to a new contract negotiated by PWGSC.

After extensive consultation with government and industry, PWGSC has reached an agreement with Alberta-based ENMAX Energy Corporation that consolidates federal electrical energy requirements for participating departments and agencies in Alberta. It is estimated the agreement will save the government a minimum of \$30.8 million and bring greater predictability to energy costs.

Over the course of 10 years, savings may even reach as high as \$54.8 million, depending on fluctuations of the energy market.

"Through the competitive process and consultations with industry, we found that we could dramatically reduce costs if we could accurately predict our electricity use and consolidate the needs of many departments," says Mark Harrison of PWGSC's Acquisition and Compensation Services. "We collected energy usage data for government buildings and once we had a very predictable consumption rate, suppliers offered us reduced rates for electricity."

Benefits of the new contract include consolidation of electrical energy needs, lower prices, budget predictability and the ability to alter energy loads over a long term.



"The success of this approach will mean that we can apply these consolidation principles to save money on other commodities, such as natural gas," adds Mr. Harrison.

The new agreement also includes a requirement for approximately 15 per cent of the total power supplied to be provided in the form of "Green" electrical energy. This gives departments and agencies the option to purchase increased levels of energy produced in a fashion that is less harmful to the environment. To date, three departments have agreed to purchase more of this type of electrical energy, with PWGSC opting for 85 per cent of its power requirements to come from "green" energy sources.

Under the terms of the agreement which come into effect January 1, 2007, ENMAX will bill each facility directly, allowing departments and agencies to track energy usage. This data also allows for more effective management of energy load requirements and better allocation of money. ENMAX will provide technical and engineering support at additional costs, as requested.

DB

For more information on this initiative, contact Mark Harrison, at 780-497-3539 or via e-mail at mark.harrison@pwgsc.gc.ca; or Lou Hiemer at 780-497-3750 or lou.hiemer@pwgsc.gc.ca

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Racing to Secure a Bargain

Quick procurement allows NRC to snap up an optimal piece of used equipment

The aerodynamic testing facilities at the National Research Council's (NRC) Institute for Aerospace Engineering in Ottawa has become a popular place for racing teams competing in the United States and Canada. Those facilities have become more attractive with the addition of a Ground Effect Simulation System (GESS) purchased at a bargain price by PWGSC.

"We were approached by NRC who had been looking to install a new system for a number of years. We went ahead and did the tenders, but they were a little bit price prohibitive," says Henry Kreker, Manager of the Scientific, Medical and Photographic Division of PWGSC's Acquisitions Branch.

When the opportunity arose to buy a used system that was being sold by an Italian automotive company, the Department had to react quickly. Within two weeks of receiving the request from

NRC, negotiations were completed and a contract was ready.

"NRC approached us to see how it could be done and we put our brains together and figured out a way for it to be done quickly and get the system dismantled and shipped over within the time constraints the Italian firm had for the removal of their system," explains Mr. Kreker.

"The used GESS was purchased for less than 28 per cent of the cost of a new system."

To be installed at NRC's 9 x 9-metre wind tunnel in Ottawa, the GESS is similar to a large conveyor belt that simulates ground movement beneath a test vehicle. As wind is generated in the tunnel, the GESS creates relative ground motion to the wind speed. The added element of a "moving floor" in the wind tunnel means improved accuracy of test data.

The increase in precision data collection makes the facilities even more attractive to racing teams looking for any aerodynamic edge to beat the competition. For many years, teams competing in the popular NASCAR series have been lining up for a chance to use the NRC facilities. The addition of the GESS will ensure the agency can offer its services at a competitive price.

"We were able to get a great price for a system that will enhance NRC's ability to provide value added wind tunnel testing services to their NASCAR clients for many years to come and we did it very quickly," says Mr. Kreker.

DB

For more information on this project, contact Henry Kreker, Manager of the Scientific, Medical and Photographic Division at 819-956-3466 or by e-mail at henry.kreker@pwgsc.gc.ca



Wind tunnels test the aerodynamics of various shapes of vehicles, buildings and other subjects. Pictured above, a transport truck and a race car are being tested at NRC.

National Research Council of Canada

Logistical support to military missions abroad

When Canadians hear news about Afghanistan, most know that Canadian Forces are in the thick of defense and development efforts. But what people may not know is that PWGSC is there as well, helping troops through the Canadian Forces Contractor Augmentation Program (CANCAP).

The Department of National Defence (DND) started CANCAP so that troops engaged in field operations outside Canada can focus on work where military skills are most needed. Logistical support services such as vehicle maintenance and food services to soldiers can then be handled through a private contractor.

PWGSC's Defence Deployed Support Services Division provides dedicated contract management for logistics to DND deployed operations.

The program allows military resources to focus on primary objectives while the contractor adds flexibility and increased support capacity to troops. The contractor delivers services ranging from the management of supplies, health and food services, transportation, power and water supply to road and ground maintenance.

While participating in the ongoing management of the program and providing advice to DND for the planning of contractual requirements, PWGSC also offers on-site representatives who plan, negotiate, contract and monitor the work being carried out by the contractor.

"We are the administration behind a contract that supports Canada's missions abroad," says John Normandin, A/Manager, Defence Deployed Support Services Division. "We're with the soldiers, on the ground ensuring they get the services they need to help them meet their objectives."

Rebuilding countries

Canada's military presence continues to have a prominent role in the stabilization and reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan. In turn, smooth support services to Canadian Forces ultimately have a trickle-down effect on the whole operation. Throughout the mission, PWGSC's role in helping Canadian Forces with logistics means the military can concentrate on its core objectives.

"When they need our assistance, we are there, and we will go through extreme measures to help them," added Mr. Normandin. **DB**

John Normandin (left) and Mark Kelz at Camp Julien in Afghanistan. The team provides on-site training about the CANCAP program at the beginning of each new military rotation of troops.

Recognizing civilian efforts

Two PWGSC employees have been recognized for their contribution to Canadian Forces' missions abroad. John Normandin, A/Manager of Defence Deployed Support Services Division (DDSSD), and Mark Kelz, Supply Team Leader, were awarded the General Service Medal for their direct support to Canadian Forces in the presence of an armed enemy.

Mr. Normandin, who has made eight trips to Afghanistan, finds the work he does to be truly rewarding. "I am able to respond and help our military personnel stay safe and healthy," says Mr. Normandin. "For this mission, CANCAP will provide various logistical support services to the main camp in Kandahar. This will not only improve the quality of life for our soldiers there, but also free them up to focus on their prime mission objectives outside that camp."

Mr. Kelz has made four trips to Afghanistan — living in tents while assisting Canadian troops — for 45 days in total. "I think that working on this contract lets me apply all my past experience both in the military and as a civil servant to support Canadian Forces in the field," says Mr. Kelz.



John Normandin

Background Photo: Francis Auger-Voyer