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Chair

The Honourable Diane Marleau

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• (0910)

[English]

The Chair (Hon. Diane Marleau (Sudbury, Lib.)): I am going to call the meeting to order, seeing that we have a quorum. I know there are a few people who haven't made it because of the weather, but we will get started.

We're going to start with our witness, Ms. Ellis. She's the senior vice-president of the Canadian Public Service Agency. She is with Madame Jauvin, a top person there. We will listen to what she has to say. I believe that Madame Boudrias from the same agency was before us in December.

I'm sure you've been able to accomplish something since then, and we're anxious to hear from you.

Madame Ellis, I hope you have a short presentation, not too long, and then we'll go from there.

Ms. Karen Ellis (Senior Vice-President, Workforce and Workplace Renewal, Canada Public Service Agency): Thank you very much.

[Translation]

Thank you. I am the senior vice-president with the workforce and workplace renewal sector.

[English]

Before we get started, I would like to give you some context for the discussion, because I know you're particularly interested in certain issues. I think it's important for me to point out that all of our work in the management of human resources in the public service is really shaped by the new regime that we have under the Public Service Modernization Act, brought into force in 2003.

So what does that really mean? It means that deputy heads of all of our departments and agencies, and their line managers, really have the primary responsibility for managing their people, as it relates to their business. So there's been a real shift in ownership and responsibility through that regime coming into force. This includes responsibility for things like recruitment, staffing, employment equity, and official languages. There's a lot they are responsible for and need to have visibility on in order to address issues where there may be problems.

The role of the Canada Public Service Agency, a central agency, is to guide and support with broad policy and direction, and then to monitor federal departments as they fulfill their responsibilities in managing their people. This is a very, very important role, because

the federal public service is the largest and most complex enterprise and employer in Canada.

[Translation]

Our work is also shaped by the increasingly complex and interconnected world we live in. As you know, the public service, like all other employers, is facing a number of demographic challenges and a highly competitive labour market.

[English]

These pressures have led the Clerk of the Privy Council, Mr. Kevin Lynch, who is also the head of the public service, to make renewal a top priority.

We recognize that people entering the workforce today are seeking rewarding professional experiences, not just jobs for life. We're trying to look at things like interchanges, mid-career hiring, and more diversity and better succession planning in the public service.

I will tell you just briefly about the four priorities of renewal, because they're going to be key to me in answering questions you have about specific topics.

The first one is integrated planning.

[Translation]

We believe integrated planning to be of the utmost importance. It is, essentially, the foundation of successful human resources management.

[English]

Simply put, this is really about bringing the business lines of an organization together with the needs for people, and really thinking about that and planning it well. When you do that, you're able to do better recruitment strategies and better employment development.

The second priority of renewal is recruitment.

[Translation]

Recruitment is about ensuring that we renew and sustain capacity at all levels, and that we continue attracting people to the public service at all levels.

[English]

The third priority is employee development. This is a commitment to fostering leadership at all levels and ensuring that employees have meaningful work to do in a supportive environment.

Our last priority is called enabling infrastructure. That means we are working hard to put the right systems and processes in place to ensure that the planning and recruitment and development I talked about can happen effectively.

What I have just described is the context we operate in, our playing field, if you will, but we are really in an ever-changing environment, where deputy heads have substantial responsibility to manage their people.

I would now like to speak a little more in-depth about the issues you have identified after hearing from some other witnesses before your committee.

The topic of employee turnover has really struck you as something you want to dig deeper into. This is a complex area, and we know, for example, that some of the trends that have been identified by the Public Service Commission and others really tell us that we need to do more analysis and pay more attention to these questions. As the president of the Public Service Commission, Maria Barrados, said when she appeared before this committee last fall, the data used by her organization on employee turnover is “rather rough”, and work is under way to clarify and standardize the terminology of mobility, turnover, and temporary workforce—or these types of titles.

Our understanding of the data used by the Public Service Commission is that it encompasses all staffing transactions. Those include the hiring of new employees; reclassifications; lateral movements, meaning movement at the same level without a promotion; promotions; acting appointments; and changes in tenure.

[*Translation*]

We have data in the agency that captures what we call internal mobility, by which we mean lateral movements and promotions.

[*English*]

The Public Service Commission has identified a certain trend, and we agree that the trend lines are the same, but perhaps not to the same extent, because of course we're measuring a slightly different basket of things when we talk about internal movement. It is also very important to note that the current movement of employees in the public service is no higher today than it was in the 1990s. To be sure, more research and analysis is needed to get a better understanding of this situation.

We know that some internal movement can be healthy for a department, when that movement is the result of effective HR planning, which must focus on both the business needs of a department and employee development.

• (0915)

[*Translation*]

As I mentioned earlier, integrated business and human resources planning is the responsibility of deputy heads and their departments.

[*English*]

One aspect of such planning involves looking at an organization's need for employees with very specialized skills and experience, and the right proportion of generalist employees with a wider range of experience.

This reality, together with the personal preferences and career aspirations of individual employees, will have an impact on internal mobility within that organization.

[*Translation*]

Ongoing, effective performance management, and discussions about learning and career planning between employees and their managers are critical to managing as much of the mobility in our system as possible. There is still much work to be done in this regard.

[*English*]

We also know that the increase in the number of public servants who are retiring is creating opportunities for promotion, or development, for other employees. One retirement might result in several promotions or deployments, as the employee who retires must be replaced and, in turn, that person must also be replaced. Effective succession planning is key to managing those kinds of situations.

Other internal movements are necessary to support the implementation of other government policies related to the management of the public service workforce.

[*Translation*]

For example, employees may be temporarily out of their positions to obtain training in their second official language or to fulfil their obligations as reservists. Bill C-40 was introduced in the House of Commons this week, to strengthen job protection for reservists when they are on leave from their civilian jobs.

[*English*]

People may also be on temporary leave to raise children through the use of maternity, parental, adoption, or care and nurturing leave; to care for elderly parents; to pursue their education; or to take a self-funded sabbatical leave.

In all of the above examples, temporary staffing solutions are needed to ensure that the work of the employee on leave continues. This can provide other employees with developmental opportunities through acting appointments, for example; or it might allow the organization to bring in a term employee for a short period of time; or perhaps a student is hired to backfill for that employee. Another option could be to bring in a casual worker, or the work might best be completed by an employee on a pre-retirement special assignment. All of these are valid options if the department has considered the implications of their use through effective planning related to its business needs.

I should also mention that planned movement is the result of a few specific and small centrally run management development programs, where participants are assigned particular assignments, perhaps for a shorter period of time, to learn particular skills and to get certain kinds of experience. Because they're on a special program they've been selected for, they may move through the system a little bit faster in a series of assignments.

Some departments have established similar development programs to respond to their specific needs. These programs typically meet employment equity objectives very well and help make the public service more representative of the Canadian population. They do that because they're very explicit in the planning of those objectives.

[*Translation*]

Of course, planning cannot be perfect. What may have started out as an employee's temporary absence from work may become permanent, resulting in the need to staff the position permanently. In other instances, where internal movement is not planned, or where it is causing gaps or shortages, it may be a symptom to help us diagnose and deal with a more pressing problem, such as an area of skills shortage in the public service. This would appear to be the case with the human resources community.

The agency and the HR community are showing leadership in this respect through collective recruitment processes that all departments can access to fill vacancies and replace retiring employees.

• (0920)

[*English*]

The public service is also working to strengthen particular functional communities with explicit strategies for capacity-building, training, and professional and career development within these specialized streams.

What is clear to us at this stage is that further research and analysis are needed to understand in greater depth the different reasons behind movement of employees, both within and between departments. Through our ongoing efforts to renew and modernize the public service, I can tell you that we are giving this considerable attention.

In closing, I would like to emphasize that the public service, with the agency's support, is taking important steps to renew and sustain itself. The leadership across this system is focused on dealing with realities around demographics, increasingly complex work, and the good people management needed to achieve a high-performing and sustainable public service.

Managing the internal movement of employees needs to be addressed as part of our work on the fundamentals of renewal, including planning, recruitment, employee development, and simplifying the HR infrastructure.

This concludes my opening remarks.

[*Translation*]

I would now be pleased to take your questions.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

[*English*]

The Chair: *Merci.*

We will move to Mr. Holland.

Mr. Mark Holland (Ajax—Pickering, Lib.): Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you very much, Ms. Ellis, for your presentation.

I'm wondering if higher turnover rates are here to stay, to some degree, and if that's not part of what we need to acknowledge, the fact that people simply don't work the way they used to work. People enter a career, but often they are looking for major changes and opportunities after just five or six years.

One of the things I noted in some of the questions we received from the Library of Parliament—and I don't know whether or not you're considering these things—is the thought of trying to limit people or to place restraints on them when they take a job in order to limit their mobility. I'm wondering if that might not just push people out of the federal government entirely. How are you dealing with the fact that this is perhaps just a new, existing reality and that higher turnover rates are going to be part of this?

Hopefully we'll try to keep these people within the federal service, but if you move to try to deal with the problem of turnover rates while misunderstanding them, you could just push these people out of the federal service altogether.

Ms. Karen Ellis: You've raised some really important points.

The first thing I'd say about our turnover rates, as I've said already, is that our data show they are no higher than they were in the nineties in terms of the trend. So the trend is real.

As you say, there can be different kinds of expectations, and people are always looking to develop their careers and themselves, which we have to be very, very conscious of when we're trying to help people manage their careers.

