



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES  
CANADA

# **Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates**

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OGGO • NUMBER 006 • 1st SESSION • 42nd PARLIAMENT

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**EVIDENCE**

**Thursday, March 10, 2016**

**Chair**

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski**



## Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates

Thursday, March 10, 2016

• (1530)

[English]

**The Chair (Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Moose Jaw—Lake Centre—Lanigan, CPC)):** Ladies and gentlemen, this is meeting number 6 of the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates. We are dealing with the supplementary estimates (C) for the Department of Public Works and Government Services, and Shared Services Canada.

We have the minister with us today, the Honourable Judy Foote, Minister of Public Services and Procurement.

Minister Foote, would you care to introduce the officials who are with you. Then we'd ask you to commence with your opening statement. Hopefully, it's no longer than 10 minutes.

Again, I remind all witnesses, ministers, and committee members that we are in a televised environment.

Minister, please go ahead.

**Hon. Judy Foote (Minister of Public Services and Procurement):** Thank you, Mr. Chair. It's a pleasure to be here.

I'm going to ask my colleagues to introduce themselves.

Julie.

**Ms. Julie Charron (Acting Chief Financial Officer, Finance and Administration, Department of Public Works and Government Services):** Thank you.

Good afternoon. My name is Julie Charron. I am the acting chief financial officer at Public Services and Procurement.

**Mr. George Da Pont (Deputy Minister, Department of Public Works and Government Services):** Good afternoon. I'm George Da Pont, the deputy minister of Public Services and Procurement.

**Mr. Ron Parker (President, Shared Services Canada):** I'm Ron Parker, the president of Shared Services Canada.

**Ms. Manon Fillion (Director General and Deputy Chief Financial Officer, Corporate Services, Shared Services Canada):** I'm Manon Fillion, the DG of finance at SSC. Sorry, I was mixing French and English. I should have said it in French, but that's okay.

**The Chair:** The floor is yours, Minister.

**Hon. Judy Foote:** Thank you.

[Translation]

Good afternoon to all members of the committee.

[English]

I am honoured to be here and to have been named Minister of Public Services and Procurement. I look forward to establishing a constructive relationship with all of you on this committee.

[Translation]

Thank you for inviting me to testify before your committee.

[English]

Our Prime Minister has emphasized the importance of these committees, and I am committed to treating this committee with respect, given the important work that you will be doing. I look forward to working with all of you. Your work will be important in helping me advance the priorities set out in the mandate letter I received from the Prime Minister. I welcome our exchanges on these issues as we move forward.

Departmental officials and I are here today to answer your questions about the supplementary estimates (C) as well as the departmental performance reports for Public Services and Procurement Canada and for Shared Services Canada.

Public Services and Procurement Canada acts as government's principal treasurer, accountant, and real property manager. As the government's central purchasing agent, it buys everything from pencils to military equipment. It also supports our efforts to communicate with and provide services for Canadians in the official language of their choice.

Shared Services Canada was established to deliver one email system, consolidated data centres, reliable and secure telecommunications networks, and non-stop protection against cyber-threats. The department does this across 43 departments, 50 networks, 485 data centres, and 23,000 servers, all to make information more secure and easier for Canadians to access.

At the heart of both of these organizations is a commitment to service and an ongoing effort to operate more efficiently and cost effectively. A great deal of the work takes place behind the scenes, but that makes it no less vital. For instance, Public Services and Procurement Canada was directly involved in meeting our government's commitment to welcome 25,000 Syrian refugees. The department secured essentials like winter jackets, travel, housing, and food, while Shared Services provided necessary IT services and operational support.

Many of our key priorities were laid out in our mandate letter, including prioritizing the national shipbuilding strategy. Our government is renewing the Canadian Coast Guard fleet and outfitting the Royal Canadian Navy so it can operate as a true blue-water maritime force. Seaspan's Vancouver shipyards and Irving Shipbuilding in Halifax have invested millions of dollars to rebuild their facilities to allow them to build Canada's vessels efficiently. Work is well under way on the LEED projects, the offshore fisheries science vessel in Vancouver, and the Arctic offshore patrol vessels in Halifax. The shipbuilding strategy is good for Canada. It is creating jobs, building industrial capacity, and renewing the fleets. Canada has not built ships for a generation. That is why we have recently hired a shipbuilding expert to provide us with advice on all facets of shipbuilding.

We are also looking at ways to ensure more accurate planning and costing. The government is developing new costing methodologies to enable more precise budgeting forecasts. Going forward, we will be regularly refreshing our budgets and timelines so that we are not working with outdated costing.

