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SAFETY, RESPECT  
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LA SÉCURITÉ,  
LA DIGNITÉ  
ET LE RESPECT  
POUR TOUS

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Report on the Review of the National  
Aboriginal Recruitment Strategy

Performance Assurance Sector  
October 2002

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# REVIEW OF THE ABORIGINAL RECRUITMENT STRATEGY

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In December 2000, EXCOM approved the National Aboriginal Recruitment Strategy presented by the Aboriginal Issues Branch (now known as the Aboriginal Initiatives Branch). This proposal included four recommendations.

- establishing a National Aboriginal Career Management Team to implement the Strategy.
- establishing National Aboriginal Employment Benchmarks for the CX and WP Groups.
- setting benchmarks for Aboriginal people employed at Healing Lodges at 50%
- and establishing a National Aboriginal employment inventory "for all levels of employment".

The strategy was to be implemented over a five-year period beginning in 2001.

The field verification phase of this review took place between September and December 2002. The review focused on the following three objectives:

1. to assess the extent to which the infrastructure is in place to allow the Regions to target audiences in Aboriginal communities to encourage applications from Aboriginal candidates;
2. to determine the extent to which proactive measures had been put in place to remove impediments to the recruitment of Aboriginal applicants/candidates; and ,
3. to determine the extent to which progress had been made staffing qualified Aboriginal candidates.

The review methodology included interviews with CSC National, Regional and Institutional staff; interviews with representatives of Aboriginal organizations, and a review of PeopleSoft databanks. As the information in PeopleSoft proved to be unreliable, this review was based on anecdotal information provided by over 65 people who were interviewed.

The Review Team found that a number of the basic organizational elements outlined in the Strategy, intended to ensure the sustainability of the Program, were not in place at the time of the review. Consequently, many of the key indicators identified for this review could not be assessed. This however, did not prevent the Review Team from making recommendations to the Director of Recruitment and the National Co-ordinator Aboriginal Recruitment Strategies. The five recommendations dealt with accountability, the fit of the Strategy with other Employment Equity initiatives, implementation issues, sharing of best (or good) practices and exploring ways to co-ordinate outreach with organizational staffing needs.

Although this initiative was to be implemented over a 5 year period, the DG Organizational Design and Resourcing advised that EXCOM approved the integration of this program into an overarching Employment Equity Program in September 2003. Consequently, it is no longer a standalone initiative.

# REVIEW OF THE ABORIGINAL RECRUITMENT STRATEGY

This review was completed under a previous DG and ACPA. Field verification was completed between September and December 2002. Staff movements have caused a delay to the completion of the final report.

Original signed by Yves Saint-Germain  
A/DG for Thérèse Gascon  
Thérèse Gascon  
Director General  
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December 9, 2004

Date

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## Background

For the past two decades, Speeches from the Throne have noted that a prosperous society is built through economic growth. These same speeches have stressed that the goal of both social and economic success must be pursued "together". The Speech from the Throne which opened the first session of Canada's 37<sup>th</sup> Parliament was no exception. It addressed the creation and sharing of opportunity for all, and noted that:

*"Nowhere is the creation and sharing of opportunity more important than for Aboriginal people. Too many continue to live in poverty, without the tools they need to build a better future for themselves or their communities. As a country, we must be direct about the magnitude of the challenge and ambitious in our commitment to tackle the most pressing problems facing Aboriginal people. Reaching our objectives will take time, but we must not be deterred by the length of the journey or the obstacles that we may encounter along the way."*<sup>1</sup>

Included in the Throne Speech was a commitment to the Aboriginal Peoples that the Government of Canada would "work to ensure that basic needs are met for jobs"<sup>2</sup>.

The 1996 Final Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples<sup>3</sup> noted that more than 80,000 jobs were needed just to raise Aboriginal peoples' employment rate to the same level as the overall Canadian rate. In addition, the Aboriginal population is young: 56 per cent are under 24 years of age, compared with 34 per cent of all other Canadians. In order to provide employment for this future workforce, an additional 225,000 jobs will be needed within the next 20 years.

The Government of Canada's response to the Royal Commission's Final Report was the development of an action plan with a long-term, broad-based policy approach designed to increase the quality of life of Aboriginal people and to promote self-sufficiency.<sup>4</sup> This Plan committed the Government to working with Aboriginal partners to implement a five-year Aboriginal Human Resources Development Strategy which would extend the Aboriginal labour market agreements. The objective of this strategy was to provide Aboriginal groups with a number of tools to increase employment.

The efforts to promote greater participation of Aboriginal peoples in the Public Service is done under the *Employment Equity Act (EE Act)* which came into force in 1996. This legislation was designed to eliminate employment barriers and to increase opportunities for four designated groups: Aboriginal people, women, persons with disabilities, and members of visible minority groups. The *Act* requires employers to develop and implement employment equity programs to ensure that the workforce is representative of the population. In addition, it strengthens previous employment equity legislation by clarifying the employer's responsibilities and giving the Canadian Human Rights Commission the authority to ensure compliance through the conduct of audits.

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<sup>1</sup> Speech from the Throne to Open the First Session of the 37<sup>th</sup> Parliament of Canada. Ottawa. January 30, 2001.  
<sup>2</sup> IBID.

<sup>3</sup> "Restructuring the Relationship - Employment" Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. November 21, 1996

<sup>4</sup> Gathering Strength- Canada's Aboriginal Action Plan- 1998

The *Act* also allows for the conduct of workforce analyses in each government department. These analyses examine all occupational categories and determine whether the representation of each of the four designated groups is in proportion to their labour market availability (LMA). If a designated group is under-represented, the gap between the workforce representation and the availability of that group for employment must be determined and efforts made to address this shortfall.

Notwithstanding the efforts to implement strategies such as those described above, challenges and barriers to the participation of Aboriginal peoples in the mainstream economy continue to be identified and documented by many reports and studies<sup>5</sup>. For example, the 2001 Report of the Working Group on Aboriginal Participation in the Economy identified a number of barriers, particularly in the areas of building understanding between different cultures, maximizing economic potential and augmenting human resources support.

### **CSC's National Aboriginal Recruitment Strategy**

In 2000, CSC developed the National Aboriginal Recruitment Strategy in response to the requirements of the *Employment Equity Act* and the Federal Government's *Gathering Strength* policies that encouraged Government departments to work in full partnership with Aboriginal communities. The goal of this Strategy was to ensure Aboriginal employee representation based on both the proportion of Aboriginal people available for employment in the local workforce area and the number of Aboriginal people in the incarcerated population. Mechanisms intended to encourage and facilitate the retention; development and promotion of Aboriginal staff in CSC were built into the Strategy to ensure its sustainability. EXCOM approved the Strategy (which included four recommendations) in December 2000. Implementation of the five year strategy began in 2001.