You can have a variety of people with different types of backgrounds. You can have people who are highly specialized and who can spend an entire career in one department and find a career path there to move up and advance. And that has to be part of their experience, working with good managers who look at the business needs and at that person's aspirations; and if there's a real ongoing dialogue and engagement about that, one would hope the person would feel there is a path for them and that there could be movement.

So I go back to the basic point: is every employee being managed well by a supervisor who's thinking about the very things you've pointed out, about what people may want in terms of their own path? So the basics have to be done well.

The second thing is that you've talked about there being a lot of movement. And in particular categories of jobs, where you will often have more generalist or transferable skills that are going to be in high demand between departments—and also in the private sector—we really have to look at good strategies. For example, some of the groups that are in high demand are the human resource professionals, the communications professionals, and the finance professionals. As you can appreciate, there is a lot of need for those skills in the public service, as well as outside. When you have groups that are in high demand and we're not necessarily getting enough graduates at the same time to get them experience and to have them replaced, there is going to be lots of pressure for those people to move around the system, because people have a great demand for them.

What we've been doing, for example, with the HR community—and Finance has also been working on this—is to say, okay, this community has a lot of pressure on it. How do we actually work with this community to develop capacity, such as specific training that will get these people ready at the right level and give them a career path, and manage them as a community, so they have a sense that their careers are going to be helped through the system even though they're under pressure?

The point is that you always have to have a balance between operational business needs, trying to get someone in to do that job, and also making sure employees are going to succeed over time. You need to spend enough time at a level to get good at that level and to be able to serve the public, or the internal client you have in government. I always say that's why that discussion is so important. You can say to an employee, it's probably a good idea to spend a couple of years at this level before you move up. And if you're working with them closely, that path can be a good, productive path for them, and they'll see a way ahead. It doesn't mean we don't have cases where there will be an opportunity for someone to get a promotion faster. Do you know what I mean? And that will be of interest to them.

But I go back to the fact that these are realities. We have to manage them and to focus on them and really work one-on-one—every manager and employee—to really find out how to manage movement within the public service. What's the best mix?

All I would say is that I like to see people equipped to succeed, so I like them to build depth and credibility at level. And that can vary from case to case, but as long as it's part of a really good performance management dialogue and career development dialogue, I think we'll get better and better at it.

• (0925)

Mr. Mark Holland: Thank you.

There are two separate issues, as I mentioned in my first question. One is turnover; one is retention within the overall organization—in this case, within the federal public service. Can you tell us how we're doing as a federal public service in terms of turnover rates? Could you also tell us how we're doing on the second issue, retention within the organization, versus your other public sector peers—in other words, the provinces and municipalities—and versus the private sector?

I'm not expecting you to start listing statistics, but in a general sense, how are we stacking up relative to our public sector competitors and relative to what's happening in the private sector? These things don't happen in isolation as well, and I think higher turnover rates are being experienced by everybody to some degree. I just want to know how we're comparing, and also about the retention issue generally.

Ms. Karen Ellis: Thanks for understanding that I won't have a lot of numbers handy. I can certainly say, having met with provincial colleagues who are dealing with issues, that they have similar challenges in some of the same functional communities I mentioned, such as finance and PE. We're all dealing in a very competitive labour market and we're looking at what's available coming out of universities and colleges, so yes, they have similar challenges when

you talk to provincial governments, but they're also taking it seriously and trying to develop strategies to deal with it.

On retention in the public service, our average departure rate per year is basically around 5%. That's overall departures from the public service. I don't have firm numbers, but I can tell you that it is higher in the private sector. It's a few percentage points higher in terms of a general comparison of departure rates per year, so in the public service overall, our retention as an institution is quite good in terms of stability.

You wanted to know about the private sector as well. You talked about the general departure rate there. Turnover I don't want to try to comment on specifically, but I would imagine that because the labour market is competitive in particular fields, we're all probably feeling the pressure in those areas for attracting and retaining employees.

In a lot of the research that we share, whether we're public or private sector, we often hear studies that echo something called the “six-pack”. What is it that actually attracts and retains employees in any organization? Of course, the top things include really good leadership, a good work environment, meaningful work, fair compensation—those sorts of questions—and flexible work practices and policies, so every one of us, public sector and private sector, needs to be striving to make sure we're providing those things in order to attract and keep people. Career development and learning and development opportunities are on that list as well.

So there's a basket of things that we know we need to be able to provide and offer to be competitive in a labour market that we are all living in. I would say that whether we're private or public sector, we're all dealing with some similar challenges, just given the way the labour market is these days, and the demographics.

The Chair: Thank you.

We'll go to Madame Bourgeois.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Diane Bourgeois (Terrebonne—Blainville, BQ): Thank you, Madam Chair.

Good morning, Ms. Ellis.

In your presentation, you said that it is important to note that the current movement of employees in the public service is no higher today than it was in the 1990s. However, our figures show that there is a high turnover rate in the public service. Unlike your statistics, ours show a steady rising trend with overall turnover having reached 40%, a level that is higher than that recorded for 2005-2006 and 2004-2005. They also show that mobility has been exceptionally high in the HR and management communities, at 76% and 58% respectively.

You said that you have developed plans to address this situation; however, I imagine that you did so based on your figures which show turnover to be 5%. Is that correct?

•(0930)

Ms. Karen Ellis: The 5% refers to the percentage of people who leave the public service each year.

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: Be that as it may, however, as my colleague pointed out, people leaving the public service generates movement within the public service. Newly vacant posts are often filled by people who were already working for the public service. It is like an endless game of musical chairs.

When she was last here, I asked Ms. Boudrias to provide me with a copy of the plan that you had developed to address staff turnover, but it has still not been sent to me. I trust that you will ask her to forward it to me. When this plan was being developed, did you take into account only retirements, or did you also give consideration to the 40% mobility generated by these retirements?

Ms. Karen Ellis: Ms. Bourgeois, as I have already said, we do not believe that the statistics illustrate an upwards trend in mobility. Indeed, movement of employees was at a similar level in the 1990s. I would be happy to provide these statistics to the committee.

Could I ask you to clarify your question. You asked Ms. Boudrias for a copy of the plan...

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: Yes, when they appeared before the committee on December 12, I even congratulated them on having prepared a plan. I asked to see a copy of the plan with its performance indicators, results, etc. I am still waiting. I would like you to reiterate my request.

Ms. Karen Ellis: Very well, I will get that done.

I believe that Ms. Boudrias' plan related to the compensation service. I would be happy to speak about integrated planning for the public service in general, as that is my area of expertise.

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: Very well, let us move on to your area of expertise. You said that you had prepared an integrated plan to make human resources more effective and more responsive.

Would you be able to send a copy of this plan to the committee?

Ms. Karen Ellis: Ms. Bourgeois, what I said was that each department is responsible for its own integrated planning. I could, however, send you the integrated plan for my agency. As I said at the beginning of my presentation, the new regime for managing human resources provides that deputy heads have responsibility for planning, recruitment and staffing. All departments and agencies are now responsible for their own human resources management, under the stewardship of their deputy head. You are asking to see each department's plan. Departments are now responsible for their own integrated planning, it is part of their mandate.

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: Does that mean that when Ms. Barrados appears before the committee she is not speaking on behalf of all the departments and agencies?

Ms. Karen Ellis: I believe that when Ms. Barrados last appeared before the committee, she spoke about the Public Service Commission's annual report.

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: But I cannot be expected to ask our 100-odd departments and agencies if they have a human resources management plan. This is supposed to be your jurisdiction, unless I

am mistaken. Who is responsible for ensuring that plans are developed to address shortages in human resources?

Ms. Karen Ellis: Each deputy minister is responsible for addressing staffing and recruitment problems in his department or agency. It is spelled out very clearly. Each deputy minister has to devise his or her own plan, as each department has different needs. For example, the Department of Foreign Affairs has very different needs from Industry Canada.

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: Very well.

Are PSAC or your employees involved in developing the integrated plan to address staff mobility and other public service issues? Have you asked for their input?

Ms. Karen Ellis: For planning?

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: Yes.

Ms. Karen Ellis: Employees' involvement in integrated planning is a bedrock of our operational practice. We have developed some excellent, simple tools, including key questions which can be consulted on our Web page.

Managers, no matter their level, and their teams, can use these tools to brainstorm and plan. They may use these tools, for example, to hold a day-long session. We provide the tools, but they do their own planning.

•(0935)

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: We heard from representatives of the Public Service Alliance of Canada this week. They told us that the problem has been around since 2000 and that they have tried to contact you on numerous occasions to work with you towards a solution as regards human resources. However, they have never been given an answer and you have never been asked to participate in the process.

Ms. Karen Ellis: In which process do they want to be involved? There are a number of groups and committees that work with the unions. It depends on the issues and departments involved. The way in which various departments approach working with the union varies, but I believe that all deputy ministers... You perhaps have, from time to time, a committee... When I was at National Defence, we set up joint committees with the unions. We had a very good working relationship with them for years. It really depends on the department and the approach it chooses to use.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Ellis.

The floor is yours, Mr. Kramp.

[English]

Mr. Daryl Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings, CPC): Thank you, Madam Chair.

Welcome, Ms. Ellis.

I have a number of questions, if I have an opportunity to get through them. We had an interesting proposal put forward by the union representatives who were here last week, and I'd like your comment on it.

In order to more fully understand why people are leaving or what the reason for relocation or job transfer would be, a suggestion was brought forward that we should or could consider exit interviews. What are your thoughts on that?