We are determined to ensure that all of our activities are conducted as openly and transparently as possible. Canadians and stakeholders should be well informed of our shipbuilding plans, costs, progress, and challenges. Therefore, Canadians, journalists, and parliamentarians will receive regular updates on where we stand with our various shipbuilding projects.

We are committed to making progress in other areas as well. The Build in Canada innovation program bridges the pre-commercialization gap for the many Canadian businesses that have new and innovative products and technologies to sell. We will improve administration of the program so that matches between innovative companies and government testing departments are made much more quickly.

Departmental officials and I are partnering with suppliers and these key stakeholders to make it easier for Canadian companies to do business with the government. We are determined to simplify and better manage government procurement and to focus on practices such as green and social procurement that support our government's economic policy goals.

Improvements are also at the core of the work at Shared Services Canada, where modernizing the government's IT infrastructure is key to the digital array of information services that Canadians expect. Sixty legacy data centres have been consolidated into three enterprise-class data centres. This cuts costs, increases data security, and improves services to partner and client organizations.

• (1535)

SSC plays a vital role in protecting our national cyber infrastructure and Canadians' data on all federal networks. Security has been upgraded through a new 24/7 security operations centre that monitors and responds quickly to cybersecurity incidents, reducing both the number of critical IT incidents and the time it takes to resolve them.

Both Public Services and Procurement Canada and Shared Services Canada are refining procurement. They are speeding up the process of informing industry of solicitations being tendered.

This allows bidders more time to respond with innovative solutions that meet the government's needs.

Another example of innovation, modernization, and the future direction of government operations is the transformation of the Government of Canada's inefficient 40-year-old pay system.

The new pay system, called Phoenix, was implemented just two weeks ago, on February 24, and the first pay cycle has proven to be a success. So far, it covers 34 departments involving 120,000 employees. The remaining 67 departments are scheduled to come online soon.

The department is also pushing forward in real property management, design, and green construction. Public Services and Procurement Canada has been recognized for high-quality work in infrastructure project planning, design, construction, and heritage expertise, and for other services to clients.

The Des Allumettes Bridge, which connects Ontario and Quebec near Pembroke, Ontario won a Canadian Institute of Steel Construction 2015 design award for excellence in steel construction. The Tunney's Pasture master plan received a national award for comprehensive planning-best practices, as well as a national award of merit for urban design. The James Michael Flaherty Building, at 90 Elgin Street, received a city of Ottawa award of merit in the Ottawa Urban Design Awards.

Public Services and Procurement Canada is also a world leader in sourcing property management services from the private sector. This approach has saved Canadian taxpayers about \$700 million over the past two decades. It was one of the first organizations in Canada to commit to meeting the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, LEED, gold standard in new construction. Major renovations must meet the silver standard.

Nine of the ten new buildings constructed for the government across Canada in recent years are certified LEED gold. The tenth, 30 Victoria, across the river in Gatineau is LEED platinum, the highest level possible. This underscores our commitment to green, energy efficient buildings.

Construction work led by the department is happening around the country and generating important work for Canadians. Over the next two years, we anticipate major repair projects will be completed on several key assets. These include the Esquimalt graving dock in British Columbia and the Alexandra Bridge, which connects Ottawa and Gatineau, a few blocks from here. In addition, a new Government of Canada pay centre is currently under construction in Miramichi, New Brunswick under a lease contract arrangement.

Parts of Parliament Hill and the surrounding blocks are also undergoing significant renovations. The rehabilitation of the Sir John A. Macdonald Building has been completed. The revitalization of the Wellington Building is nearly finished. Work continues on the significant West Block rehabilitation project, as well as others. Committee members will be happy to know that each one is on time and on budget.

As part of my mandate, I have also been asked to undertake a review of Canada Post to ensure Canadians receive high-quality postal service at a reasonable price. The independent review will consider all viable options and provide Canadians with an opportunity to have a say in the decisions about Canada Post's future.

I am hoping that this committee will play an important role in the Canadian consultation process as we reach out to Canadians to get their feedback once a task force, that we will be putting in place, will have done its work. This is an important task and we are taking steps to ensure that we get the process right.

Turning now to the 2015 supplementary estimates (C), Public Services and Procurement Canada is seeking net funding of just over \$83 million, increasing its approved funding to \$3.22 billion.