The Strategy recommended the establishment of a National Aboriginal Career Management Team with the appropriate levels of long-term resources<sup>6</sup> which would be responsible for putting the Strategy into practice. The second recommendation put in place National Aboriginal Employment benchmarks and specified that the benchmarks for designated indeterminate positions be set at 14% for CX and WP positions, 10% for managerial positions and 3.5% for executive positions. The third recommendation set the benchmarks for Aboriginal people employed at Aboriginal Healing Lodges at 50% and the fourth recommendation committed the Service to the establishment of a National Aboriginal employment inventory "for all levels of employment".

The Logic Model in Appendix A outlines the major program components of the Strategy. These are:

- targeting audiences in Aboriginal communities to attract potential recruits;
- undertaking proactive measures to qualify Aboriginal candidates;
- monitoring the placement and occupational category of new Aboriginal staff;
- fostering retention of Aboriginal employees; and,
- promoting the advancement of Aboriginal employees.

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<sup>5</sup> IBID

<sup>6</sup> Framework for Decisions by the Executive Committee. [National Aboriginal Recruitment Strategy](#). December 2000. Page 1.

## REVIEW OF THE ABORIGINAL RECRUITMENT STRATEGY

As this review was completed during the second year of the Strategy, the focus of the review was placed on the Service's ability to increase the number of applications received from Aboriginal candidates, to look at measures that had been put in place to remove impediments to their recruitment and finally, to assess whether progress had been made in hiring Aboriginal staff as a result of this initiative. Appendix B contains the key indicators used by the Review Team to address these objectives.

A second review was scheduled for fiscal 2004/2005 and was to focus on gains CSC had made with respect to retaining and promoting the advancement of Aboriginal employees. However, at the September 2003 EXCOM it was decided to integrate the Aboriginal Recruitment Strategy with the Employment Equity Program so that it was no longer a stand alone program.

### **Review Methodology**

Multiple data collection strategies were used to obtain the information required for this review. These methods included interviews with key informants including CSC National, Regional and Institutional staff; interviews with representatives of Aboriginal organizations, the use of individual client questionnaires (ICQ's) and the review and analysis of CSC databanks related to Human Resources (Peoplesoft). As the PeopleSoft data was found to be unreliable, the review was primarily narrative and anecdotal in nature.

### **Approach**

The Review Team contacted the Human Resource staff in all five Regional Headquarters and Staff Colleges. In addition, seven CSC Institutions across the country were visited. Interviews and discussions were held with the Regional Recruitment and Career Managers, Human Resource Specialists, Directors of Regional Training Facilities, Staff College Instructors, Regional Chiefs of Staffing, Wardens, Assistant Wardens Management Services (AWMS), Regional Chiefs of Human Resource Management, Regional Communications Officers, Institutional Recruitment Officers, Institutional Chiefs of Personnel, the Regional Employment Equity Coordinators, Regional Aboriginal Programs Staff, and Aboriginal Correctional Officers (some of whom had participated in the pre-recruitment program). Discussions were also held with members of Aboriginal Organizations including the President of the Prince Albert Métis Women's Association, the General Manager of the Aboriginal Futures Career and Training Centre and the Labour Marketing Manager of the Treaty Seven Economic Development Corporation. Interviews and discussions were held with over 65 people during the course of this review. The details of the seven major findings, four recommendations and three suggestions are in the body of this report.

The Review Team would like to express their appreciation to all CSC staff and members of Aboriginal Organizations who were consulted during the course of this Review. The insights and counsel they provided were most valuable and very much appreciated. The Review Team members were:

Karen Kaschube (Team Leader)  
Pam Haslam  
Marie-Thérèse Hokayem

## OBSERVATIONS AND FINDINGS

### Objective 1

**To assess the extent to which the infrastructure is in place to allow the Regions to target audiences in Aboriginal communities to encourage applications from Aboriginal candidates.**

The Review Team noted that many of the key indicators for this objective were not in place at the time of the review. There was no clearly articulated process (including roles and responsibilities) in place for establishing contacts with Aboriginal communities, the Regional Aboriginal Employment Advisory Committee was not in place, and there were no mechanisms in place to track the origins of applications or to handle large influxes of applications.

However, the Review Team did note that Regional Aboriginal Recruitment Officers were actively involved in ensuring the participation of Aboriginal people and other stakeholders, the variations and types of outreach activities in each Region were being documented, and procedural barriers perceived to be hampering outreach activities had been identified.

Anecdotal evidence suggested that there was increased interest expressed by Aboriginal communities in CSC as an employer given that some regions had a backlog of applications accumulated as a result of outreach activities. However, most of that data was kept in paper files and not easily or readily accessible, and the PeopleSoft data that was available was not reliable enough to use.

The findings below provide further detail.

### Finding #1

**The initial conditions for the sustainability of the Strategy were not fully in place.**

In December 2000, when EXCOM approved the National Aboriginal Recruitment Strategy, the Service committed to hiring Aboriginal Peoples at a rate above the standard set by both the Employment Equity legislation and Treasury Board policies (which were based on the labour market availability (LMA) of Aboriginal peoples). This standard was substantially more modest (3.8%) than that set by CSC (14% for the CX and WP groups). The rationale for the higher CSC standard was to ensure that each site had an Aboriginal staff complement that reflected their representation in the offender population.

