



Treasury Board of Canada  
Secrétariat

Secrétariat du Conseil du Trésor  
du Canada

Canada

# Treasury Board Secretariat Public Service Renewal Results

2016

## Message from the Secretary

I am pleased to provide an update on the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat's (TBS's) work in 2016 to advance public service renewal. This report highlights a number of government wide and internal initiatives that TBS has either implemented in the past year or is now carrying out to modernize Canada's public service.



TBS was created 50 years ago this year and is a cornerstone of the modern public service. As a central agency, it has played a significant role in developing, refining, and overseeing the implementation of the Government of Canada's management agenda. In fulfilling this role, TBS has always strived to make government better, to foster excellence in the public service, and to deliver high-quality results for Canadians. Indeed, for half a century many of the best and brightest public service employees have served Canadians by working at TBS.

Our 50th anniversary is the perfect opportunity to reflect on our history, our culture, and our approaches to attracting top notch people, developing our best talent, and honing our business practices. It's also the time to look ahead to the type of organization we want to become and at what we need to do to get us there.



This year, TBS was named one of [Canada's Top 100 Employers](#) by Mediacorp Canada, placing us among Canada's top organizations in both the private and public sectors. We are very proud of this achievement. Our challenge is to maintain employee engagement and momentum in developing a vision for TBS and in achieving it. We will do that by involving leaders and employees at all levels in internal forums and activities that spur us forward. At the same time, we will stay true to our core values of serving Canadians and the government with dedication, integrity, and professionalism. We are looking ahead and building on excellence, and I look forward to continuing to work with TBS employees to achieve great results.



## 01 Respectful Workplaces

### Mental health in the public service

This year, the **Federal Public Service Workplace Mental Health Strategy** was launched. It builds on the work of the Joint Task Force on Mental Health to continue efforts to promote a healthy, respectful and supportive work environment.

The Workplace Wellness section of Canada.ca was created this year to provide tools to help organizations improve wellness and mental health in the workplace, by ensuring the right conditions are in place for employees to do their best. The site has been viewed more than 20,000 times since its launch in June.

TBS is spearheading the **Deputy Head Pledge** to support workplace mental health and to demonstrate a visible and sustained leadership commitment to healthy workplaces.

A GCconnex **Mental Health E-Pledge badge** has been developed for public service employees to pledge their support for mental health in the workplace by adding the badge to their GCconnex avatar. The badge is raising awareness about the federal Mental Health Strategy, and is fostering dialogue on mental health and respectful, supportive work environments.

In partnership with the Canada School of Public Service and the Federal Workplace Well-Being Network, the Office of the Chief Human Resources Officer (OCHRO) within TBS has designed and is now delivering a series of learning events to provide guidance on developing and implementing **mental health action plans**.

Through its ongoing collaboration with the Joint Task Force on Mental Health in the Workplace, TBS, through OCHRO, has created a **Centre of Expertise on Workplace Mental Health** to provide advice, guidance, and resources to departments on measures to improve overall workplace wellness.

### Wellness at TBS

A **Wellness Champion** was appointed to promote a culture that encourages wellness of the mind, body, and workplace.

A **Wellness Action Plan** is being developed to help define what wellness means at TBS and to raise awareness about mental health. The plan will include indicators to evaluate progress and the impact on employees and the workplace.

The Not Myself Today campaign, created by Partners for Mental Health, was launched at TBS to promote workplace wellness and raise awareness about mental health. As part of the launch, clinical psychologist Dr. Jacques Legault led a discussion with employees to help demystify issues relating to mental health.

A **return-to-work coordinator** position is being created to support employees who are returning from long term leave for reasons of illness or incapacity by helping reduce the stress of reintegration, in order to ensure a positive return to the workplace. The coordinator will also provide guidance and tools to respective managers.

### Appreciating our co-workers

TBS created a **Kudos Board** in June 2016. Employees can use it to send a note to a colleague who lent a helping hand in a crunch or to thank someone for a job well done. Kudos messages appear on the TBS intranet site and are having a positive impact on individuals and on workplace well being.

## Embracing diversity

A joint **union-management task force** was formed this fall to examine **diversity and inclusion** in the public service and to identify and study concrete ways to create a more respectful workplace.