This requested funding is needed mainly for the management of federal real property, the reconstruction of the Grande Allée Armoury in Quebec City, and the continuing rehabilitation of the Parliamentary precinct, as well as for fees that will allow Canadians to do business with the government using credit and debit cards.

The 2015-2016 supplementary estimates (C) for Shared Services Canada represents an increase of just over \$54 million to \$1.58 billion. The funding requested is needed mostly to enhance the Government of Canada network and cyber system security, to support the government response to the Syrian refugee crisis, and to offset the incremental costs of providing core information technology services to client departments and agencies.

● (1540)

While we have made progress on several fronts, there is still much work to be done. Both departments will look for opportunities to better deliver programs and services and to improve results for Canadians through sound management. Overall, the keys to success are innovation, process-busting, and common-sense changes. I have confidence in the ability of the public service to embrace all three. Already I have met hundreds of dedicated, enthusiastic, and professional departmental employees in so many communities, and I intend to continue to do so. I know that we can work together to meet the expectations of Canadians.

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm happy to take the committee's questions.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Minister.

My understanding is that you are with us for one hour.

**Hon. Judy Foote:** I am.

**The Chair:** At 4:30 p.m., then, Minister, we'll break the proceedings to let you get on to your other ministerial duties.

We will go into a seven-minute round. The first questioner will be Mr. Drouin.

**Mr. Francis Drouin (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'd like to thank the minister and her department for being here today. I really appreciate you guys taking the time for us to pose some questions.

I'll get to the supplementary estimates soon, but I want to ask you a question, Minister, about your mandate letter. You were charged with modernizing procurement and making it more open and accessible to small and medium-sized enterprises. I am from Ottawa and the national capital region, and I do represent a lot of SMEs. It's important that they procure and do business with the government.

How will you modernize this so that SMEs can participate in the procurement process?

**Hon. Judy Foote:** We have started already by having an extensive consultation process with small and medium-sized businesses, and industry generally. We have a supplier advisory group that we meet with on a regular basis. It's really important to engage them to find out what the barriers have been to small and medium-sized enterprises being successful in accessing government opportunities.

We are making sure that we take the time to reach out to all of those involved in industry, get their advice, and learn from them about how we can do things more efficiently and more effectively. We have been doing that throughout the department, again to focus on not just small and medium enterprises but industry overall. Government is a big business in the country, and we want to make sure everyone who can take advantage of that because of the jobs that come with it and the opportunities that come for companies.

**Mr. Francis Drouin:** Great. Thank you.

Moving on to Shared Services, I know there have been some challenges.

I want to start by saying that I am a firm believer in the goals of Shared Services. In the supplementary estimates, you ask for \$54 million for cybersecurity. What steps are being taken by SSC to ensure that we have a proper cybersecurity strategy? I remember a few years ago there was the Heartbleed problem, and then the problem at NRC. What is SSC doing to ensure that those kinds of situations don't happen again?

**Hon. Judy Foote:** As you know, what we've attempted to do with an enterprise-wide system is not an easy task. It's fair to say that what we are doing is probably the largest undertaking in the country, in putting in place an enterprise-wide solution.

What we have to do is to look at where things have gone wrong and fix those. We're doing that. Those at Shared Services have undertaken to step back, evaluate the work that's been done to date, and on a go-forward basis find ways to ensure that any mistakes that happened in the past won't happen in the future. We're very cognizant of the responsibility we have from a cybersecurity perspective, working closely with Public Safety and security, working with our counterparts throughout government, to make sure that everything we possibly can do will be done to secure the security of our country and Canadians.

**Mr. Francis Drouin:** That's great. Thank you.

I have one more question with regard to Shared Services. Does consolidating data centres make it easier to provide security with regard to cyber-threats? Other than saving costs, does that help prevent cyber-threats?

● (1545)

**Hon. Judy Foote:** Of course. The fewer avenues we have to ensure that we do get this right and that we have the types of services in place to respond quickly is important. When you're dealing with several entities, it becomes much more difficult. It makes a difference working closely with Public Safety and with other entities to ensure that we're of the same mind, and that we're working cohesively.

**Mr. Francis Drouin:** That's great. Thank you.

I have one last request as a millennial. Many millennials were elected recently, and we have to fill out forms to get speakers, and we know how to do it. I always think about my father, so I'm not putting everybody else in the same boat. Minister Brison mentioned that he wants to hire more millennials as they come on board. I'm hoping that your department thinks of a strategy to ensure that millennials are well served and that perhaps they're more tech savvy.