The EXCOM Framework for Decisions for the Strategy noted that:

*"It is estimated that with the necessary senior management support and the establishment of a National Aboriginal Career Management team, it may be possible*



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*to achieve the levels identified in this document for Aboriginal staff representation in CSC within five years."*<sup>7</sup>

Although the Review Team interviewed several regional senior managers, all of whom expressed their commitment to the strategy, other CSC staff believed that the accountability for building the organizational structure and achieving the objectives of the Strategy was not clear. This perception was reinforced in a January 2002 CSC Employment Equity Survey in which respondents felt that, while there was recognition that employment equity was a CSC priority, CSC managers had only a vague awareness of specific employment equity goals. Respondents also noted that managers were not held formally accountable for delivering on employment equity targets."<sup>8</sup>

The Fiscal 2002/2003 performance agreements for Regional Deputy Commissioners, NHQ Sector Heads, Wardens and District Directors included an employment equity component, which required "progress in achieving employment equity targets" however, there did not appear to be reference to Aboriginal employment as a distinct CSC strategy with its own set of unique targets. Neither did there appear to be consequences of not achieving either Aboriginal recruitment targets or employment equity objectives despite the fact that these executive level positions are subject to pay at risk compensation. The 2000 Task Force on the Participation of Visible Minorities in the Federal Public Service noted that one of the keys to the successful implementation and sustainability of an employment equity program was identified as providing for an accountability mechanism:

*"Make the [employment equity] action plan top-driven. Formulate the objective of achieving a representative public service into annual goals and include those goals as a key commitment in the performance accords struck between the Clerk of the Privy Council and deputy heads. These goals must be measurable and form part of pay-at-risk compensation."*<sup>9</sup>

While the Review Team concurs that the sustainability of the Strategy depends on Senior Management support, it is also dependent on having basic organizing elements in place. An excerpt from the Strategy notes that:

*"to ensure that Aboriginal peoples are recruited, trained and supported at all levels of the organization, a National Aboriginal Career Management Team should be created. This Team would be responsible for the recruitment, training, selection, counseling, support and all other factors that impact on the hiring and retention of Aboriginal employees in the CSC."*<sup>10</sup>

This team (which was to consist of a National Aboriginal Recruitment Coordinator at NHQ and five Aboriginal Recruitment Officers) was to work with the regions to implement the Strategy by:

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<sup>7</sup> IBID Page 8.

<sup>8</sup> Correctional Service Canada. Report on the Survey: Staffing for Employment Equity. "A Blueprint for Needs Analysis." January 2002. Page 1.

<sup>9</sup> Perinbam, Lewis C. Embracing Change in the Federal Public Service. The Task Force on the Participation of Visible Minorities in the Federal Public Service. Treasury Board Secretariat. 2000. Page 15.

<sup>10</sup> OP Cit . National Aboriginal Recruitment Strategy: Framework for Decisions by the Executive Committee Page 8.

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- establishing an Aboriginal Employment Regional Advisory Committees or a special task force;
- ensuring the participation of Aboriginal people and other stakeholders;
- setting long-term goals for Aboriginal employment;
- setting annual targets for Aboriginal employment;
- identifying barriers to Aboriginal employment; and,
- developing yearly Aboriginal employment action plans.

The Review Team noted that CSC staff involved in the Aboriginal recruitment and career management process were working from positions with titles such as "Regional Recruitment Manager", "Aboriginal Career Manager", "Recruitment Officer", "Employment Equity Recruitment Officer", "Staffing Officer" or "Institutional Recruitment Officer". While staff in these positions were cognizant of their outreach and staff development obligations, they did not see themselves as members of a national team to promote Aboriginal recruitment and retention in CSC. In addition, as noted by some of their titles, many of these staff were tasked with recruitment activities for other Employment Equity groups as well.

Despite the fact that there was no recognized National Aboriginal Career Management Team in place, many of the duties of this team were undertaken by the regions. These included ensuring the participation of Aboriginal people and other stakeholders; identifying barriers to Aboriginal employment; and in one Region, providing pre recruitment opportunities.

The Strategy also noted, in part, that "the appropriate levels of long term resources"<sup>11</sup> should be provided. The following was recorded in the EXCOM minutes:

*"The ACCS will develop resource indicators for the six positions and a resourcing strategy will be prepared with possibilities of accessing such funds as the Treasury Board Intervention Fund and the Partnership Fund. If funding cannot be accessed through that initiative, the funding will be considered an internal priority for next year".<sup>12</sup>*

In addition, the Framework for Decisions by EXCOM noted that:

*"Ideally, it would be best to seek resources for a five year strategy."<sup>13</sup>*

Initially, funds were provided for first four months of the Strategy and additional funding from Treasury Board was obtained for fiscal 2001/02. CSC staff involved in the recruitment of Aboriginal people were resourced at the regional level while the National Aboriginal Recruitment Officer was resourced from the Effective Corrections Initiative in the Correctional Operations and Programs Sector (COP). Since that time, no specific funding has been received.

Given the above observations with respect to senior management accountability, funding for the National Aboriginal Recruitment Strategy, and the fit of the Strategy in CSC's

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<sup>11</sup> OP Cit . National Aboriginal Recruitment Strategy: Framework for Decisions by the Executive Committee Page 1.

<sup>12</sup> EXCOM Minutes. December 2000. Section 3. "Aboriginal Recruitment Strategy (ACCOP & ACPT)

<sup>13</sup> OP Cit . National Aboriginal Recruitment Strategy: Framework for Decisions by the Executive Committee Page 1.

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overall employment equity effort, the Review Team makes the following recommendations and suggestions

## **Recommendation #1**

That, staffing strategies similar to those *recommended by the 2000 Task Force on the Participation of Visible Minorities in the Federal Public Service* for Visible Minorities be implemented for Aboriginals, specifically staffing goals as part of senior executive pay-at-risk compensation.

OPI: Assistant Commissioner, Human Resources Management

## **Recommendation #2**

That, as part of the process of consolidating the move of the National Aboriginal Recruitment Strategy from Recruitment to Organizational Design and Resourcing, the fit of the Strategy with other Treasury Board Secretariat Employment Equity initiatives is clarified.

OPI: Director General, Organizational Design and Resourcing

## **Suggestion #1**

That the longer-term funding options available to the National Aboriginal Recruitment Strategy be determined, both as a distinct strategy or, alternatively, as a component within CSC's Employment Equity Initiative.

OPI: Organizational Design and Resourcing Branch of the Human Resource Management Sector, together with the Aboriginal Issues Branch of COP

## **Finding #2**

### **Outreach approaches varied from Region to Region.**

The Five-Year Review of the *Corrections and Conditional Release Act* (CCRA) noted that any outreach effort aimed at recruiting potential Aboriginal staff should be guided by a strategy that took into account:

- the availability of qualified Aboriginal persons;
- the competition for qualified Aboriginal persons by other governments and agencies; and
- the need to recruit Aboriginal persons who can be developed for supervisory and management positions.