Ms. Karen Ellis: I would say, generally speaking, that I think exit interviews are an excellent way to find out some of the reasons behind departures of employees. In fact, in many departments those are conducted. Again, it just depends on whether the manager in a particular work unit is using that best practice to find out what's happening with their particular workforce.

Mr. Daryl Kramp: Do you believe it should be mandatory throughout all the departments?

Ms. Karen Ellis: I really couldn't make a recommendation on anything like that. I would simply say that many people use exit interviews and that they're very useful. They should be considered as a best practice and as part of the picture in finding out what's behind some of these issues.

Mr. Daryl Kramp: Do you see any downside to them?

Ms. Karen Ellis: I don't see any particular downside to exit interviews. I think they can be very useful.

Mr. Daryl Kramp: Thank you very much.

I'll go on to the next question.

I'm actually looking for a breakdown in four or five areas. Let me just preface my remarks by saying that the turnover we experience in our public sector blows me away. I just cannot imagine how a government can function with the turnover rate we have. From all of our levels of management trying to deliver a job to all of the people in any position trying to fulfill their responsibilities, with the dramatic turnover we have, I literally cannot imagine how poorly run we are or how inefficient we are with this kind of a turnover rate.

I'm seeing the rate at basically around 40% now. Last year it was 35%; the year before that it was 30%; the year before that it was 23%; the year before that it was 18%. My point is that we're not heading in the right direction.

When I see this kind of turnover, I have two areas of concern. I want a comparison to another sector, and I'll get to that.

In terms of all of these transfers taking place, I'll give you four categories. I'm certainly not asking you to come up with numbers, but eventually I'd like some information on this from the department. In terms of all these transfers that are taking place, or the massive turnover, what percentage is the result of retirement, what percentage would be advancement, what percentage would be as a result of all the temporary conditions you've listed—maternity, reservists, etc.—and what percentage would be simply a request for relocation?

If we are able to separate those four components right there, it would give us a little better understanding. Obviously we have one other internal problem that it could be, which is just total job dissatisfaction. I'm hoping that is the smallest category, but if it turned out to be one of the major categories, then we really have some problems.

At some point, I'd like a report back to this committee with some range of discussion on that.

One other point I would like to make is that we found the turnover rate is much smaller in a lot of the smaller communities where we have federal employees than it is in larger urban cores. Why? We need to know why. Does that mean we should take a lot of our federal responsibilities that have accumulated in large urban cores and start to spread them to smaller communities? Is that the solution? I'm not suggesting it is, but if there's a correlation between the low turnover rate in your smaller communities versus your massive, "bloated" bureaucracy, then we have another problem.

I would like your comment on that.

● (0940)

Ms. Karen Ellis: We'll start with your request for a breakdown, which our statistical expert here says we can provide as a follow-up. We can give you a good breakdown on the various categories. We may even have one or two more.

I don't know that we'd have one on job dissatisfaction, but I take your point that part of good management is trying to make sure people have meaningful work and want to stay for a reasonable amount of time.

With reference to the smaller communities, yes, I believe our numbers do indicate that there is more movement in the national capital area than there are in regions. I don't know that we have a lot of analysis as to why, but in the national capital region one of the reasons for a lot of movement is that we tend to have quite a few of the five largest professional occupational groups in which there's a lot of movement. Human resources, as I mentioned, is constantly moving. The economists and the executives move a lot; that movement is often associated with some career progression and planning. We also have some development programs for executives that would require movement to get them developed to a certain level. The computer scientists often move a lot in this area, and also program managers.

Why do they move a lot? It's because they have more of the generalist or corporate services skills that are in high demand. Those skills are highly transferable between branches in a department, or in fact between departments. It's also because we have, as I said, some basic shortages in the labour market in those areas, so it is going to be more challenging to keep people for a long period of time in some of those areas because there will be opportunities for them to advance and move as a result of the high demand for them.

Because there's a higher population of those folks in the NCR, it's logical that there would be more movement compared to the regions. Often departments will have a lot of their central administration in the national capital region, so those groups naturally would gravitate there.

I don't have information in greater depth as to why people stay longer in the regions. When it comes to issues of relocation, there can be a lot of personal and family reasons as well; people have different reasons and different considerations in every case, in terms of what part of the country they want to work in.

I do agree that diversity of thinking and representation across Canada is really important. When we manage and try to build our teams, we need to really plan for and think about getting a good mix of not only people, backgrounds, education, and employment equity groups, but also of regions of Canada, and build diversity into our thinking, because we make better policies and deliver better service that way.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Angus is next.

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Thank you very much.

I'll speak from the experience within our region, because it's practical and I know it.

We have two major federal employers in my riding. One is Veterans Affairs in Kirkland Lake. Then we have CPP and old age security; that's handled out of Timmins.

I've always tried to get a clear sense of how departments set their criteria. I often find it's like calling Darth Vader and seeing if he'll go out for a coffee with me to get a clear answer on these decisions.

In the Kirkland Lake office we find a very low turnover of employees—very low. People are committed to it. It's basically a way of life. People, once they're in the federal civil service, stay. In Veterans Affairs they bid on contracts. They're not just doing a regional service; they're actually able to branch out and bid on contracts across Canada, and they're very successful at it.

We find that in our human resources department, on the other hand, we always seem to be taking the overflow work from big centres like Scarborough. If someone retires, the position is not necessarily replaced. I'm trying to get a sense of why it would be more efficient to be continually putting resources into a very large centre like Scarborough, where there is going to be a much higher turnover rate, than into a city like Timmins, where these people are committed to it. We can never get a sense of the criteria for deciding where to apportion the workload.

You said that it's within each department, and I noticed that in one of your statements you said the deputy heads have substantial authority. What criteria must they meet to ensure the public is getting good bang for the buck—that the jobs are going to places where we aren't going to have high turnover? Is that a factor they even have to consider?

• (0945)

Ms. Karen Ellis: I'm sure it's something they would have to consider when they do their overall planning.

I keep coming back to planning. Frankly, since I've been working in this job, I'm realizing how critical it is to good management and to dealing with all kinds of questions, including the one you ask.

In terms of planning for a department, when a deputy head is leading that process, the first level is that really strategic level—for example, what the business of that particular department is, what the main business lines are, what the needs are that spread across Canada, etc. Then what they really have to do is cascade that down so that every sub-leader.... I would be the next level, the assistant

deputy minister. If I'm running old age security or whatever, I have to really do that in depth for my own, and I expect everyone who's underneath me to feed in, so that I can give a really good picture of my business, my people needs, my finance, and everything else. That has to actually form that overall integrated plan for a department.

The bottom line here is that the questions you're asking are big questions for a department that they need to engage in. I'll be very honest with you: integrated planning is evolving and getting better with time, but most departments and deputies who find they're doing it well now have told us that it's taken two to three years of changing the energy and the dialogue in the department to get into planning and that type of open conversation that brings the people piece in, and that when they've spent two to three years really doing it, they start to see excellent results.

I'll give you an example. I can't speak to HRSD, but a few years ago the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, as you know, with food safety becoming a big issue in Canada, got lots of new funding in their budget to deal with big national issues of importance. Their deputy shared the fact that a whole lot of new expectations were put on the department with that. They needed to sit down right away and start talking about what this set of new business needs would mean and how they were going to recruit the people they needed. They needed to look at scientific recruitment—which is challenging in and of itself—and something they called a hyperspecialist, a situation in which there might be one expert in North America to do that type of science.

For me, it was a live example of a management team taking ownership of the business it needed to do for Canadians and then really figuring out what the people stuff was.

I'm just saying that you have to have that kind of dynamic. The deputy has to have a plan, and that plan has to be shared with employees.

Mr. Charlie Angus: My concern is, first, whether or not your agency actually looks at geographic hot spots to identify high turnover areas.

This isn't pitting one region against another—I think every region of the country should have a balance of federal jobs—but if it comes down to the deputy heads, they could do this in a very holistic manner, or they could continue to do it the way they've always done it. If you are making planning decisions and you're apportioning a workload in regions where you have extremely high turnover, and you have other regional offices that have very low turnover, is there a criterion whereby you actually have to look at the overall bottom line of putting resources into places to train people who are going to leave in two years, as opposed to putting in the same resources and having someone for 25 years? Is that, in any way, mandated above the deputy head?

Ms. Karen Ellis: I'm not aware of any specific mandate on geographic selection in areas. What I can say to you is that our policies, our guidance, and our advice to departments is to sit down and think holistically about the whole picture, which would encompass such questions as where you're going to train people and where the mix is.

There is certainly a level of reflection and responsibility to decision-making at the departmental level, but we wouldn't have a list of specific criteria. As a central agency we're offering broad policy guidance, and because the regime shift was to give ownership and to get the whole leadership in a department doing this, they really do have the responsibility. They're accountable for how that department runs.

• (0950)

Mr. Charlie Angus: We've identified here—and we believe it is a very serious problem—the high levels of turnover and the investment that is made in people who then maybe move to other departments or maybe go to the private sector. It is a major cost to the taxpayers and a major impediment to our being able to provide a functional public service. We would certainly like the issue of turnover to be part of any planning process; otherwise, it seems to me that the planning process is going to be functionally irrelevant.

Geographic location is certainly a factor. How do we ensure that we're not just blowing smoke here, and that some deputy department head somewhere along the line looks at a list of seven or eight criteria and says we'd better tick that box off and look at this before making a decision?