**Hon. Judy Foote:** I appreciate the comment. We are working very closely with Treasury Board through all of this, because of course we're very much partners in this enterprise. Absolutely, I'm there with Minister Brison in terms on who we need to be hiring, and to work with those who also have experience.

**Mr. Francis Drouin:** Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** Did you care to cede your time to any other member?

Okay, Madam Ratansi, you have about a minute and a half.

**Ms. Yasmin Ratansi (Don Valley East, Lib.):** Minister, thank you for being here. You request a funding increase of \$83 million for federal real property. You're also requesting \$13.7 million in operating expenditures for the reinvestment of revenues.

First, how many real properties were been sold in the previous year, and what was the result of the sale? Second, there was an old practice of storing all our excess furniture in real estate. Is that practice still there? If we want to be efficient, that's really not good value for our real estate.

**Hon. Judy Foote:** I'm going to turn to the deputy to address that in terms of the actual numbers.

**Mr. George Da Pont:** We sold 21 for a total of about \$10.3 million.

**Ms. Yasmin Ratansi:** Okay, but my next question is, are we still using real estate to store excess furniture, which is probably useless?

**Mr. George Da Pont:** I would hope not, but we certainly recognize that there are some issues in that area. There is also the issue of us having real estate and occupying buildings that are not completely full, while in the same communities we're leasing other space. One of our priorities, which touches very much on the point you raised, is to really try to maximize the use of our space. If we have half-empty buildings or buildings that are one-third empty and we're leasing elsewhere, we want to move people into those buildings, and maximize their use to reduce the costs. Similarly, if

we're using space in a fashion that's not productive—and you gave us one example—then we're looking to phase that out. Space optimization is really a key priority of the real property area.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr. Da Pont.

We'll turn to Monsieur Blaney.

[Translation]

**Hon. Steven Blaney (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, CPC):** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Madam Minister, welcome to the committee. It is a pleasure to have you here. I would also like to acknowledge the officials you have with you. You can count on robust and constructive opposition from our side, I hope, in the greater interest of Canadians. That is why we are all here for, after all.

Madam Minister, in your presentation, I liked your commitment to the shipbuilding strategy which, as you have recognized, is a major engine of job creation here, especially in Vancouver, Halifax and Lévis. I am also delighted that you intend to provide us with regular updates about the evolving costs and the progress of the projects. Canadians expect us to be sure that the contracts awarded by the Canadian government are completed on time because we are dealing with taxpayers' money and, of course, because we are in a competitive environment. We have been entrusted with a great responsibility.

My first question is about the shipbuilding strategy issue specifically.

After the election, I printed this passage from your election platform, your plan. You say that you want to strengthen the navy while complying with the requirements of the National Shipbuilding Procurement Strategy. Of course, those are investments that will allow the navy to be operational, but that will also create jobs. Clearly, we want to create jobs in Canada.

I had the opportunity to tell you about an article about the tugboats, as they are called. It raised the possibility of having them built somewhere else. So, can you confirm this afternoon that the jobs will be created in Canada, as part of the shipbuilding strategy, as you committed to do?

● (1550)

[English]

**Hon. Judy Foote:** Thank you for the question.

Like you, I recognize the importance of the shipbuilding industry. We have not had a shipbuilding industry in this country for over 25 years, and we need to have one. We need to have a robust shipbuilding industry in our country. We need to respond to the needs of the navy and the Canadian Coast Guard. In having that robust shipbuilding industry, we need to involve companies throughout the country and in doing so create jobs. That's what this is about.

No decision has been made yet by the Department of National Defence with respect to the tugboats. We're very early in the planning stages for that. There was a competitive process that enabled the government of the day to come up with two centres of excellence, one in Halifax and one in Vancouver, which you already referred to. That doesn't preclude other shipyards from availing themselves of the opportunities, because there will be opportunities for smaller ships. While Halifax will be building combat ships, and Seaspan will be building non-combat ships, there will be other opportunities for companies throughout the country to avail themselves of and employ Canadians from coast to coast to coast.

**Hon. Steven Blaney:** Yes, and there are certainly many smaller shipyards throughout the country that have the capability to build those tugboats. My colleague, Mr. MacAulay, and I visited the designer of tugboats in Vancouver. I would argue this person is the best designer in the world. He's in Canada. We have the expertise.

Madam Minister, I was a little surprised that when it came time to hire an expert, you couldn't find any Canadians and went to hire a independent British consultant. Is there any reason why you chose not to rely on Canadian expertise in shipyards to advise you on moving forward with the strategy?