The report concluded that a National Aboriginal Recruitment Strategy was the most promising method of attracting the numbers of Aboriginal staff required to have a major

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impact on federal corrections<sup>14</sup>. This was reiterated in the introduction to the Strategy which noted that:

*"To improve the employment prospects of Aboriginal people, CSC, with other private and public sector corporations, must compel itself to develop an active recruitment strategy focusing on reaching out to the communities and providing career opportunities to Aboriginal people."<sup>15</sup>*

As previously noted, one of the goals of the Strategy was to increase outreach efforts in Aboriginal communities so that a workforce that was more representative of the Aboriginal inmate population could be developed. The Review Team noted that every region had outreach programs in place. In some regions, these activities were linked to pre-recruitment programs (e.g. the Aboriginal Pre-recruitment Training Program in Prairie region and a program sponsored by the Native Court Workers and Counseling Association in Pacific Region). In others, no special measures were being taken to recruit Aboriginal candidates over and above the provisions of the EE Act.

However, in Regions with a robust recruitment program, a number of common approaches were observed. These included meeting with Aboriginal Agencies, posting information regarding careers in corrections in Native Friendship Centres, advertising in local Band newspapers and on local radio stations, participating in career fairs and maintaining contacts with community colleges. In addition, a number of noteworthy recruitment approaches were observed. Some of these initiatives are highlighted below as they may be of interest to other regions.

In the Prairie Region there was at least one designated recruitment officer for each province and a Regional Recruitment Manager who coordinated outreach and recruitment activities across the Region. This staffing configuration allowed for a rich and varied approach to Aboriginal outreach and extended the reach of the program to some of the more remote Aboriginal communities. The outreach activities were noted:

- going to Aboriginal communities to speak in schools;
- establishing and maintaining contacts with Aboriginal Training Centres and various Métis Councils;
- partnering with provincial correctional officers to share contacts with Aboriginal communities;
- visiting the Human Resources Departments of First Nations communities;
- holding seminars and career fairs in communities offering an Aboriginal correctional officer program. Follow up sessions were held with those who had expressed interest in a career with corrections;
- establishing partnerships with Aboriginal employment agencies (such as the Aboriginal Futures Career and Training Centre in Calgary); and,
- attending CSC recruitment information sessions to explain how to apply for CTP or WP positions.

In the Pacific Region, a Regional Aboriginal Career Manager position was created for community outreach and recruitment activities. Outreach activities focused principally on the lower mainland, the Fraser Valley and Vancouver Island. The Regional Aboriginal Career Manager worked closely with the Regional Chief of Human Resources so that

<sup>14</sup> CCRA 5 Year Review- Aboriginal Offenders -February 1998

<sup>15</sup> Framework for Decision by the Executive Committee. National Aboriginal Recruitment Strategy. December 2000. Page 6.

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when specific needs were identified, efforts to recruit Aboriginal candidates could be made. In addition to the "common" outreach activities noted above, activities in this region included meetings with Federations and First Nations, attending Aboriginal conferences to broaden the reach of the recruitment program and speaking at schools in Aboriginal communities.

Given the above observations, the following recommendations and suggestions are offered:

### **Recommendation #3**

That some of the innovative outreach approaches used by CSC be submitted to the Public Service Commission's WEB site on Employment Equity Special Measures.

OPI: Director General, Organizational Design and Resourcing

### **Suggestion #2**

That consideration be given to submitting an article to "Let's Talk" so outreach initiatives can be shared CSC wide.

OPI: Director General, Organizational Design and Resourcing

### **Finding #3**

#### **The underlying intent or the "spirit" of the Strategy was not clearly understood.**

Through out the course of the review, it was apparent that the intent of the Strategy was interpreted differently in each Region. Many of the interviewees were not sure what the strategy was attempting to achieve.

This was also evident among the Human Resource staff, who requested clarification from the Review Team. They were uncertain as to the target population for recruitment. They believe that the strategy was to attract Aboriginal candidates, who knew what it meant to be Aboriginal and who practice and have knowledge of the culture and can successfully transfer these teachings in the institutions. However, individuals were uncertain as to what was the objective of the strategy. They questioned, whether it was only to increase the number of Aboriginal people or if it was to recruit individuals with the skills and knowledge for the task. This was a source of a great deal of frustration for many.

The question of who could apply for jobs under the umbrella of the Strategy and to what extent CSC could request confirmation of status (Band card, Métis) was raised frequently. Many expressed concern that the guidelines available to them were too vague as the final determination as to whether someone qualified for the program was left to their discretion. In one Region, staffing officers reported that people whom they had had deemed ineligible for the program because they had no proof that they were Aboriginal were calling them several days later advising them that they had just "bought"

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their band cards and that they would now be applying for employment under the Strategy. Even though the staffing officers knew that the cards were not legitimate, they did not feel that they could refuse access to the program to these people as they now had “proof” of their Aboriginal status. In another Region, it was reported that, at least twice, applicants who were hired as a result of this Strategy refused to self declare when signing their letter of offer stating that the “Aboriginal” self identification box must have been checked off by mistake on their original applications. Several recruitment officers noted that they felt that the benchmarks were purely a numbers game and as long as someone said they were Aboriginal they could apply for the program. Others indicated that they were functioning on an honour system which some people appeared to be misusing.

Some staff questioned whether the Strategy was focusing on the right Aboriginal groups and whether CSC should be directing its attention on attracting Aboriginal peoples who reflect the **highest** proportion of incarcerated Aboriginal peoples. For example, the bulk of the inmate population in the Pacific Region comes from the Prairies, but the outreach activities target Pacific Region Aboriginal groups as the Stolo, Coast Salish, and Chehalis (who form a very small portion of the incarcerated Aboriginal population). The protocols of the Pacific Region Aboriginal groups differ from the protocols of the Aboriginal inmate population in that Region. It was reported that when attempts had been made to hire officers with backgrounds comparable to the offender population, they returned to their home Region after a short period of time.

Staff also asked why the strategy was limited to the CX and WP groups as many Recruitment Officers indicated that during their outreach activities interest had been expressed in the trades (GS / GL and FOS) and CR positions. It was suggested that Aboriginal staff, particularly in the trades (where they would be work supervisors), could serve as role models for Aboriginal inmates just as readily as parole officers or correctional officers. In addition, they could contribute to increasing the number of people who could share positive experiences of CSC in their communities and serve as a potential pool from which to recruit CX and WP candidates.

### Objective 2

**To determine the extent to which proactive measures have been put in place to remove impediments to the recruitment of Aboriginal applicants/candidates.**

As noted in Objective 1, the organizational structure to manage and co-ordinate the recruitment strategy was not fully in place at the time of the review. Consequently, it was difficult to measure some of the key indicators for Objective 2, particularly those related to infrastructure (such as funding for the positions of the Aboriginal Recruitment officers and the National Aboriginal Recruitment Co-ordinator) and reliable data sources reflecting increased numbers of Aboriginal candidates in the National and Regional Aboriginal Employment Inventories (which had not been created).