Ms. Karen Ellis: I talked about renewal. Our clerk is really leading deputies, and really expecting much better work year over year on truly holistic planning that looks at all the angles. It would have to include those kinds of considerations. When you have a department with a lot of regional operations, they should be looking at—and I'm sure they do look at—the mix and where they do training.

Something I've noticed about the movement of people—and I've been in eight or nine departments, so this is based on my own experience—is that many people, when they move, usually move largely within the same department, and then there is a certain proportion of movement between departments, so in terms of the investment that's made.... That's why I'm so keen on real discussion around employee development in every work unit, because you help people plan how to invest.

We invest in somebody's training and learning a job. We'd like them to make that contribution for a decent amount of time, and then if they move on to another part of the organization, they're still with us, and their skills and investment are still giving us something good in the system.

We do have movement, but a lot of movement is within the same department; some movement is between departments. You still have trained and formed people to be able to produce good work for the public service. As I said, our departure rate overall is lower than that in the private sector. We actually have quite a high level of retention in the public service.

I would also emphasize that we're aware of the challenges, but I wouldn't say we're in a crisis. This is serious. These are trends we have to pay attention to. What we work on in the agency, which is what the clerk is pushing people to do, is to say, this isn't simply the job of the human resources department anymore; this is your job, line manager. This is your job to take ownership of these questions, and to be paying attention to them, and to be managing them. To have a high-performing public service, you have to make sure you're getting the best out of people, and that they feel they have a career path.

There are two sides, and people have to have the discussion. The worst thing is if you're not having that dialogue and discussion, and somebody feels they're not being utilized fully, and they're dissatisfied and may move on. We still, hopefully, will get them somewhere else in the system, but I go back to that “six-pack”—the good leadership, the good management, the career development. These are the basics. We need to just keep making sure they become more and more systematic through the system.

In my case, I've had good people who have managed me through my career and have helped me figure out what to do, but I've also spent good amounts of time in each place so that I could build my strength as I went. So I'm very grateful for my own experience, and I think there are many who have good experience, and others for whom we need to do better. This is really person-to-person good management. This is how you do it.

The Chair: I'm going to take privilege here and add something to what Mr. Angus was saying.

What role does having most of the decision-makers living in the large centres, with much larger staffs around them, play in putting them in a much better position for promotion? Sometimes I get the sense that that's why some of the decisions are made. They're not looked at, for instance, on turnover. It's more a case of, well, you know, if I have all these people working for me here, I'm going to do much better. So the decisions sometimes are taking in that function.

Coming from the regions—and I've been in politics now for a long time—I can tell you there is always this pressure to remove the jobs from the regions and bring them to the larger centres. I can't tell you the number of times there's been that kind of pressure going on across the country. I think if you talk to anybody who represents the regions, they're going to tell you the same thing.

So I add that, because while you may have a great plan, if your senior person feels that it's better for their future to have all the staff under them in that particular place, you're not going to get the same kind of decision making.

A voice: It's empire-building.

The Chair: It's empire-building. It's natural. It's human nature. I think we suffer from that in many instances.

• (0955)

Ms. Karen Ellis: I had never worked in human resources before I came to this job. I had four years at National Defence, where I was practising as a senior manager. I would say that I have come to appreciate how important the leadership is on things such as those you're talking about. The tone is set by the leader for the value-based public service and the values in human resources management staffing.

This new regime I talked about is value based: fairness, access, and transparency are in the preamble to the legislation. So the more leadership in an organization, the more engagement, the more setting of clear expectations about how they want people to make decisions and communicate with employees—that is how we change it.

I'm not giving you a simple, easy answer on a specific, because I'm telling you that this isn't a simple, easy world. It's a world where we have to keep pushing, we have to keep focused, we have to keep expecting our leaders to walk the talk and to basically expect that the leaders at different levels are doing this.

When it comes to the human resources piece and decision-making, for me it's the engagement of the collective. The more you have the team sitting together talking about common challenges and issues, then the more you can get to topics like these: how are we doing this, how are we making decisions, and what do we want to stand for in our organization.

I really believe there is progress being made. I've been immersed in it now for 18 months, and I have to say it's coming. It's not perfect in every place, and people will say we're not where we need to be, but there's a level of engagement and priority that's been put on these issues now by our clerk, on renewal. I have to say that at the agency pretty well all our work is involved in trying to help departments make progress.

The Chair: I'd like it if you could add that little piece about considering the regions whenever there is a new expansion with a call centre somewhere. I noticed that there's some of that happening, but I don't think there's enough of it.

I'm going to go to Ms. Karetak-Lindell,

Ms. Nancy Karetak-Lindell (Nunavut, Lib.): Thank you.

I'm sitting in for someone, but it is a very interesting topic.

We're sometimes confused as to how far some of these policies go into arm's-length agencies. To be more specific, I represent Nunavut, and we have land claims agreements that have specific requirements concerning Inuit hiring. Sometimes there doesn't seem to be a clear policy on how far those policies go, whether it's Parks Canada or Canada Post, for example. The more arm's-length you go from the central part, the more it seems to be a selective or optional interpretation of what that means at the hiring level.

We're aiming for proportional hiring with the Inuit population in our territory, but we sometimes have difficulty with some federal government departments that say that policy doesn't apply to them because they're, let's say, Canada Post, and they're arm's-length, or Parks Canada has its own guidelines.

So I think there needs to be a clearer policy on what you mean by government departments. Are they part of the central group, so that policy applies to them? Yes? What is the policy for Parks Canada, Canada Post, or some of the other agencies that are up there, as we set up more agencies that seem to be a little bit arm's-length?

As far as people up there are concerned, the agencies are still the Government of Canada, but when it comes down to the nitty-gritty, sometimes it's a very grey area and it's different for each agency. Again, there seems to be selective interpretation.

This is very specific, and I don't mind if you get to back to me later.

Here is another very quick point. I noticed in the information that the Canadian Human Rights Commission ensures equal opportunity for employment of the four designated groups. I'm assuming you have hiring priority policies for those groups. Do you get any complaints when you have hiring priority policies like affirmative action?

• (1000)

Ms. Karen Ellis: I'll tell you what I do know about the special operating agencies and crown corporations, versus the 70 or so departments and agencies that our policies would cover, and my staff will correct me if I'm wrong. We can certainly provide a follow-up page to the committee.

But you're quite right, things like Canada Post...that's a crown corporation, so it really is governed in and of itself, and our policies would not apply to them. Many of them will have similar things, but they really do run on their own.

You have something like the Canada Revenue Agency, which is a special operating agency. It's still part of the Government of Canada, but it's been set up with a different kind of governance.

I won't get technical, but under a certain schedule of the Financial Administration Act, there's a whole list of departments and agencies that are considered to be part of the employer of the Government of Canada, and run by the Treasury Board as the employer. That's the group to which our policies would apply as the general policies. They have to work with those policies and set up their own processes to support them inside, but our policies would apply to that large group.

We can follow up for you there, but you're quite right, there are some differences.

Just to be clear, any complaints about human rights—whether that has to do with employment equity groups or any of the grounds under the Human Rights Act—those would go to the Canadian Human Rights Commission and not the agency. We do not receive those complaints.

However, in my area, I am responsible for the policy on employment equity for the public service—that large group of departments—as well as for the duty to accommodate, both of which are related in some ways and very, very important, especially in today's increasingly diverse workforce. We do that general policy, we provide some support and guidance, and we monitor departmental performance, but the departments are responsible for their results on how they are doing effective hiring of equity groups, as well as all kinds of other considerations in their recruitment.

So as a public service overall, we are meeting the workforce availability for persons with disabilities, for women, and for aboriginal people. We do not yet meet—well enough—the workforce availability for visible minorities. I did a couple of committees in the last week, talking about some of those issues.

But the bottom line is that we have to look to deputy heads—starting with the planning, and then how do they do their recruiting—to try to make sure they can build their workforce to be representative. One thing I would emphasize is that we've seen that when people do really thoughtful planning, they get very, very good results on the employment equity groups. Some of our percentages on those centrally run management trainee programs are fantastic.

My point is that when you think about it, plan for it, and seek out that talent, you can build a very good representative work unit. I guess what I'm saying is that we just have to keep working on that year after year.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

[*Translation*]

We will now move on to Ms. Faille.

Ms. Meili Faille (Vaudreuil-Soulanges, BQ): Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you for your presentation, Ms. Ellis.

All of this brings back memories of the 1990s. I myself am a former public servant. I am not sure whether you recall, but at that time the talk was of salary freezing. This meant that the only way for a young employee to earn more was to change jobs. I worked for a number of different departments in a number of different capacities and eventually ended up drafting memoranda of understanding between various departments. I was also involved in union-management negotiations. In short, I had a great career.

I sought out jobs in the IT field. What led me to leave the public service was not that there was not enough work, but, rather, primarily, the lack of challenge or recognition. That being said, it would be remiss of me not to mention the grievances of certain colleagues who provided us with unsurpassed support even though their workload was too heavy. For some managers, when it came to setting priorities, their career came first, end of story, and their employees were an afterthought.

At the beginning of last week, we heard from public service union representatives who explained to us the salary discrepancies that affect people working in compensation services.

The same problem existed when I was a public servant, and I remember that other employees did all that they could to help us, because we all worked together. Everybody wants to be paid, and to be paid on time, and everybody wants information; however, the

compensation officers have too much work on their plate and, to be honest with you, I have never had the impression that their problem is a priority for the department.