**Hon. Judy Foote:** Allow me to repeat that we have not had a shipbuilding industry in this country for 20 to 25 years. We did look for a Canadian. There were Canadians who were working abroad, but in the interviews that were held, it became obvious from those who were doing the interview process that Mr. Brunton was highly qualified and came with shipbuilding experience. He's a rear admiral who is used to naval acquisitions. We wanted to get the best possible person and we did that. It was determined through all of the interviews that were held that he was the individual we should hire.

**Hon. Steven Blaney:** In the mandate you have provided to this consultant, have you clearly specified that in his recommendations the ships would have to be built in Canada?

**Hon. Judy Foote:** We will be looking to Mr. Brunton for advice, but clearly he knows that our goal is to build the shipbuilding industry in this country. We want to make sure that we get 100% Canadian profits for all ships that are built. He is well aware of that, just as we've indicated before. We're working closely with him, but our priority will always be to have ships built in the country.

We also have to bear in mind that we're talking about Canadian taxpayer dollars here. We want them to be spent effectively and efficiently. A number of factors come into play, but first and foremost are jobs for Canadians.

**Hon. Steven Blaney:** Absolutely. Regarding the taxpayer, you mentioned you would be willing to provide an update on the procurement process. When do you expect you will be able to provide this committee with the current status of the shipyard strategy either for the combat or the non-combat ships, the estimated costs, and the schedule for those ships?

• (1555)

**Hon. Judy Foote:** We're expecting to have our first report ready in the fall, and after that we'll be doing quarterly reports. Bear in mind that we are going down a different path in the shipbuilding strategy. We want to make sure that we get it right. We're doing consultations on an ongoing basis with industry. We will not

preclude anything in how we're going to roll out the strategy, bearing in mind that we know that we already have the two centres of excellence. We know what we have committed to them to do. They're our partners in this process. We're looking at the fall for a complete report of where we are, and then we'll do quarterly reports.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Minister.

Mr. Weir, you have seven minutes for questions and answers with the minister.

**Mr. Erin Weir (Regina—Lewvan, NDP):** Thank you.

As the NDP critic for Public Services and Procurement Canada, it's great to have you here, Minister. I'd like to pick up on a point raised across the table about real property. A practice of the last Conservative government, and indeed the preceding Liberal government, was to sell off government buildings and then lease them back at much higher costs. I wonder whether the new government will continue that practice? Specifically, of the \$32.8 million requested for increases in non-discretionary expenses associated with crown-owned buildings and leased space, how much of that is crown-owned buildings as opposed to leased space?

**Hon. Judy Foote:** I'm going to ask the deputy to speak to those details.

**Mr. George Da Pont:** In terms of the approach on buildings I think what you're referring to are situations when we are in buildings that are close to the end of their life and need very significant refurbishment. That's the bulk of what the real property folks deal with.

When buildings get to that situation, there's a cost-benefit analysis done, where we look at all the options: would it be better to sell the building, would it be better to invest and refurbish the entire building, would it be better to look at some public-private partnership to see if one could build a new building?

I think the approach is to look carefully at all the available options, look at which one has the best value for the taxpayer and still meets the needs of the public service, the people who will be working in those buildings.

The answer is different depending on that analysis.

**Mr. Erin Weir:** Perhaps that should be the approach. I'm still wondering if there's a breakdown of that figure between crown-owned and leased buildings. The more general question is about the oft-taken approach of selling these assets for upfront cash, which might make the public finances look better, but cost taxpayers more in the long run.

Can we get some kind of commitment from the minister that this won't be the approach of this government?

**Hon. Judy Foote:** Certainly it's not all about getting cash for the buildings. It's about looking at how the property will be used.

We're very conscious sometimes of the need to take a different approach and we have not ruled that out on a number of fronts within the department. We're reviewing all of the...whether it's real property, Canada lands, different entities within the department, and looking at different approaches to delivering on our mandate. Real property, of course, is one of them.

**Mr. Erin Weir:** Another item in the estimates that relates to procurement is \$61.8 million for a new bridge to replace the Champlain Bridge. The new government has indicated that it will remove the requirement from federal funding that infrastructure projects be conducted as public-private partnerships.

I'm wondering if you could update us on whether that has been done and whether it makes sense to push ahead with the new Champlain Bridge as a P3.

**Hon. Judy Foote:** We are cognizant of a need to spend taxpayers' dollars as efficiently and as effectively as we possibly can. In looking at any new builds, we're bearing that in mind, so that as we go down the path of new builds we're looking at what the actual cost will be, what the best route to take is, and the signed contract for that particular bridge is a P3.