## Taking Action on Public Service Employee Survey results

The **Taking Action** document outlines the steps TBS is taking to address results of the 2014 Public Service Employee Survey. **Taking Action** supports effective people management by articulating key management commitments, expanding and modernizing communication and engagement with employees, and fostering sustained [culture change](#). Steps taken this year include the following:

- Launched the **Every Day** commitment, a commitment by TBS executives to all employees to support a respectful, fulfilling, inclusive and productive work environment each and every day.
- Introduced **skip level meetings**, where employees meet directly with their immediate supervisor's manager. Skip level meetings enable employees to hear directly from, and provide input directly to, departmental leaders on priorities and operational issues without the presence of their immediate supervisor. This initiative is fostering stronger communication at all levels by giving employees an opportunity to interact with higher levels of management.

- Created the **TBS Office of the Ombudsman**, an impartial service where employees can express workplace-related concerns confidentially and explore solutions. This service supports TBS's commitment to employee well-being, good governance, high ethical standards, and a culture of continuous improvement.
- Began working toward a **culture change** by identifying and defining the behaviours that align with the six tenets of the culture we aspire to have: trust, collaboration, openness, agility, accountability, and respect. Members of the TBS Transformation and Innovation Working Group, which is made up of employee volunteers, are consulting with employees in various internal forums to further define the behaviours and to identify gaps.



## 02 Recruitment and onboarding

---

### Proudly Serving Canadians

TBS led the creation and launch of the **Proudly Serving Canadians webpage**, which showcases the important work of public servants and provides information on the wide range of career opportunities available in the public service. The webpage also has a Twitter component (#ServCDNs) to help reinvigorate recruitment.

To date, Proudly Serving Canadians has received more than 14,000 visits, with nearly 5,000 visitors from outside the Government of Canada.

### Fostering mobility

TBS is participating in a pilot project to promote and facilitate **interdepartmental micro-missions**, which are short-term, voluntary opportunities for employees to showcase and develop their skills, and to build networks by contributing to different projects while remaining in their work units and substantive positions.

Micro-missions are an informal way for employees to gain experience and for managers to get support for projects that require specific knowledge or skills. They also help foster an agile workplace and workforce.

### Connecting people

TBS designed and launched the **GCconnex onboarding module**. The module helps new users and users less familiar with online tools learn about key features and digital collaboration, and provides an opportunity to connect with colleagues from all government departments.

The **Jobs Marketplace** on GCconnex has been enhanced with the **Career ConneXions Opportunities Platform**, developed in partnership with teams from Health Canada and the National Research Council. This new matching platform gives employees better access to at-level mobility opportunities (such as micro-missions and job swapping) and to development opportunities (such as mentoring and job shadowing), based on their skills. It also lets managers search more efficiently for and access employees who are ready and willing to take on new challenges.

### Simplifying job descriptions

As part of the Classification Program Renewal Initiative, TBS is continuing to work with departments to develop and promote the use of **interdepartmental job descriptions** for work that is the same in different departments. This work will reduce the effort and costs associated with writing unique job descriptions. It will also increase consistency in the evaluation and compensation of identical work across departments.

## Attracting talented Canadians

TBS is working with departments to finalize **Building a Better Canada**. This proposed recruitment initiative is aimed at attracting the next generation of public service employees to work on advancing key government priorities such as climate change and open government. This initiative will improve candidates' hiring experience, speed up the onboarding process, and increase the level of engagement of new recruits.



### Orienting new employees

**TBS Essentials Boot Camp** is a bilingual learning event that is held twice a year for new employees who have been at TBS for less than six months. The event provides an orientation to the organization's structure, its various branches, sectors, and lines of business; key services and resources available to employees; as well as an overview of TBS priorities and government wide initiatives such as Blueprint 2020.

## A Top 100 Employer

TBS was named one of Canada's Top 100 Employers as part of **MediaCorp Canada's 2017 national competition** that compares organizations in a given field to determine which ones offer the most progressive and forward-thinking programs. TBS was selected as an employer that offers an exceptional workplace for its employees, based on eight criteria: physical workplace; work and social atmosphere; health, financial, and family benefits; vacation and time off; employee communications; performance management; training and skills development; and community involvement

## Developing leaders for the future

This year, the Office of the Chief Human Resources Officer, within TBS, in partnership with the Canada School of Public Service designed and launched two new **Executive Leadership Development Programs** to help form a diverse leadership cadre that reflects the people it serves, to strengthen the leadership community across the public service, and to build the leadership competencies needed today and in the future.