I appreciate that each department has its own challenges. Priorities and services vary from one department to the next. Some are more political, others are more operational. In addition, some departments are going through restructuring. I saw a lot of restructuring in my time, it was awful. The department changed its name three times in two years.

There comes a point when the employees seem to become demotivated. You are trying to create the impression that everything is going swimmingly, when that is not in fact the case in all departments. It would perhaps be better to recognize that there is a problem and try to find the solution.

That is why we are so interested in planning. That is what we are looking for as a committee. There is a problem, and we want to know how you are addressing it.

I have also worked in management. Managers want the best from their employees. I will always remember something that my last employer said to me. He said that his aim was to see me promoted above him. That is what happened and we celebrated. That is something that you do not see in the public service.

I am going to ask you to explain something in simple terms for us. The various departments are in competition with one another. Some departments offer higher salaries than others for equivalent work. This is something that I experienced in the 1990s. Departments tried to grab the best employees and sometimes offer better conditions to certain employees in order to keep them.

On Tuesday, we heard that these salary discrepancies can be as much as \$14,000. The public service is a small world; people talk to one another and word gets out. This sort of situation undermines morale and could also lead to people asking themselves whether it is worth staying with the public service. I can well believe that there are cases of \$14,000 salary discrepancies. The people who told us about them had proof. Are you aware of this problem?

• (1005)

To cut to the chase, what do you plan on doing to resolve this problem? Are you carrying out more detailed investigations in some areas? Do you carry out investigations or audits in those departments where there are problems?

As the witnesses said on Tuesday, this sort of problem does not affect all departments. It does, however, seem to affect more operational services, such as, for example, Service Canada. When I was a public servant, I remember Service Canada employees saying that they had to handle a crazy amount of legislation. How can they be expected to provide customer service in such conditions? Service Canada struggled to recruit staff as employees were disheartened at having to interpret five, six or even seven pieces of legislation, including the Immigration Act. They knew that the information they were giving could have important consequences for the person who was requesting it.

Perhaps you would like to comment on this situation. I went through it myself in the 1990s, and a decade later the same problem still exists.

The Chair: You used up a lot of time, Ms. Faille, and there is not much left for Ms. Ellis to answer.

Would you like to give us a brief answer?

Ms. Karen Ellis: I would like to make three points. Firstly, the problem of excessive workload does still exist. I agree with you that the best way to manage it is section by section, branch by branch. It is not always easy. There are seasonal trends and departmental trends, but that being said, there is always work to be done. Managing it appropriately is part and parcel of good planning and good management.

Secondly, I think that the issues brought before the committee earlier this week actually relate to classification. It is not my area of expertise, but I think I am right in saying that salaries are determined by an official system of classification. If there is a problem or a perception of unfairness, then it ought to be referred to a classification expert. Classification reviews take time; professional groups can wait for them for a long time. Classification is a huge and complex field. There is a lot of work being done on this front with some professional groups.

If you would like a brief update on the matter, we could send you some information. A great deal of progress has been made with some three to five groups.

• (1010)

The Chair: What we were told was that, depending on the agency or department, people were being paid up to \$14,000 more for the same work, and sometimes even for slightly easier work. When we asked about this in December, we were told that it was a different issue.

Classification problems can take years to resolve.

Ms. Karen Ellis: I know, I know.

The Chair: We should not wait years before acting on this problem. I think that it could be resolved by deciding to place all compensation officers on the same pay scale as certain other groups. It is a challenge. However, the solution has been partly implemented and we should continue to roll it out in order to ensure that we hold on to the compensation officers that we train, rather than losing them as soon as they have finished their training. I am saying this because I know that you are not familiar with the issue. If these poor people have to wait for reclassification, they will leave and we will be faced with a real problem again. We cannot wait for reclassification.

That being said, I will now hand over to Mr. Albrecht.

[*English*]

Mr. Harold Albrecht (Kitchener—Conestoga, CPC): Thank you, Madam Chair.

I want to come back to that if I have time, because I think we need to pursue that question further.

Madam Ellis, you've referred a number of times today to the new regime, that deputy heads and line managers have primary

responsibility and flexibility and that your role now, as the Canada Public Service Agency, is to guide, support, and monitor.

I'm a new member here, and I'm just wondering if you could help me in about one minute to understand the current system in contrast to one before 2003. In a practical way, how is this different?

Ms. Karen Ellis: I'll go as quickly as I can, and what we can probably also do is follow up with a one-page summary of some categories for you.

Essentially, before the new regime came in, there really was a lot more centralized direction and management of things like staffing and recruitment. A lot of work was actually run and managed by the Public Service Commission and, in some cases, the Treasury Board. Those are central agencies.

Mr. Harold Albrecht: So an agency would tell you they needed x number of people, and you would recruit them?

Ms. Karen Ellis: Yes, that's how it works in large degree. And departments could always do some recruitment. For example, Finance has always gone out and found people on campus. But many departments have worked with the Public Service Commission, which has done the actual recruiting, and they still do, but they offer it as an optional service to departments.

But the main thing is that when it comes to meeting your employment equity objectives, developing your recruitment strategies, and figuring out your staffing strategies, departments are doing the bulk of that themselves. They obviously have to respect the laws, policies, and guidance, but they actually have to sit down and do that thinking and do that reflection in a much more in-depth way now. It's not that they didn't do any of that before, but there's been a real shift in attitude, that this is now for you to do.

Mr. Harold Albrecht: Okay. I would be helped by a one-page summary of how those changes are reflected.

Ms. Karen Ellis: Okay, we will follow up on that, and we can give it to you easily.

Mr. Harold Albrecht: I want to come back to the point of classification, because in our last meeting, the message I received was that there is a classification problem and a huge discrepancy in terms of financial reimbursement. The part that was of most concern to me was not the fact that it exists, and not the fact that it's complex and may take years to reclassify, but that I heard them say there is an unwillingness to sit down and talk about these issues. It seems to me that's one of the obligations we would have with our different representatives, to at least listen to them. Whether or not we can achieve all of their expectations is the second question.

But am I hearing from you today that you're more than willing to sit down and discuss these issues in a timely manner, so that we can be assured as a committee that we're moving ahead on this?

Ms. Karen Ellis: I can't make any commitments about classification, because I don't deal in that area, but what I would say to you is that an expert colleague of mine handles classification within the agency and, I'm sure, could come to speak to you about what's happening on classification.

But I wasn't sure of what you said. You listened to a variety of union representatives earlier this week. Again, the way in which a particular group is classified now is on a group-by-group basis. For example, the foreign service officers had a reform of their classification regime, which was implemented in July 2005. At the Canada Border Services Agency, the newly created Border Services group is an occupational group implemented in February 2007. The economic and social sciences group has had good work done, and it says here that they're going to have an outcome after the current round of collective bargaining.

So without being an expert and without trying to speak for colleagues who know this stuff, I believe there is some appropriate involvement of unions as these issues are dealt with by the experts. I'd rather ask you to have them come to tell you about it, because I don't want to give you wrong information, but I do believe there is involvement as each particular group has work done on classification.

• (1015)

Mr. Harold Albrecht: I respect that.

Is there more time?

The Chair: You have one minute.

Mr. Harold Albrecht: On the whole issue of movement—lateral or vertical—within an organization, I think we could argue the pros and cons of the value of movement and new blood and institutional memory, and all of those things, but it would certainly seem to me that there's value in the long-term service of an employee—perhaps not in the same job, but in the same department, because of their institutional memory.

Are there ways you've considered, or that we could consider, to give incentives to employees to stay within those departments, so that their expertise would be better tapped, as opposed to this very rapid movement—and then the retraining that goes with it and the time that's lost from that?

Ms. Karen Ellis: I think it's important to remember that some particular groups are moving more than others. I take your point, because you will often have some departments that are really characterized by the many people who stay, with a large proportion of the employees staying in that department for their whole career. And you're right that they may move around and do different things, but whether it's a science or policy interest they have, there can be a lot of stability in some of our organizations, depending on the business. In other cases, there is more movement with generalist skills, which one would expect.

But again, I go back to your question on whether there is an incentive. I think the incentive is from every employee really feeling and believing and experiencing that their contribution and career is important, and that whoever is managing them is working with them on an ongoing basis, because again, it's the good leadership, the interesting work, and the environment that's going to have people make choices. Do you know what I mean?

But we have to respect that some people do want to move around. Can we manage that with them? Can they do a decent amount of time with us, so we can get a bit of the return on investment, if you will? But can we also see them as a corporate player in the public

service, who is going to bring value wherever they may move? I think those are the fundamentals that are key.

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Thank you.

Ms. Folco.

Ms. Raymonde Folco (Laval—Les Îles, Lib.): Thank you, Madam Chair.

Ms. Ellis, I would like to begin by congratulating you on your French. I am truly delighted to hear from an English-speaking official—at least, I think your mother tongue is English—who can say more than a couple of sentences in French. Congratulations.

• (1020)

Ms. Karen Ellis: Thank you.

Ms. Raymonde Folco: Now that I have congratulated you, allow me to raise a more troubling issue. I apologize for not having been here when you made your presentation, but I do have a copy of the text and certain key terms, such as “demographic challenges” caught my attention. You speak about making renewal a priority, and also mention the importance of adequate systems and processes.

