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Thursday, November 4, 2010

—
Chair

The Honourable Joseph Volpe

Standing Committee on Public Accounts

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• (1105)

[English]

The Chair (Hon. Joseph Volpe (Eglinton—Lawrence, Lib.)): I call the meeting to order.

Mr. Dreeschen, Mr. Kramp, Mr. Saxton, Mr. Allen, Madame Faille, Monsieur D'Amours, you have before you the 12th report of the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts. We have the honour to present this report to you.

Your subcommittee met on Wednesday, November 3—that's yesterday—to consider business of the committee and agreed to make the following recommendations. You'll note that the first one is as follows:

That the following draft reports be considered by the Committee at its meeting scheduled for Thursday, November 4, 2010:

- Chapter 4, "Electronic Health Records," of the Fall 2009 Report of the Auditor General of Canada and "Electronic Health Records in Canada - An Overview of Federal and Provincial Audit Reports," of the Spring 2010 Report of the Auditor General of Canada;
- International Peer Review of the Office of the Auditor General of Canada;

I think you have those two with you.

Mr. Daryl Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings, CPC): Chair, there's no problem. We could go with that.

Just out of consideration for all the members here and certainly our analyst and clerk, we understand the reasons for not a lot of advance notice on things like this now, but hopefully down the road for all of the members, if we can try to arrange a steering committee a week ahead of time, in that way we would all have more adequate time, and our analyst and clerk will have more time too.

It would help us all to be more prepared...in a perfect world.

The Chair: Well, Mr. Kramp, as we go down the report, I think you'll find that your observation has already been addressed, but we thank you for making the observation nonetheless, just in the spirit of friendship, which will dissipate in a few minutes anyway.

Do I have agreement on number one?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: Thank you.

On number two:

That consideration of the draft report on Chapter 3, "Rehabilitating the Parliament Buildings," of the Spring 2010 Report of the Auditor General of Canada, be postponed pending receipt of further information;

Mr. Daryl Kramp: I have a question on that one.

The Chair: You want back in on that one. Okay, go ahead.

Mr. Daryl Kramp: I'm just wondering, we're postponing "pending receipt". Can we walk and chew gum at the same time? Can we still go ahead with that report at some point as further information comes in?

The original report did not have anything to do with contracting. We've asked for information on contracting. The committee has decided it wants information on contracting, but the original report did not include that.

So could we still proceed with the original report as well?

The Chair: Madame Faille.

[Translation]

Ms. Meili Faille (Vaudreuil-Soulanges, BQ): I agree with Mr. Kramp. Certain sections of the report...

[English]

The Chair: Excuse me.

Can we please close these doors?

[Translation]

There is too much noise. I apologize profusely, Ms. Faille.

• (1110)

Ms. Meili Faille: I was saying that I agreed with Mr. Kramp. Certain sections of the report could be reviewed at this point, as we've always done in the past. If certain sections have been sorted out, we could begin working on the report. The committee members could start working on it.

[English]

The Chair: *Merci.*

Monsieur D'Amours, vous avez...? Non? Okay.

Well, yes, I guess there's no problem with that, but this was the recommendation of the steering committee. If you want, I can take note of that, no problem, and bring it up at the next one, but the schedule is already set for this week.

Mr. Daryl Kramp: I realize that, Mr. Chair. I was just suggesting after discussion with all the colleagues, we might get a feeling—

The Chair: So we'll make a decision on number two, given, and taking into account, the observations made by two colleagues.

Fair enough?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: So number two is accepted.

Number three is as follows:

That, pursuant to Standing Order 108(3)(g), the Committee undertake studies of the following parts of the Fall 2010 Report of the Auditor General of Canada, referred to the Committee on October 26, 2010:

- Chapter 1, Canada's Economic Action Plan
- Chapter 3, Service Delivery
- Chapter 4, Managing Conflict of Interest;

I think you'll see that those are three items that were agreed by the steering committee, and you'll see that reflected in the projected calendar later on.

Are there any observations? There are none.

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: Number four is as follows: That, in relation to the motion adopted by the Committee on Thursday, October 28, 2010, the Committee begin its study of Chapter 6, Acquisition of Military Helicopters, of the Fall 2010 Report of the Auditor General of Canada at its meeting scheduled for Tuesday, December 7, 2010;

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: Thank you. We accept number four.

Number five is as follows: That, when possible, the Committee devote one of its two weekly meetings to the consideration of draft reports;

We'll try to arrange that in a particular schedule, which you'll see on the draft schedule already, in order to take into account the work the analysts need to do and the preparation time we want to give all committee members when they have a draft report.

Okay?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: Thank you.

Number six is as follows: That the Chair be authorized to write to the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development to request a more complete response to the letter sent by the Chair on May 13, 2010, pursuant to the motion adopted by the Committee on Thursday, April 15, 2010;

The Chair: Okay?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: Thank you.

Number seven is as follows: That the motion deemed adopted by the Committee on Thursday, March 25, 2010, which reads as follows:

I won't read the whole thing, but I will ask the clerk to underline the key word, "six" months, because it refers to the amount of time between the report and the reception of material.

You'll find on the following page: That departmental action plans and progress reports received by the Committee be published on the Committee's website.

The only amendment would be that "six" months be changed to "three" months. There was some discussion—it went from two to six—but there was general consensus on the number "three". So that's what this does.

Okay?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: Thank you.

So departmental actions, etc., it's done.

Could I have somebody move that the entire report be....?

That is moved by Madame Faille and seconded by Mr. Christopherson.

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

The Chair: None opposed: this is good.

Thank you very much.

I have one other item for your information and observation. I think it goes to one of the questions that Mr. Kramp was trying to address as we were going through the report.

Again, I put it there for your observation; we don't need to have a serious debate on it yet. This reflects what we've just agreed to. You'll note that November 16 is "Canada's Economic Action Plan, of the Fall", etc. It reflects the list of priorities that people put down. It also reflects the availability of the departmental officials for us.

What we'll try to do—and I do this for illustrative purposes only—is that you'll notice that on the 16th we have the discussion on the study. On the 18th, we have draft reports for approval. I think we ought to expect that if you go down diagonally to November 25, any report that might come from the discussion of chapter 1 wouldn't take place until November 25. That will give our analysts an opportunity of about a week to get a draft report together, and to get it translated and distributed for serious discussion.

Fair enough?

So that's what this does, and I think that addresses the question you asked.

You'll find that this tentative calendar—because it's always subject to some modifications—is what essentially came out of our discussion yesterday. We tried to fit that in, as best we could for everybody, so we know what we're going to be doing on a particular day.

Okay?

Thank you very much, colleagues.

Let's suspend for a moment so we can go into consideration of the draft report on e-health records.

[*Proceedings continue in camera*]

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