That notwithstanding, efforts were being made in all Regions to ensure ongoing communications between the Regional staff and the National Coordinator to identify

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procedural and selection barriers negatively impacting on Aboriginal recruitment and to attempt to address them.

Finding four (below) speaks to what one Region was doing to remove impediments to the recruitment of Aboriginal applicants while finding five addresses barriers that staff working in outreach/recruitment identified as still requiring attention.

## **Finding #4**

### **One Region had initiated a pre-recruitment training program for potential Correctional Training Program (CTP) candidates.**

The Prairie Region developed a pre-recruitment training program to assist Aboriginal candidates in acquiring specific practical (on the job) and classroom training relating to CSC's screening process and qualification standards. The program was intended to enhance the candidate's ability to succeed at each phase of the recruitment process which, in turn, would result in more Aboriginal people successfully completing the Correctional Officer Training program. This concept was consistent with the Five-Year review of the Corrections and Conditional Release Act which cited the need for a focused Aboriginal recruitment strategy which took into consideration:

*"the need for pre-appointment training of Aboriginal persons with potential who are interested in correctional careers but who need some training to meet some selection criteria"<sup>16</sup>.*

This program was jointly delivered by CSC and a "host" Aboriginal organization. The following table describes the contributions of each partner.

#### **Pre-recruitment Training Partnership**

<b>CSC's Contribution</b>	<b>Aboriginal Organizations Contribution</b>
Develop the training curriculum	The financial responsibility to deliver the training through the Organizations training and development resources.
Provide services of a Recruitment Officer to work with the Organization to coordinate and deliver the course	Provide instructors.
Use CSC staff expertise to deliver specialized components.	Provide classroom facilities.
Provide work practicum sites	Provide any student allowances or uniforms.
Ensure the availability of indeterminate employment opportunities.	

<sup>16</sup> CCRA 5 Year Review- Aboriginal Offenders -February 1998

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At the time of this review (October 2002), the pre-recruitment training provided the following:

- orientation and practice of the GCT-2 test;
- knowledge of CSC;  
practice role playing
- CPR and First Aid training;
- training for the Correctional Officer Physical Abilities Test (COPAT) and,
- up to four weeks of on the job training.

The course took up to 9 weeks depending on the skill of the applicants and the funding of the organization delivering the course.

This program also provided recruitment officers with additional tools to contribute to increasing the number of Aboriginal candidates being accepted into the CTP. For example, Aboriginal values assessors conducted the Values Assessment component of the pre-recruitment screening and during program sessions and interviews, Aboriginal board members were present whenever possible. Additionally, the number of people who did not attend their scheduled GCT-2 test were tracked and then contacted to determine why they did not attend (lack of transportation or the means to pay for it were the most commonly cited reasons). Often their appointments were rescheduled. The pass/fail scores of potential Aboriginal recruits were used to provide the facilitators/trainers with additional detail to tailor the program to address the identified needs. For example, if many Aboriginal candidates were failing the interview, the program would be amended to provide future candidates with more time on this particular component.

The Review Team also noted that staff at various sites in the Prairie Region employed several unique approaches to contribute to the recruitment of Aboriginal CX staff. One site had an Aboriginal COII (who was also a COPAT assessor) explain the purpose and expectations for the COPAT test and provide a demonstration. At another site, the institutional doctor (licensed by Health Canada), completed the physical exam required prior to starting Correctional Officer training. This allowed candidates to move more quickly to the next phase of the process (the team was advised that in some provinces the waiting period for a medical assessment by Health Canada can be up to six months).

Regional Recruitment Officers also identified several unexpected benefits of the pre-recruitment program. They indicated that Aboriginal agencies were contacting them and requesting program information instead of waiting for CSC to approach them. Further, instead of expecting to be paid to deliver the training, they were asking how they could get involved so that their members could get jobs.

The Review Team had the opportunity to interview several Aboriginal correctional officers who had taken the pre-recruitment training program. They all indicated that they found the training valuable, particularly the job shadowing. Other comments from trainees included the fact that the program prepared them for the GCT-2, it helped them to come out of their "shell" and it provided them with an idea of what was expected in the interview.

Members of Aboriginal organizations involved in the delivery of the program also spoke highly of it. The following were representative comments from across the Region.



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*"There is a huge need for these types of programs. The program is of value to CSC but it adds a huge value to an Aboriginal life"*

*"It is amazing to see the changes that happen to their [i.e. the trainee's] lives"*

*"It is not only employment but it is meaningful employment"*

*"A training program that leads to a full time job- you just do not turn your back on something like this."*

*"I found CSC supportive and pro active- CSC was always available ...the wardens were very supportive of the program and a lot of CSC staff came out for our information sessions on the pre recruitment training program"*

### **Suggestion #3:**

That a copy of the pre-recruitment training curriculum used in Prairie Region be made available to other Regions, upon request.

OPI: Director General, Organizational Design and Resourcing and the Director of Recruitment

### **Finding #5**

#### **A number of recruitment barriers still exist.**

Although progress has been made with respect to increasing the representation of Aboriginal Peoples in the CSC workforce, a number of barriers still exist. The CSC submission to the Public Service Commission for a five-year Employment Equity Program (2002-2007) noted that expectations for some groups have not yet been met. The reasons for these shortfalls vary from Region to Region. The Review Team has put the barriers noted by staff involved in the recruitment process into three broad categories: barriers to attracting potential recruits, barriers to hiring Aboriginal candidates, and "other" barriers.

#### **Barriers to Recruiting Potential Candidates**

Human Resources staff indicated that their biggest challenge was trying to find a way to present corrections in a favourable light so that CSC is seen as a potential employer. For many Aboriginal peoples, CSC is not considered an employer of choice. It was reported that for some, this is because they (or their family members) have previously been incarcerated and CSC has negative connotations for them. For others, the difficulty lies in seeing other Aboriginal people locked up in cells as opposed to being in Healing Lodges. Several interviewees noted that many Aboriginal people do not appear to be comfortable in positions of authority over others, particularly over other Aboriginal people. For others, CSC simply does not fit into their future employment plans; they are looking for employment in "traditional" professions such as law, teaching and medicine.