If I understood correctly, you said earlier that you have already analyzed, and made progress on, employment equity for women, persons with disabilities, first nations and aboriginal persons. However, you also said that you have not yet acted with regard to employment equity for visible minorities, and this is what I would like to discuss.

Could you tell me how many people belonging to a visible minority are employed by the public service, and what percentage of them remain at the same classification level throughout their career? Is it a higher or lower percentage than that across the public service as a whole? What is the typical career path of a visible minority member in the public service? Is it the same as that of anybody else? Do visible minorities tend to move horizontally, from one department to the next, while staying at more or less the same level? Do they tend to be promoted more quickly than non-visible minorities? In other words, what is the typical career profile of a member of a visible minority in the public service?

I would also like to know why you have not yet addressed employment equity for visible minorities and when you plan on doing so.

Ms. Karen Ellis: I greatly appreciate your question, Ms. Folco, because employment equity is one of my responsibilities at the agency. However, I would like to clarify that I did not say that we had not done anything.

What I said was that, according to the available statistics, we are meeting the workforce availability for three of the groups. We have achieved good results for these three groups. We have also made progress with visible minorities, but not with regard to their workforce availability.

Ms. Raymonde Folco: Why?

Ms. Karen Ellis: There are a number of reasons. Allow me to start from the beginning. We achieved some very good results by including targeted employment equity group recruitment in our integrated plan. Each department really has to focus its planning on those groups which are underrepresented. If a particular group is underrepresented, sound planning and targeted recruitment strategies have to be implemented.

The new Public Service Modernization Act provides departments with greater flexibility for targeted staffing when competitions are run. They are able to state that a certain group is underrepresented within their organization and, consequently, give preference to qualified candidates from that particular group.

Ms. Raymonde Folco: You said that enabling infrastructure is at the bottom of your list of priorities. That is what you are saying. You have managed to create enabling infrastructure to support the other target groups, but you have not, as yet, done so for visible minorities.

Ms. Karen Ellis: Across the public service as a whole, we are achieving fairly good results with regard to workforce availability for the first three groups.

With regard to visible minorities, our figures are good because there is a generalized upwards trend in the number of members of visible minorities working for the public service. The figures rise year on year, but have not yet reached workforce availability levels. Workforce availability currently stands at 10.4%, and the public service has reached 8.6%.

Ms. Raymonde Folco: That is very interesting. I am currently looking to recruit an assistant for my Ottawa office. All the answers I have had to my job offer thus far are from members of visible minorities. This means that there is a pool of people looking for jobs. Furthermore, I can assure you that these are people qualified way beyond the requirements of the job that I am offering.

Clearly, there is a large pool of graduates who want to work, but who cannot find a job—and I am only referring to the National Capital Region here—the same would be true across Canada. I am sure you have heard the saying: first hired, last fired. Could you please send these figures to me or the chair at some point?

I would urge you to work harder on this issue because it is both an employment problem and one of social equity. It is also a political problem, but above all, it is a social problem. If these people are unable to find work and go on to have children, we all know what lies ahead for the second and third generation.

Ms. Karen Ellis: I firmly believe that this is a very important issue. As a vice-president of a central agency, I am responsible for this issue. As a member of a visible minority, I have personal experience of this issue. I have made good progress in my career thanks to good career management and good managers who have helped me in the past.

You also asked about the typical career path of visible minorities in the public service. It depends on where they work, their manager, their experience, and the planning available to them. It varies from one department to the next. Some departments have very good figures and very good methods. One of my responsibilities is to identify best practices and share them with other departments that are looking to improve their results.

●(1025)

The Chair: Thank you. You have already gone over your time.

Mr. Warkentin.

[English]

Mr. Chris Warkentin (Peace River, CPC): Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you very much for coming in this morning and sharing what you know about the situation. Turnover is something the committee has been concerned about.

I'm wondering if you could provide us with some numbers on the current vacancy rate within the public service. Do you have numbers such as those?

Ms. Karen Ellis: The current vacancy rate in the public service would have to come from the Public Service Commission, and Madam Barrados, who was here. She's the one who collects that data.

Mr. Chris Warkentin: You wouldn't know offhand if it's rising compared with years past?

Ms. Karen Ellis: I really couldn't comment on that, and I don't want to give you something on that.

But as I said earlier, the trends in the movement within the system are not really that different from what we've had in the nineties and other years. It's a real trend, which you have to pay attention to and manage, but I wouldn't say we're in a crisis mode over this.

Mr. Chris Warkentin: There seems to be a little bit of a contradiction, I guess, in terms of the numbers.

We did have an opportunity to meet with the pay and benefits people the other day. What they've seen in terms of their workload as a result of people moving in the civil service, leaving and coming, is an exponential increase in their workload as a result.

So we're getting different anecdotal evidence.

Ms. Karen Ellis: I wouldn't disagree with that. You were hearing about a community that's been particularly vulnerable and that needed to be built up again, because I think they have just had a wave of retirements. I'm not an expert in that area, but I know that as a group, compensation specialists have required special attention—and I wouldn't contradict that at all.

Mr. Chris Warkentin: But I asked specifically about the increase in workload in general, not in terms of individual groups but the entire community seeing an increase in their workload as a result of the higher turnover. It was their perception, at least, that there's been an exponential increase in turnover or in the number of people coming and going over the last number of years.

That was more of an anecdotal perspective, but I'm concerned that we are getting different numbers and are seeing a little bit of a contradiction here, because you're reassuring us that this is a trend that we haven't seen any significant change in over the last number of years, but Madam Barrados was the first person who brought to our attention that this was something to be concerned about.

Ms. Karen Ellis: And it is. I agree with that, because the trends are there.

What I'm saying is that the trends aren't different, but that what we have to work on, and what she and her team are working on, and we are as well, is what we mean by the term "turnover", what we mean by "mobility". You have to actually define what you're covering under those terms if you are to get solid numbers. She said her numbers were fairly rough.

I work with one of her ADMs, and she's saying that we have to dig deeper as to what we mean by the terms and what numbers match which type of movement.

Mr. Chris Warkentin: Exactly. That's what we're concerned about. We're concerned that we don't have those numbers yet. We're concerned enough to bring this forward to committee.

I'm wondering when we might have some concrete numbers to work from.

Ms. Karen Ellis: I believe Madam Barrados and her team are working on more precision on numbers and standardized definitions of which numbers match which type of movement. I really don't want to make a commitment for Madam Barrados or her team, but I know they are working on this.

I would ask that a follow-up be done with her. She is not my boss, and I would hate to try to.... I know they're looking at this. We also have work to do on this, because we have different data and we measure some of the things in different baskets.

Mr. Chris Warkentin: Is there a standard measuring tool across the industry that is used to measure movement within an organization?

•(1030)

Ms. Karen Ellis: My statistical experts are saying no, and that's with respect to the private sector as well.

Mr. Chris Warkentin: It's going to be difficult for us to compare the difference between the public service and the private sector. First and foremost, we want a sense from the numbers, when we see that 40% of the people who were working in one job last year are no longer working in that job, that type of thing. Those numbers concern this committee.

As we've talked about, the corporate memory and stability in the public service are tied to that. We're concerned, so I think it's important that we get a handle on that. Obviously as the demographics change and we see at least some of the baby boomers leaving the public service for retirement, that's also an issue we have to address.

I wonder if there has been any research into the possibility that we're going to have a complete worker shortage in the years to come. I know there was an opening of applications for some public service jobs to the regions. That's something new. It's an initiative that has just come on stream. The interesting point is that far fewer applications came from the areas than expected.

I wonder if anybody is looking at those retirement numbers in terms of possible replacements, whether we're going into a crisis situation, and if we are, what we're going to do about it. I think all these things have to start to be considered. Is there much consideration of those issues?

Ms. Karen Ellis: I hope I address everything, and remind me if I don't. I really appreciate the interest by this committee, because this is really important.

Again, I will try to give the message that we are not seeing this as a crisis; we're seeing it as a real challenge, and issues that we have to work on and plan for because we know they're coming. When you talk about the wave of retirement, for example, we know that over the next three or four years we're going to have a steady increase of the baby boomer generation moving on. But it stabilizes. I think in 2015 that's going to even off.

The thing to remember is that this is normal. When you had the post-war growth in the public service, those people entered at the same age. In the 1970s a lot of them left, and a lot of people who got great jobs and opportunities from that thought that was just fine. Now we're in another natural cycle of demographics. What's challenging is that for a period of about 10 years, in the late 1980s and early 1990s, we didn't do a lot of recruiting. So we're experiencing that natural group who would have moved on, but the natural successors are also moving on.

You asked what we're doing about this. We're trying to do a lot of good work around succession planning. That's actually asking who has the critical knowledge positions and what we are going to do to make sure there are two or three good people who will be able to replace them at the right time. That's one example.

The Chair: Thank you.

We'll go to Mr. Angus.

Mr. Charlie Angus: Thank you.

In a region like northern Ontario, we take our federal or provincial civil service jobs very seriously. As Madam Marleau would attest, if you lose civil service jobs in your riding, you're pretty much out of a job in the next election, because it's a very serious issue.

We see a trend. You can see this provincially. A number of political parties over the years in Ontario have run campaigns in northern Ontario on promising to move civil service jobs to northern Ontario—"elect us and we're going to move a big department"—and it never happens. It just doesn't happen. As soon as the government comes in, they realize that there's such an entrenched way of doing things that it just doesn't happen.

