

2008-09 Public Service Renewal Action Plan

Renewal is about making sure that the federal public service preserves and strengthens its capacity to contribute to Canada's successes through the delivery of excellent public services and policy advice.

- Clerk of the Privy Council, 15th Annual Report to the Prime Minister on the Public Service of Canada, March 31, 2008

Most of what matters to employees happens in their own organizations. *Therefore the Clerk has asked Deputy Heads to share this Action Plan with employees, and to report by the end of August 2008 on how they are engaging their employees in Renewal. As well, each Deputy Head will commit by that date to an action of importance to Renewal tailored to their department or agency.* Both the plans for engagement and the departmental Renewal commitments will be published.

Last year, we set out four public service-wide priority areas for Renewal: **Planning, Recruitment, Employee Development** and **Enabling Infrastructure**, and reported on progress in April 2008. Our 2008-09 Action Plan stays with these four themes, highlighting 12 specific commitments. We will report the results next April.

Planning

The foundation for shaping the public service workforce we need is a clear understanding of the skills and knowledge required to meet departments' business objectives now and into the future.

Last year departments and agencies produced plans that linked human resources plans to business goals. The quality varied, given these organizations' diverse experience with such planning. This year:

1. *Each Deputy Head will update the department's integrated business and human resources plan, including identifying progress against their 2007-08 plan. Each updated plan will include a strategy for the recruitment, development and advancement of visible minorities, as well as Aboriginal people and persons with disabilities, setting out how to achieve representation at all levels that reflects their workforce availability.*
 - *A panel of experienced external and internal executives will review the plans and identify the best practices by November 2008.*

Recruitment

Recruiting and retaining the best possible talent for the public service is indispensable to our long-term capacity to serve Canadians with excellence. We must reflect Canada's diversity in such recruitment.

We need to hire the right graduates and experienced workers to meet our varied work demands, as much as possible through direct recruitment into permanent jobs. Last year, we hired at least 4,000 recent university or college graduates, greatly exceeding our target of 3,000. This year:

2. *By the end of March 2009, Deputy Heads will make offers to at least 4,000 post-secondary graduates for indeterminate positions.*
 - *To accelerate closing the gap in representation of visible minority Canadians in the public service, overall recruitment in this area will exceed workforce availability.*

- *Each new recruit will have an orientation and learning plan to facilitate their effectiveness in the public service, including consideration of measures to strengthen second official language skills early in their career.*
3. *We will strengthen our public service brand, capturing in a compelling way who we are and what we do. Specifically:*
- *During 2008-09, the Canada Public Service Agency (CPSA), in cooperation with the Public Service Commission (PSC) and departments, will pilot a new public service-wide approach to career fairs at no fewer than four universities across Canada. Managers will be equipped to make conditional job offers on the spot for suitable candidates.*
 - *By March 2009, the CPSA and the PSC, in cooperation with departments, will develop a plan for a job-seeker friendly website. By the end of 2009 interested Canadians will be able to apply for any job open to external candidates through this website.*

Employee Development

The development of public servants at all levels as leaders, managers and empowered employees is central to a high performance institution. Careful attention to managing talent and performance is also required.

Last year most departments and agencies ensured that at least 90% of their employees had learning plans. This year:

Learning and Development

4. *Deputy Heads will ensure that by March 2009 discussions have occurred between supervisors and their employees regarding performance, career development and related learning needs. Learning plans will be updated as a result, building on the implementation of last year's plans.*
5. *Deputy Heads will expand talent management to their entire executive cadre by March 2009, building on the ADM Talent Management approach. The CPSA will provide by September 2008 a common framework and tools for Deputy Heads to use.*
6. *We will intensify our support for leadership development at all levels. Specifically:*
- *By January 2009, a second group of at least 25 promising senior leaders will undertake the Advanced Leadership Program;*
 - *As a special developmental opportunity for future leaders, 150 new employees selected from across the public service will prepare by June 2009, under the Privy Council Office's (PCO's) sponsorship, an assessment of the principal challenges facing Canada in 2017 (our country's 150th anniversary), and their implications for the Public Service.*
 - *By March 2009, the CPSA, in collaboration with the CSPS, will strengthen our management development programs. We will ensure that tools such as the Career Assignment Program and the Accelerated Executive Development Program are effective in supporting the timely preparation of the next generation of public service leaders.*

Managing Performance

7. *Building on the new more rigorous system now applied to managing and assessing the performance of Deputy Ministers, Associate Deputy Ministers and other Deputy Heads:*

- *Deputy Heads will institute and apply a comparably rigorous approach in their departments. All executives will have clear, assessable commitments in place by July 2008, and will receive mid-year feedback on progress by the end of November 2008. Specific action plans will be developed and implemented to address all performance issues.*
- *Deputy Heads will implement the revised Performance Management Program for eligible excluded or unrepresented employees by March 2009.*

Enabling Infrastructure

We need to strengthen the tools and systems that support management in the public service – neither our tools nor our systems are efficient, let alone best-in-class.

Last year, we made modest progress on improving our human resources infrastructure, focusing on reducing the wait times for access to second language oral testing, and in developing a tool to transfer employee records rapidly as employees change departments, expanding the use of “fast-track” staffing, and developing generic job descriptions to facilitate classification for key occupational groups. This year:

Governance

8. *Responsibility for human resources management in the public service will be clarified and simplified this year as recommended in March 2008 by the Prime Minister’s Advisory Committee on the Public Service.*

Effectiveness

9. *The Treasury Board Secretariat (TBS) will begin to reduce the “web of rules” constraining the effective delivery of services and advice, as follows:*
 - *TBS will put into effect by October 2008 a new Policy on Transfer Payments that reduces central oversight on high-performing departments in the delivery of grants and contributions; and, will work with the six departments that deliver over 50% of Grants and Contributions spending to reduce by March 2009 their clients’ administrative and reporting burden by at least 10%; and*
 - *By March 2009, TBS will rescind an additional 30 Treasury Board policies (to a total of 86 out of 136 policies to be rescinded).*

Benchmarking

10. *By November 2008, the PCO, in consultation with the Deputy Minister Committee on Public Service Renewal, will set out the key indicators to be used for central tracking of the state of the public service and people management within it.*
11. *CPSA, through Statistics Canada, will administer the fourth Public Service Employee Survey to all employees, with results reported by March 2009.*
 - *In addition, by March 2009 the CPSA, working with Statistics Canada, will finalize development of an on-line survey to measure employee engagement that will be administered annually starting in 2009-10.*
12. *By March 2009, consistent with being primarily responsible for people management in their departments, Deputy Heads will establish departmental service standards for key human resources services, including staffing, classification, and employee pay, and communicate these to their employees.*