For some Aboriginal groups, CSC is competing with the quality of life in a traditional Aboriginal community. For people living and working in these communities, working in the criminal justice milieu is not their preferred type of work and CSC offers nothing to

## REVIEW OF THE ABORIGINAL RECRUITMENT STRATEGY

make it more attractive. As well, in areas where there is a robust economy CSC is in competition with substantial numbers of available positions that do not involve shift work. One interviewee noted: *"recruitment could be a problem... (in areas)... where anyone can make 25\$ an hour hanging drywall"*.

In Regions that either span several provinces or cover great distances, the physical ability to get to the Aboriginal communities for outreach activities can be problematic. Geography plays a major role in determining which Aboriginal communities are identified as being potential candidate pools. One Native liaison officer noted that she has gone to some of the more remote communities but that it is very time consuming and costly. She further added that some reserves are unreachable except by air. Accordingly, most of the outreach activities are directed to reserves that are closer to the major centres.

Further, the majority of the job opportunities are not in locations with the community infrastructure (cultural activities such as exposure to Aboriginal teachings and language) in place to accommodate Aboriginal people who may be relocating from reserves with their families. A similar dilemma exists when trying to attract "urban" Aboriginal people who may be reluctant to relocate to smaller communities where they do not feel that the social or cultural infrastructure exists to support their smooth transition/integration.

### Barriers to Hiring Aboriginal Candidates

Many staff noted that CSC's selection practices are not conducive to increasing Aboriginal staff representation despite attempts to improve potentially culturally biased tools. According to some staff, the behaviour-based interview is a barrier for many Aboriginal candidates. It was reported that in many instances, the candidates were not familiar with the interview format or the concept of responding to a specific question within a given timeframe and that their interpretation and demonstration of the "leadership" quality was often not presented in a manner that a non-Aboriginal assessor would expect.

While the framework for this review was being developed, the GCT-2 was frequently identified as a barrier to the recruitment and employment of Aboriginal staff into the CX ranks. Prior to the elimination of the pass/fail aspect of this test (February 2000) candidates had to have a score of at least 50% to be considered for the next phase of the recruitment process. Since that time, candidates' scores have been used for ranking purposes only. However, in most Regions, the majority of Aboriginal candidates continue to have lower scores than non-Aboriginal candidates. To ensure that Aboriginal candidates (and members of the other employment equity groups) are represented when correctional officer training programs are initiated, some Regions were grouping the candidates according to their Government Competency Test-2 (GCT-2) scores and their employment equity group (if applicable). This selection process ensured the participation of Aboriginal candidates (as well as members of the other employment equity groups) in the CTP's.

Despite this selection method, there is anecdotal evidence to suggest that many CSC Aboriginal staff feel this approach demeans Aboriginal candidates and makes them feel like second class citizens. Recent Aboriginal graduates of the Correctional Officers Training program indicated that it was difficult enough being accepted at a facility without hearing their colleagues say that the only reason they got the job was because they were Aboriginal and not because they were the best qualified.

With respect to the recruitment of Aboriginal peoples to the WP group, the only barrier specifically mentioned was that immediate employment could not be guaranteed once a person had successfully qualified for the position. The requirement for a university degree was also mentioned as being a barrier. However, this was raised in the context of the adverse effect it had on the Aboriginal correctional officers who did not require a degree for their positions but whose positions represent the feeder group for WP (program officer and parole officer) positions.

Other barriers included having the funds required for babysitting, travel expenses (particularly for those coming from remote areas to attend training) and the up front costs associated with having a physical exam prior to being able to start CTP.

### Finding #6

#### **The cancellation of the Correctional Training Programs in some Regions for the remainder of the 2002/2003 fiscal year may have impacts on future recruitment efforts.**

The cancellation of Correctional Officer Training programs in the Prairie and Pacific Regions left some Aboriginal communities questioning CSC's commitment to recruiting Aboriginal staff and placed many of the outreach initiatives in jeopardy. Their scepticism was augmented by the fact that correctional officer recruitment posters indicated that "offers of full-time employment would be made to candidates who successfully complete the Correctional Training Program". In addition, CSC recruitment campaigns advertised that indeterminate positions would be available for qualified Aboriginal recruits. One Region graduated two CTP's for a total of 44 potential employees but had no positions to offer them (as a result of a workforce adjustment and the overall CSC hiring freeze). It was reported that many gave up jobs to attend the CTP training on the promise that they would have full time government jobs if they successfully completed the program. [Access to Information Act – section 23] While the cancellation of the CTP's in the Prairie and Pacific Regions was a necessity, staff involved in the recruitment process were concerned about the impact this would have on future recruitment attempts. One staff member observed:

*"What we do corporately for Aboriginal communities sets the tone for recruitment. There is currently a disconnect- we have made promises that we have not kept- If I don't keep my promises/ act respectfully and I am CSC- that is what they see."*

The Review Team was unable to determine who was responsible for co-ordinating outreach activities to ensure that there are actual jobs to be staffed when CTP's are initiated (not shadow positions for people who have been assigned elsewhere or who are on extended leave). One regional staffing officer summed up the challenge currently faced by Pacific Region.

*We need to coordinate the planning around outreach activities, what staff college can intake and projected institutional vacancies. We need this because our outreach activities resulted in 700 applications with no more CTPs to be run until fiscal 2003 and no job vacancies because of having to accommodate those from William Head."*

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Given the above observation, the Review Team makes the following recommendation:

### **Recommendation #4**

That each Region explore mechanisms to co-ordinate outreach activities with Correctional Training Program vacancies and with staffing requirements in the institutions.

OPI's: The Regional Assistant Deputy Commissioner of Corporate Services, the Regional Director of the Staff College and the regional Aboriginal Recruitment Staff

### **Objective 3**

#### **To determine the extent to which progress has been made staffing qualified Aboriginal candidates.**

The review team was unable to determine whether progress had been made staffing qualified Aboriginal candidates. While there was some PeopleSoft data and anecdotal evidence available to suggest that outreach and recruitment efforts were having a positive impact, few of the key indicators were in place to support this finding.

However, the Review Team believes that the following finding is worth noting.

### **Finding #7**

#### **CSC, as an organization, has made some progress in increasing Aboriginal staff representation.**

The Aboriginal employment benchmarks approved by EXCOM in December 2000 for CSC as an organization were as follows: 14% for CX and WP positions, 10% for Managerial Positions and 3.5% for Executive positions. These benchmarks were then broken down by Region for both groups. Appendix C reflects the representation of Aboriginal persons in the CX and WP groups as of August 31, 2002 (as provided to the Review Team by Human Resources staff during the field verification process). As noted in Objective #1, the responsibility for determining these targets had been tasked to the National Aboriginal Career Management Team. However, given that this team was never established, it was unclear how these "annual targets" and benchmarks" were determined. Human Resources staff in the field were of the impression that EXCOM had set them.