Then when you see a downturn and civil servants are let go, it really is a case of the empire striking back. The first places that lose the jobs, it seems, are always the regions, and jobs are sucked back to the centre.

My concern here is ensuring the fair distribution of geographical locations, number one, because it is a fundamental issue of fairness and accessibility for all Canadians, and number two, because it makes economic sense, because these are jobs with low turnovers and high commitments.

Yet the way the departments are working now, deputy ministers have substantial authority. Under the changes to the Public Service Employment Act, managers have much higher, greater powers to hire.

It seems to me that the decision to actually locate work outside of the great empire is a political decision. It needs political will. It doesn't just happen because the deputy manager wakes up one day and says, you know what, I think we should make sure Lethbridge is well accounted for. It just doesn't seem that works in the corporate structure.

Given that so much responsibility has been given to such a great extent to deputy ministers—and I'm not saying that's a bad thing—and that there doesn't seem to be any mechanism in place to ensure geographic fairness in the allocation of jobs, how do we do that?

• (1035)

Ms. Karen Ellis: That really is a decision for the elected government. Anything of that nature really would be a political decision, and I'm unable to make any comment on things like that. It really, as you say, has to be made at the political level.

Mr. Charlie Angus: Just to confirm what I think, there is nothing in position right now to make sure there are checks and balances? That is a political decision that has to be made.

Ms. Karen Ellis: Any decision about moving a location of a department would be a political decision. There probably is some scope at the departmental planning level for looking at the smaller scale or moderate scale, at how they distribute work and things like that, and at the structure of a regional office. Those are day-to-day operational decisions that would be handled by a department. But anything major, such as what you're talking about, would be a decision of the elected government of the day.

Mr. Charlie Angus: Okay. Thank you very much.

The Chair: We'll go to Mr. Kramp, followed by Madame Folco, followed by Mr. Warkentin.

Mr. Daryl Kramp: Thank you, Madam Chair. I have just two questions.

Whenever we have a turnover and/or we have the chain reactions, as you termed them, or basically a domino effect, is there an expectation within the structure of the employees and/or the management that advancement then is basically automatic? Or is it based on an expectation of a competition? What would be the mindset in that case?

Ms. Karen Ellis: As I said, the basic values of anything we do in terms of staffing of any type, including promotion or whatever it might be, have to be fairness, access, and transparency. If somebody is going off on maternity leave or someone retires and their job becomes vacant, the manager has to have done some thinking about their staffing strategy for replacing that person. How are they going to do it?

There can be any variety of ways of doing that. They may run a short internal process to give an acting assignment so that those who might be interested in trying that as an acting—

Mr. Daryl Kramp: But you're saying that they may. Do we have a set modus operandi and/or a policy that states how we fill that position? My concern is this feeling of, well, Johnny's leaving, and I've been Johnny's understudy for the past four years, so obviously that's my job. Do we have that kind of approach?

Ms. Karen Ellis: I can't talk about individual people's mindsets. But the way things are supposed to be done is on merit, fairly and transparently for all to see.

Mr. Daryl Kramp: Is it an expectation or is it written?

Ms. Karen Ellis: Do you mean in terms of how every individual position...?

Mr. Daryl Kramp: Do we have an actual policy so people understand that, or is it understood that we have an overall policy of fairness and so everybody—

Ms. Karen Ellis: It's in the legislation that the values are access, fairness, and transparency. There is flexibility for deputies and their departments to figure out what staffing strategies they want to use for any case. As you know, one of Madam Barrados' key functions is auditing the staffing actions and strategies that are done in departments. She and colleagues who work for her have always said that if a department has shown that they have a really good plan and good justification for why they've chosen a certain approach, that's good enough for them if there was thoughtful reflection.

You're trying to bring in a big new regime, and Madam Barrados herself has talked about the length of time it takes to bring in a big change like that. We're making progress, but the bottom line is that the staffing strategies have to be thought through, sensible, and live to the values—

Mr. Daryl Kramp: I'm going to run out of time, so pardon me for interrupting. I have one other quick question.

Obviously under your responsibilities for human resources planning the one issue that's come before this committee a number of times through various departments is people getting paid. Serious concern has been registered with the payroll advisers that files aren't even attended to for up to two years, etc., without even having a response back. Some people think this situation is out of control or calamitous; other people say it's really not that bad. This is something the committee really has to get its head around.

I'd like your assessment of the perceived or alleged crisis in payroll advisory management right now.

• (1040)

Ms. Karen Ellis: I have to tell you that I'm not able to give you a view or assessment on that, because I really don't look after that file. But I believe Madam Boudrias has appeared before you and may be invited to come back to explore that issue with you. The compensation group is under stress and pressure with the workload, as it is with some other groups. I know that a lot of attention is being paid to that particular group, and I think it is worthy of further discussion by you and your committee, but with the right person.

Mr. Daryl Kramp: Thank you.

[Translation]

The Chair: Ms. Folco.

Ms. Raymonde Folco: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Ms. Ellis, could you please send the chair a comparative table? Earlier, you said that some departments were meeting expectations satisfactorily, while others were meeting them less so. I would like to see the figures supporting that statement.

I have another question on visible minorities. In 2000, the public service established a program called Embracing Change. The program set goals, or targets, for visible minorities, such as a 1:5 ratio for external recruitment.

First, do you have any figures showing how much progress has been made towards meeting the targets of that program in the public service? Second, how is the program Embracing Change doing? What sort of efforts are you making to further its aims?

Ms. Karen Ellis: Thank you, Ms. Folco.

First, the list of departments and their employment equity performance was published in *The Hill Times* last summer, because a request had been made to that effect. We can share that information quite easily, because it is in the public domain.

Second, the program Embracing Change was in place for five years, and is now terminated. We did not fully achieve the goals of the program. That was set out in our annual report on employment equity, which is submitted to Parliament each year. We have clearly made progress with respect to the program, but not enough.

Our current efforts are focused on the four pillars for renewal of the public service: planning, recruitment, employee development...

Ms. Raymonde Folco: I'm sorry, but I will interrupt because I have only limited time.

I do see a more general renewal within the public service. There are always waves of renewal. However, I note that the renewals give priority to women, disabled persons and aboriginals. I agree with all that, but whenever we come to visible minorities, it seems that there is yet another renewal, and we start all over again. That is the impression one can get when it comes to visible minorities.

I feel that the chair is about to interrupt me. I would ask you to make sure that visible minorities are not forgotten in the phase you are now entering. I am not asking you to make visible minorities your top priority, but to put them somewhere on your list, so that we can move forward.

Ms. Karen Ellis: I agree with you. Visible minorities are a very important priority. I deal with the central agency, and work with many public service managers who deal with the issue. We consider visible minorities very important; they are just as important as the other priorities. We have to formulate strategies to ensure there are no gaps. We have made progress—I don't want to give the impression that we have made none. In general, all figures for employment maintenance and employment equity groups have increased over the past few years, and that increase is being maintained. We still need to continue our efforts, however, in order to improve the results.

•(1045)

Ms. Raymonde Folco: I am eager to see your figures.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Folco.

[English]

I think I'll go to you, Mr. Brown, seeing as Mr. Warkentin isn't here. We'll just switch you.

Mr. Patrick Brown (Barrie, CPC): Thank you.

I'd like to touch on a point that Mr. Angus raised about the geographical dispersment of jobs. In the riding that I represent, Barrie, we have 0.2% of the federal jobs in the public service. One suggestion is that relocation to regions away from large urban centres would be a way to renew the workforce at a lower cost, given the typically lower turnover rate and lower cost of living there.

I know you mentioned to Mr. Angus that obviously the location of jobs is a political decision, but does the Public Service Agency have an opinion on whether that strategy would work in terms of having a lower turnover rate?

Ms. Karen Ellis: As a public servant, I really can't venture an opinion on a question like that, but what I would say to you, again, is that there are different reasons for different kinds of turnover and movement in the system. What's really important for us is to get a handle, department by department and unit by unit, on what's happening in that workforce.

If there is some flexibility, for operational reasons, for departments to make some decisions around where they locate some of their workforce, that would have a place in our thinking. But as to the decisions about geographic location and other major decisions, that's nothing I can really comment on. Those really are decisions of the government of the day.

Mr. Patrick Brown: But has that option ever been considered? Has political discretion ever been presented and looked at as an option by the Public Service Agency?

Ms. Karen Ellis: I really don't know. I personally have not been involved in anything like that, so I really couldn't comment, I'm sorry.

Mr. Patrick Brown: Okay, thank you.

The Chair: Mr. Warkentin.

Mr. Chris Warkentin: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm back again.

Again, in terms of the retirement rates as we look to 2015, I'm wondering if you have statistics on the expectations with regard to the percentage of the civil service that will retire between now and 2015. Do you have any sense of what the numbers will be?

Ms. Karen Ellis: Do you mean the numbers on average per year?

Mr. Chris Warkentin: Yes, or even just between now and 2015.

Ms. Karen Ellis: We can provide those numbers. I don't want to try to list them here in a conversation. I think we've modelled out to 2020, so we'll give you the full prospect.

Mr. Chris Warkentin: I think for the committee's benefit it would be helpful to maybe speak at one point with the folks who are doing the statistics. I think that would be helpful for us so that we could more clearly understand this.

I know they probably wouldn't have the breakdown of every question we might have—

Ms. Karen Ellis: But they would have a lot of good data.

Mr. Chris Warkentin: They would, yes, and I think that's probably what we're really trying to get after.