## Opportunities for Indigenous students

The Office of the Chief Human Resources Officer, within TBS, launched and was one of 12 departments that participated in the **Indigenous Youth Student Employment Opportunity (IYSEO)**, a government-wide pilot program that recruited 30 Indigenous post-secondary students from across Canada to work during summer 2016.



The program provided mentoring and targeted learning for students and cultural awareness for managers. Eighty-five per cent of the recruits expressed a keen interest in returning next summer, and more than two-thirds have either extended their employment or are expected to continue to work part time, to return next summer, or to be appointed to a full-time position in the future. Lessons learned from the pilot program are being incorporated into plans to make this a permanent program and to expand it across the public service.

The four IYSEO students at TBS indicated that their work experience had been extremely positive. Two continue to work at the Secretariat part time through the Federal Student Work Experience Program.

## Speed networking with executives

Renaissance, the Secretariat's new professionals network, hosted a **speed networking** event in August 2016. At the event, students had an opportunity to interact with senior Secretariat executives in a series of short, timed exchanges and small roundtable discussions. Executives shared stories about their career experiences, insights into professional development, and approaches to maintaining work-life balance.

## Student work experiences

Students working at TBS formed a subcommittee of Renaissance, TBS's network for new professionals, and organized a **focus group** to gather ideas about ways to improve students' work experience in five areas: the hiring process; training; the departmental experience; collaboration and networking; and future opportunities.

The focus group's recommendations centred on more robust training so that students develop required skills more quickly, and have a clearer understanding of hiring processes and mechanisms to match students with employment opportunities after graduation. The recommendations will inform future student initiatives and improve students' overall work experience at TBS.

The Chief Information Officer Branch's **Student Ideation Initiative** aims to empower its summer students to develop innovative ideas for more efficient processes, enhanced communications, and greater collaboration in the branch.

This summer marked the third year of this initiative, and approximately 20 students participated in a series of workshops and manager talks on topics including mapping a career path and improving collaboration in the workplace.

At the end of the summer, participants presented their ideas to a board of branch executives at a "Dragon's Den" style event. From this event, students gained experience in engaging with senior officials; and the branch gained innovative ideas for enhancing the workplace and is assessing the feasibility of implementing some of these proposed ideas.



## Communicating priorities

The Secretary of the Treasury Board hosts regular EX town hall meetings, where all TBS executives can discuss government and TBS priorities. Executives then update their teams so that employees have relevant information and business intelligence.

## Financial officers

This year, TBS made changes to the **Financial Officer Recruitment and Development program** to help ensure that the public service can compete with the private sector for top financial management talent. University recruitment efforts were expanded across Canada; the hiring process was streamlined; and professional development was enhanced through onboarding sessions, job rotations, and support for participants working toward a professional accounting designation.

## Administrative professionals

The AS Community Initiative (ASCI) supports the learning and career development of TBS employees in the AS occupational group through focused engagement and through learning and networking events, such as the annual AS conference. To meet the diverse needs of the AS community, the ASCI and AS Champion undertook to develop an **Administrative Professionals Learning and Development Strategy**. The strategy will aim at providing TBS's administrative professionals with

the right tools to develop their skills to facilitate professional development, to support managers in creating a high performing workforce, and to improve organizational performance by making learning an integrated part of AS work. The strategy is scheduled to launch in April 2017. Financial resources have been earmarked for training to support the career development of TBS employees in the AS and CR occupational groups.

## Talent management

Looking to go beyond the requirements of the Directive on Performance Management, TBS piloted a **Talent Management Advisory Committee** for employees in the EC occupational group—about one quarter of TBS employees. The committee's primary role is to guide, monitor, and provide an integrated approach to identifying, developing, and retaining EC talent in support of key business objectives, both current and projected. The committee focuses on demonstrated and achieved competencies as set out in each employee's specific performance management agreement and in talent management plans. Talent Management Advisory Committees will gradually be created for other occupational groups and will take into account lessons learned from this pilot.