Clearly, there has been more success in areas where there is a larger pool of potential recruits from which to draw (such as in the Prairies Region) in both the CX and WP ranks (as noted in the Appendix) despite the fact that some Regions focussed their hiring strategies to meet the labour market availability gap for Aboriginal people. In these instances, it was felt that there was no need to use the Strategy to hire Aboriginal staff as there was no "gap". The Review Team was advised that the Strategy was viewed as a "self-imposed target" for which there was no legal basis. Regardless, most Regions made gains with respect to hiring CX staff. The only exceptions were Quebec

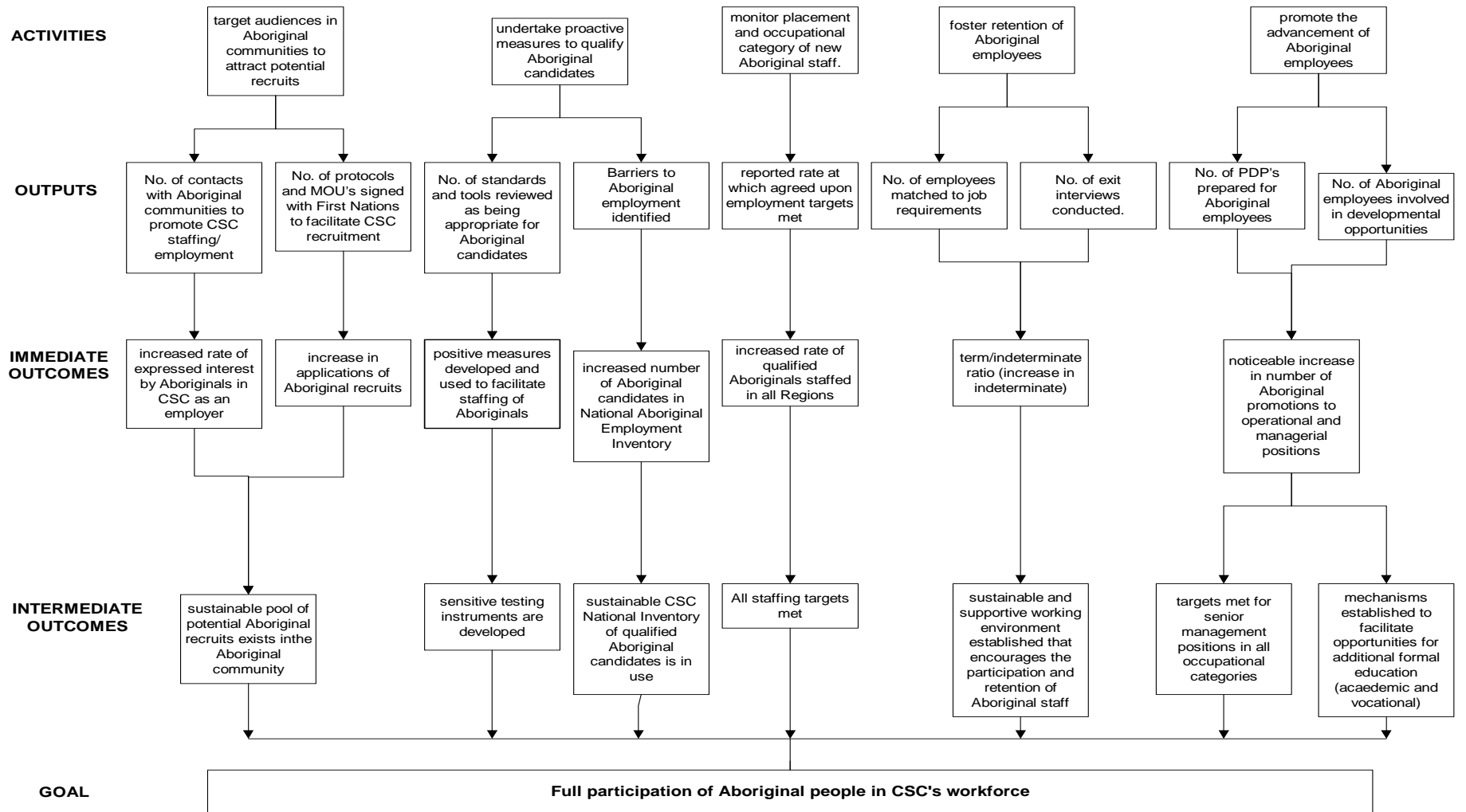
## REVIEW OF THE ABORIGINAL RECRUITMENT STRATEGY

Region (where there was no change in the representation) and the Pacific Region, where there was a minor decrease in representation. As noted in the previous finding, this was attributed to the cancellation of CTP's. The findings for the hiring of WP staff were similar. All Regions with the exception of the Atlantic Region saw an increase in WP representation. The Review Team was advised that the requirement to be bilingual had impacted on the Atlantic Regions numbers as candidates chose to transfer to the Quebec Region after they had secured permanent WP positions.

**APPENDIX A**

**Logic Model for the National Aboriginal Recruitment Strategy**

# NATIONAL ABORIGINAL RECRUITMENT STRATEGY LOGIC MODEL



**APPENDIX B**  
**Objectives and Key Indicators**



# REVIEW OF THE ABORIGINAL RECRUITMENT STRATEGY

## REVIEW OBJECTIVES AND RELATED KEY INDICATORS

Under each objective is listed a key indicator which must be assessed to determine if the objectives have been met.

### Objective 1:

**To document the extent to which the infrastructure is in place to allow the Regions to target audiences in Aboriginal communities to encourage applications from Aboriginal candidates**

#### Key Indicators

1. A clearly articulated process (including roles and responsibilities) is in place to for establishing contacts with Aboriginal communities.
2. A Regional Aboriginal Employment Advisory Committee is in place and provides direction on strengthening contacts with Aboriginal communities (as per the EXCOM approved National Aboriginal Recruitment Strategy).
3. Funds for the National Aboriginal Recruitment Co-ordinator have been allocated (as per the approved strategy).
4. Regional Aboriginal Recruitment Officers are actively involved in ensuring the participation of Aboriginal people and other stakeholders (as per EXCOM approved National Aboriginal Recruitment Strategy).
5. Variations and types of outreach activities in each Region are documented.
6. Strategies are in place to handle large influxes of applications.
7. Mechanisms are in place to track the origins of applications.
8. Regional data indicate increased interest expressed by Aboriginal communities in CSC as an employer.