We've had some discussions already this morning about the regional distribution of jobs and different things. There was talk about the \$14,000 difference between the different classifications of jobs. However, within different regions, \$40,000 in certain regions is far less money than \$40,000 in another region. Cost of living, housing, and all those different things play a factor in that.

As a matter of fact, I can give you anecdotal evidence about a crown corporation. Some people from my home town were looking for transfers from Grande Prairie to the Maritimes, specifically because they could sell their home, get out of their mortgage, and live mortgage-free in a nicer home. They wouldn't have that mortgage payment, so really they'd have more income. Or that's the way they viewed it.

I'm wondering whether, in terms of civil service studies, there has been any consideration of those particular points—how and where civil servants are placed, and if that might be a component or reason as to why fewer people in the regions give up their jobs, whereas in some of the more metropolitan areas they do give up their jobs. Has there been any research or consideration of those points?

Ms. Karen Ellis: Not to date, not that we're aware of.

The only thing I can comment on is, for example, if someone works at Foreign Affairs and their career is going on postings and coming back to Ottawa and whatever, there will obviously be the cost-of-living provisions to equalize things when they go on a posting. But this is just—

• (1050)

Mr. Chris Warkentin: This is just domestically.

Ms. Karen Ellis: Domestically, you're talking about?

Mr. Chris Warkentin: Domestically, yes.

Ms. Karen Ellis: I don't know that we're aware of any studies or research, but I would say somebody probably looks at a number of factors, including what you've talked about, in trying to make a decision on a move or a relocation. But we don't have anything definitive I could talk about on that.

Mr. Chris Warkentin: This is of significant interest to me because I come from a region of high employment. As a result, what we've seen in the private sector is a real dependence on temporary foreign workers. I fear the day the federal government will have to bring in temporary foreign workers to fill our positions. I hope it doesn't ever come to the point where we have to do that. That's why I'm concerned and hopeful that we're looking to the future, if we ever come to a point where there's high demand for employees, that we've considered what we're going to do.

Ms. Karen Ellis: One point I can make is that regional rates of pay are an issue. Treasury Board Secretariat could talk to you about that. Obviously there are people who know a bit more about what you're asking, and I would just mention that for the benefit of the committee.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Ms. Ellis. It's been very, very good, and you've given us a lot of good information.

We'll excuse you at this time, but I won't stop the session, because we have to deal with some other issues. Mr. Angus has given me notice that he wants to move his motion.

Ms. Karen Ellis: Thank you very much.

The Chair: Mr. Kramp.

Mr. Daryl Kramp: The witness today gave us a lot of information, which is refreshing, but I think there's a tonne of other things we could explore with this witness and/or something similar, because this is finally informative—

The Chair: Yes, it has been very good.

Mr. Daryl Kramp: —and we can use it as a cost comparison. So I'm hoping at some point we can either bring back this witness and/or a comparable person who's going to be able to comment on the direction in which we're heading.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Angus.

Mr. Charlie Angus: Thank you, Madam Chair.

To digress before I speak to my motion, I would support Mr. Kramp. I think we need to come forth with some recommendations out of this so we can report them to the House. We're moving in fairly close to where we need to be, and I think there's consensus, but I'd like some written record that the House knows what we're thinking on this issue. So I would support that.

It's been two years since Justice Gomery's 19 recommendations came out of the commission of inquiry into the sponsorship activities. I brought forward a motion last week that our committee examine what's been done and what remains to be implemented, but we didn't get time to speak to it. This was a challenge Justice Gomery put out to the House. He feels unfinished business needs to be addressed. I think our committee is well suited to it. The other committee that could consider it is the ethics committee, but they are obviously backlogged with their own issues.

I think this is something we could look at, bringing forward some recommendations on what needs to be done and what has been done. It would be a good progress report for Canadians, to continue to try to restore their confidence in government.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Holland.

Mr. Mark Holland: Thank you, Mrs. Chair.

I don't have a problem with the motion. I think it's a good idea. The only thing that is a question mark out of it—it's a parallel conversation to this, but I think it's important to this motion—is the business of the committee. Obviously the committee is an exuberant committee, it's anxious to look into many matters, and that's good. There's lots of enthusiasm. But that leaves us with a number of items to deal with.

We also have a motion coming from the Bloc, and we're going to want to make sure that we deal with that. I certainly am supportive of that motion as well.

I'm open, if need be, to having an extra meeting or two before the March break to make sure we get through the items that we're approving. I just want to make sure, as we're passing these motions, that we have the commitment from the people who are introducing them, or that as we pass them we're going to commit to having the meetings necessary to have those hearings.

Mr. Angus is suggesting in this motion three meetings, which I have no problem with. I'm not really aware of the Public Sector Integrity Canada issue. Maybe somebody can explain why that needs to be on February 26, or Mr. Moore can when that motion comes up. But I would like to see the three that are suggested by Mr. Angus. I know we've already approved one for the municipal election and the John Baird issue, and then we also have the motion from the Bloc.

I'm just looking perhaps for the assurance of the mover that as we're moving these motions we're going to make sure that we allocate those meetings. I say that, perfectly willing to sit for an extra meeting or whatever, maybe two, to make sure we do get through that before we head off to our March break.

• (1055)

The Chair: Is there debate on Mr. Angus's motion?

Madame Bourgeois.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: Could I make a comment first? It's just about this motion on...

The Chair: We are dealing with Mr. Angus' motion.

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: Perhaps the clerk can answer the question. Mr. Angus moved two motions, one of which was dated January 31 and focused on government operations and the Gomery Commission. Have we disposed of the January 25 motion, which dealt with appointments by order in council?

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Michel Marcotte): The January 25 motion was passed at meeting 9, a week ago.

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: Forgive me. I was there, but I don't seem to remember.

With respect to the January 31 motion, I think it is on a very important issue and I think we should set aside at least three meetings. There are very many recommendations to consider.

The Chair: Our clerk, in another life or in another era, has studied the recommendations and analyzed them. I think he could produce an update. It would be very useful. Would that be all right?

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: I move that we give him the time he needs.

The Chair: Agreed. Thank you.

Mr. Moore.

[*English*]

Mr. James Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam, CPC): I thank Mr. Angus for bringing forward this motion. We're interested to engage in this debate and we're glad to engage in this debate, particularly at this time.

With regard to Mr. Gomery's report and the recommendations he's made and the actions of our government with regard to Mr. Gomery's mandate, as Charlie points out, he made 19 different recommenda-

tions. What I wonder about, though—and perhaps Mr. Angus can help inform the committee on this—is that he said he wants to have three committee meetings on this. It's not outlined in the motion itself. Is that going to be a friendly amendment to the motion? How does he see three committee meetings as the best way of dealing with this?

The Chair: Mr. Angus, did you want to answer that?

Mr. Charlie Angus: Sure.

It has always been my preferred way of doing business to not lock in the motion the witnesses and the description, because you sit and argue the motion away. I'm open to how the committee wants to operate. We have a number of issues that have to be dealt with here, a lot of issues where I think people expect us to come out having actually done something.

So my suggestion is three meetings. I think we would need to look at a witness list and talk about it to see what we feel is necessary, if three meetings would handle it. I think it would.

I'm offering a ballpark figure, not something carved in stone with my own list of witnesses I want to bring forward. I think this is a discussion we all need to have so that we can actually all produce something.

Mr. James Moore: There are important, substantive elements in Justice Gomery's report and things that the previous Liberal government, frankly, had already implemented at the time of Gomery's report, and stuff that our government has implemented. There are some issues on which there is significant debate in the public service in terms of whether or not they should be put forward and on how this might best be done.

So who do you envision being a witness? There's the idea of having three meetings floating around, but who do you envision being a witness, other than Justice Gomery?

• (1100)

Mr. Charlie Angus: Certainly Justice Gomery. I've left it deliberately vague for this reason, because I think there are some substantive issues that still have to be resolved. Is it an issue of lack of political will? Is it a problem within the civil service saying it's simply not realistic?

I haven't come forward with that list of names. We have a number of witness lists we've been developing back at the office, but this morning I was just throwing this out for general discussion.

With all of us working together, I would prefer to have something come out of this where we're making recommendations not just based on testimony—yes, you did, and no, you didn't—but rather, on the steps to be taken to realize Gomery's commitments.

Mr. James Moore: To Charlie, the chair, and the committee, I don't then have any problem with the motion per se.

What precipitated me to push for my motion—which I was hoping would be debated today, but it looks like we're out of time—was that circumscribing it down to three committee meetings and having a tight witness list was important. A good part of the dynamic of the existence of this Parliament was based on Justice Gomery's commission and his report, and so on, which is why I have my motion to lock in, and to respect, the democratic will of this committee in the past, the things that we have already voted for.

The clerk was very good just now to pass out the list of all the things we've voted on and the direction the committee wants to go in.

So I don't have a real problem with this motion, as long as this committee respects our democratic prehistory and the things we've already voted on.

The Chair: I really think we will have to have a debate on Tuesday as to where we're going with the passage of these motions, and how we fit all of these things in. We're going to do that on Tuesday.

We're going to have legal counsel here on Tuesday, and I think we will also have some motions to pass. I suggest we vote on this motion now, and on Tuesday we'll have a debate on the next motions and on how we fit all of this in, so we can actually get something completed.

(Motion agreed to [See *Minutes of Proceedings*])

The Chair: I'm going to adjourn the meeting now, because we have another committee waiting.

The meeting is adjourned.

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