The Directive on Performance Management requires that employees who obtain an overall rating of "surpassed" have a **talent management plan**. At TBS, managers may also offer a talent management plan to employees who receive a rating of either "succeeded +" or "succeeded." Through sector review panel discussions, all TBS employees are identified as being ready for advancement (RFA), ready for movement (RFM) or well placed in their role. A list of RFA and RFM employees TBS wide is then created to facilitate internal mobility and help ensure that resources are aligned with business requirements and employees' skills.



## 03 Other actions to renew the public service

### Reducing internal red tape

This year, the government-wide **Internal Red Tape Reduction initiative** wrapped up its interdepartmental working group series that focused on understanding the scope and nature of various programs, with a view to identifying where process improvements could be made.

In the participating departments, the TBS team leading the initiative looked in depth at low-dollar value procurement, staffing processes, and the internal processes for administration of grants and contributions. They identified a number of areas for improvement and made key recommendations, including streamlining overly elaborate processes and procedures, reducing oversight of low risk profiles, and changing a culture that is resistant to change. Participating departments will be adopting some of the recommendations on a trial basis.

A **playbook** has also been developed to provide guidance and advice to departments as they work to reduce business process complexities and administrative burden. The playbook includes a service design strategy that departments can adopt or adapt to help create efficiencies using innovative approaches.

### Renewing the policy suite

The **renewal of the federal policy suite** is geared at streamlining and simplifying rules, focusing on policy users, improving government performance, and changing the culture to make it more innovative and less risk-averse. Better tools for public service employees in their day-to-day work means better service for Canadians.



This year, TBS created a policy architecture that is consistent and easier to navigate; clarified roles and expectations within departments and across government; launched the new policy suite website (visited on average 15,000 times a day); and developed clear logic models and performance measurement strategies. Work is now underway to reduce the number of policies (from 67 to 14), to simplify the language used in policy instruments, and to update policy training curriculum.

One example of a renewed policy is the new **Policy on Communications and Federal Identity**, which brings Government of Canada communications practices in line with today's digital environment and which supports the goal of making digital media and platforms the primary means for interacting with Canadians. The new policy gives subject-matter experts such as scientists the freedom to speak publicly about their work, which is an essential part of evidence-based decision making. The process to modernize this policy included extensive consultations with public service employees so that they could help shape its direction. Since the new policy took effect, more than 25 information sessions have been conducted with employees to help ensure that they understand how the policy enables more open communications. Procedures on public opinion research have also been updated to make it easier for departments to engage with Canadians when developing policies, initiatives, and programs that affect them.

Internally, TBS has been applying lean principles to its departmental human resources (HR) policy instruments this year, with a view to reducing the reporting burden on TBS HR clients. The exercise to revise or remove specific TBS HR policy instruments is expected to be completed by the end of the fiscal year.

## Revamping GCTools

In April 2016, the suite of **GCTools (GCintranet, GCpedia, and GCconnex)** was fully redesigned. With input from user experience testing and feedback sessions, the GCTools have been streamlined and restyled to improve their look, feel, usability, mobility and accessibility, and to make browsing, collaborating, and searching more user friendly across all of the GCTools. In November 2016, **GCdirectory** (formerly GEDS, the Government Electronic Directory Service) joined the suite of GCTools products.



The use of GCTools continues to increase. By November 2016, GCintranet had more than 369,000 visits from across the Government of Canada. GCconnex had 100,500 registered users (up more than 31 per cent from last year), and GCpedia had 71,000 registered users (up more than 13 per cent from last year). More than half of public service employees are now using the GCTools.

## Using IT strategically

In June 2016, TBS published the Government of Canada **Information Technology (IT) Strategic Plan 2016–20**, which charts a path forward for the public service to manage and use IT as a strategic asset to deliver better programs and services to Canadians.

Online and in-person consultations were held with Canadians over a three-month period. More than 100 comments were received and will be considered in developing the next version of the plan.

## Ensuring informed financial decisions

This year, TBS's Costing Centre of Expertise developed and implemented a strategy to help departments provide better cost information in support of decision making by ministers.

As part of the strategy, TBS has partnered with the International Cost Estimating and Analysis Association to create a **Canadian professional designation in cost estimation**.

A costing community of practice now meets monthly to share information, tools, and ideas to strengthen and advance costing in the federal government.

## Collaborating with external partners

**GCcollab** is being piloted as a collaboration and networking tool for public service employees, and for academics and students of select post secondary institutions. The tool has been designed to create stronger bonds between the federal government and Canadian universities and colleges, through direct collaboration, experimentation, and innovation on policy and program issues.