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### Objective 2:

**To determine the extent to which proactive measures have been put in place to remove impediments to the recruitment of Aboriginal applicants.**

#### Key Indicators

1. There is an organisation structure in place to manage and co-ordinate the National Aboriginal Recruitment Strategy.
2. Appropriate levels of long term resources have been allocated to fund an Aboriginal Recruitment officer position in each region (as per the approved strategy).
3. Regional Aboriginal Recruitment Officers are aware of and understand their roles with respect to influencing modifications to corporate Human Resources policies and practices.
4. There is an active interaction between members of the National Aboriginal Career Management team and both Regional Headquarters and National Headquarters.
5. Aboriginal members are on screening boards.
6. Procedural and selection barriers impacting negatively on Aboriginal recruitment have identified and corrective action has been taken.
7. Accurate data exists which suggests a positive trend in terms of increasing the number of Aboriginal candidates in the National and Regional Aboriginal Employment Inventories.
8. Standards and tools used to screen Aboriginal candidates are applied consistently across the country.

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### Objective 3:

**To determine the extent to which progress has been made staffing qualified Aboriginal candidates.**

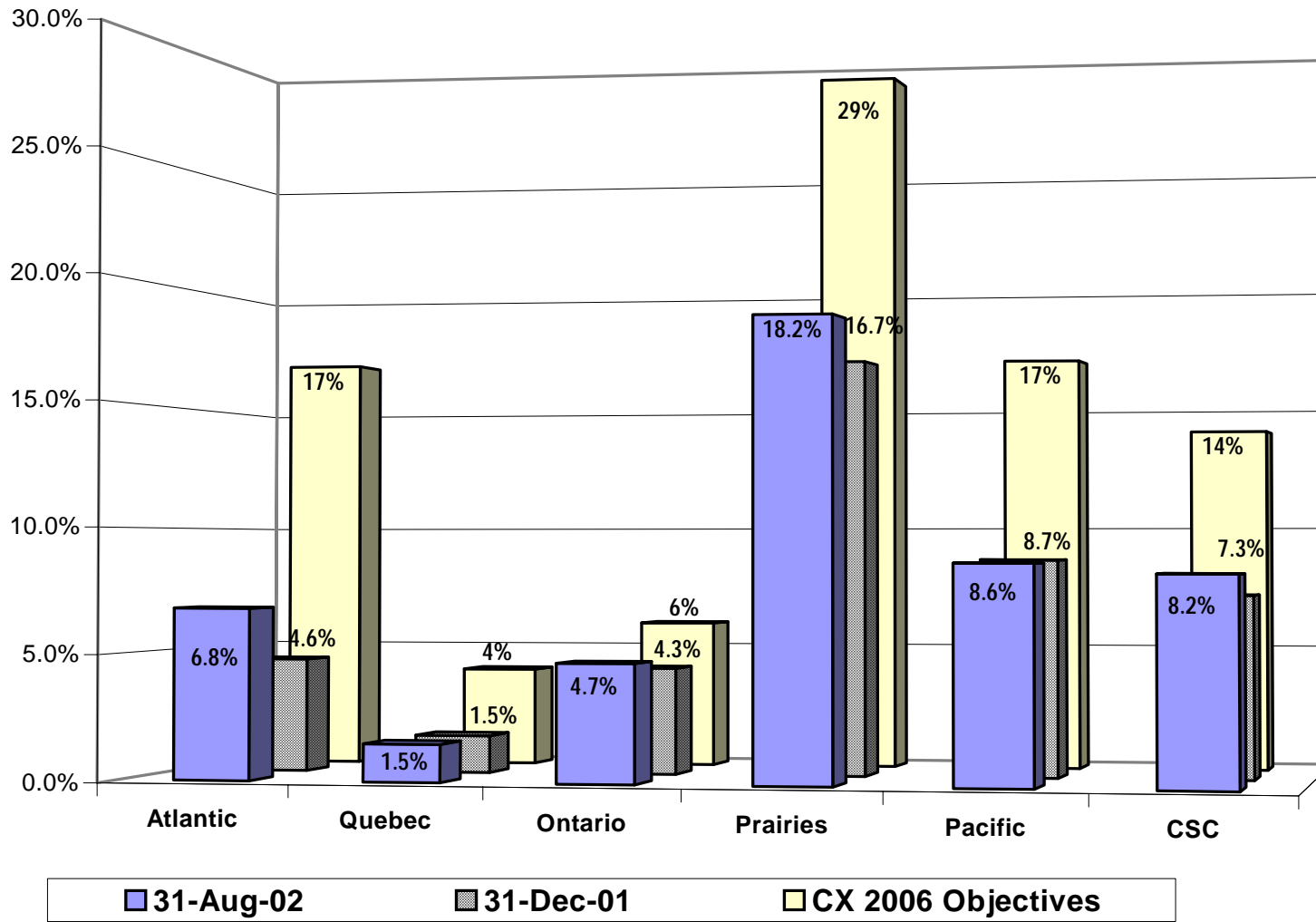
#### Key Indicators

1. A framework exists which holds managers accountable to meet the annual Aboriginal staffing targets for their Region (as identified in the National Aboriginal Recruitment Strategy).
2. Annual targets for indeterminate Aboriginal employment are set in each Region (as per Recommendation #1 in the Recruitment strategy.)
3. There is a reliable reporting mechanism in place to provide assurance that CSC is working towards meeting its commitments with respect to approved benchmarks in the CX and WP categories.
4. There is a reliable reporting mechanism in place to measure CSC's progress towards meeting a 50% benchmark of Aboriginal peoples employed at the Aboriginal healing lodges.
5. There is a formal reporting structure in place that clearly outlines the respective reporting responsibilities regarding Aboriginal staffing between the Regions and National Headquarters.
6. Human Resources staff are aware of, and communicate information on the special authorities and special measures available to facilitate the appointment of Aboriginal candidates.
7. The National Aboriginal Career Management Team is examining special measures and best practices to expedite the timeliness of the overall staffing process for Aboriginal candidates.

**APPENDIX C**

**Representation of Aboriginal Persons in the CX Group and the WP group as of  
August 31, 2002**

### Resourcing Representation of Aboriginal Persons in the CX Group



### Resourcing Representation of Aboriginal Peoples in the WP Group