Launched in September 2016, GCcollab is already supporting discussions about recruitment, government in the 21st century, Indigenous issues, environment and climate change, and global affairs.

GCcollab has a number of anticipated benefits, including increased, open, and transparent engagement with academics and students; identification and recruitment of talent for the public service of the future; crowd sourced research and policy thinking; and increased awareness of Government of Canada priorities on the part of academics.

## Cultivating innovation

TBS is looking to partner with the Canada School of Public Service, Natural Resources Canada, and the Privy Council Office Innovation Hub to develop and implement a tiered **Policy Innovation Training Program** that uses a “train the trainer” approach. Each tier of the program would bridge a gap and increase policy analysts’ capacity to use emergent skills such as complex problem identification, foresight, big data analysis, and design thinking.

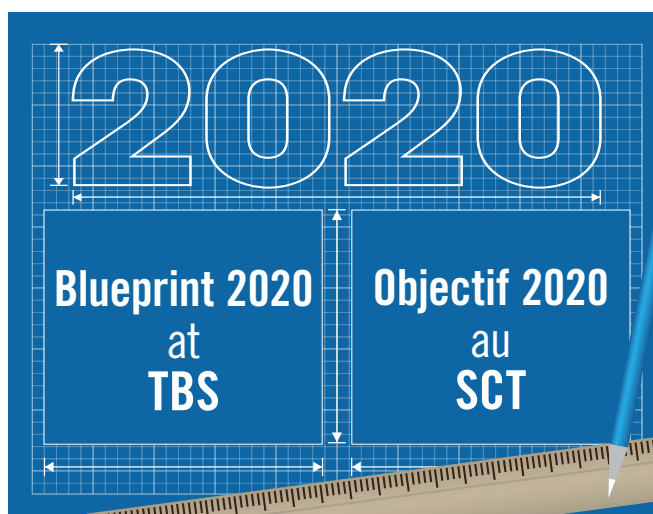
## Experimenting with data visualization

TBS is working on a **service dashboard** prototype that brings together relevant data on the performance of federal services and presents it in a way that helps users gain key insights to support better decision-making.

Once further developed, this tool will help Canadians unlock the value of federal service data and leverage open data to gain policy insight. It will also build internal capacity to use open data and visualization tools.

## Showcasing innovation

In April 2016, TBS and the Department of Finance co-hosted the second annual **Blueprint 2020 Interdepartmental Innovation Fair** at 90 Elgin Street. More than 2,000 employees attended in person, and nearly 3,000 participated online. By 11:00 a.m. that morning, the Twitter hashtag #GC2020 was top trending in Canada with over 4,000 tweets.



The fair showcased some of the most innovative initiatives from more than 50 departments, including 17 from TBS. The President and Secretary of the Treasury Board, and the Clerk of the Privy Council kicked off the event and spoke with employees about the importance of innovation in delivering the government’s agenda and serving Canadians.

## Our Public Service: Why we choose TBS

---

At TBS, I feel challenged by the work, energized by my colleagues, and inspired by our leaders.

**—Sophie Dubourg, Human Resources Division**

Being part of a community of people that want to contribute to something greater than them is something I value about TBS. The team spirit and camaraderie empowers employees to provide unwavering support to Canadians and what matters most to them.

**—Awo Nuuh, Corporate Services**

What I appreciate the most at TBS are the people I've had the pleasure—and the luck—of interacting with; my immediate colleagues, and our partners throughout the department we work with every day to solve challenges and move our shared files forward.

**—Ezana Berhane, Priorities and Planning**

I am very thankful for the overwhelming support from senior management (Assistant Deputy Minister champions) to their newer employees through Renaissance—TBS's new professionals network. They have really contributed to the positive workplace culture, and provided an avenue for junior employees to participate in corporate initiatives.

**—Michael Yung, Chief Information Officer Branch**

Working at TBS is challenging at times, yet always rewarding, especially when your advice has real and meaningful impacts for Canadians.

**—Patrick Mullin, International Affairs, Security and Justice**

What I value most about working at TBS is that senior management cares about employees and the work environment, and is committed to creating a culture of mutual respect. I also really appreciate the fact that senior managers are accessible and have an open door policy for their staff.

**—Lucie Chartrand, Pensions and Benefits**