**Mr. Erin Weir:** That's part of the reason I raised the topic.

Whether or not it's a P3, the bridge will require a large amount of steel. The Canadian steel industry is currently depressed, and I'm wondering if the new bridge will be built with Canadian-made steel, and also what type of fair wages policy if any will be applied for the workers engaged in that project?

•(1600)

**Hon. Judy Foote:** We're looking at optimizing the benefits for Canadians and for Canadian companies with everything we're doing. That is something we're undertaking to do as a department.

**Mr. Erin Weir:** But on this specific construction project, which is a huge one, can you give any indication of whether it will be built with Canadian-made steel?

**Hon. Judy Foote:** Have we funded the P3?

**Mr. George Da Pont:** As the minister said, significant Canadian companies are part of the consortium that won the contract, so there will be very significant Canadian content. I would have to look into the question you raise about whether they intend to use Canadian steel because, off the top of my head, I don't have the answer to that. We'll undertake to send that afterwards.

**Mr. Erin Weir:** I appreciate that.

I know your mandate letter speaks to a modernized fair wages policy, and I'm not sure exactly what that means. Will it be in effect for all the workers employed in building this new bridge?

**Hon. Judy Foote:** That is the intention.

**Mr. Erin Weir:** Can you tell us anything about what the policy will be?

**Hon. Judy Foote:** What have we done?

**Mr. George Da Pont:** In terms of the fair wages policy, under this contract and any other contract we enter into, anyone building in Canada has to comply with all federal and provincial legislation and meet all the existing requirements—

**Mr. Erin Weir:** On complying with labour legislation, isn't it a fair wages policy? It used to be that if you wanted to bid on a federal construction project, you had to pay certain wage rates for different trades. The Conservatives eliminated that good policy. The new government has talked about bringing back some version of it. Will this be done?

**Mr. George Da Pont:** And that's what I was explaining. At the moment that's the situation. There are no longer those provisions in contracts. I think the government is looking at the issue.

**Mr. Erin Weir:** So we're not sure whether it will be applied to the new Champlain Bridge.

**Hon. Judy Foote:** It may very well be, and a fair wages policy is part of the mandate letter. I guess we're not sure whether or not it's going to happen with this particular procurement, but it's certainly something that we're committed to do.

**Mr. Erin Weir:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Minister.

We'll go now to Mr. Whalen.

**Mr. Nick Whalen (St. John's East, Lib.):** There is a point of order. I believe it's Mr. Grewal.

**The Chair:** I'm sorry.

**Mr. Nick Whalen:** But I may jump in if he shares his time with me.

**The Chair:** Mr. Grewal, you may concede any unused time you wish.

**Mr. Raj Grewal (Brampton East, Lib.):** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you, Minister and your staff for coming today. We really appreciate it.

My question was going to be on the national shipbuilding procurement strategy, but my hon. colleague has had a detailed discussion on that, so I'll move on.

A lot of people in my riding, especially during the campaign, talked about Canada Post. A lot of these people work for Canada Post. A number of people were concerned about door-to-door delivery. The issue of an independent task force review of Canada Post has come up quite often in question period and in the media. Can you please update us on what's going on in that process?

**Hon. Judy Foote:** We are determined to get this right and that means making sure that we find the right individuals to lead the task force. We know that there has been substantial work done in the past on Canada Post. Under the previous government, there was a five-point plan. We need to access all of the information that Canada Post has used in making its decisions. We want to have a more independent review than was done by Canada Post itself, but we also want access to information that Canada Post has gathered.



We want to hire the right individuals to make up the task force. These people will do the legwork to collect this research and determine whether or not there are other business lines that Canada Post can be engaged in. We need a consultation process with Canadians, but it would be very time-consuming for the committee to do this itself. For this reason, we'd like to have an independent task force undertake that work, co-operating with the secretariat out of the department. They would be able to provide you with all the information you need, if you think this is an appropriate exercise for the committee to undertake.

• (1605)

**Mr. Raj Grewal:** Thank you, Minister.

Throughout the campaign we talked about the shortage of affordable housing. I have the privilege of sitting on the finance committee, and we just went through pre-budget consultations. A lot of organizations across the country came and spoke about the importance of affordable housing.

Your mandate letter said that you're working with the Minister of Infrastructure on an inventory of all federally owned real estate, with a view to seeing what can be converted to affordable housing. I think this is a great use of government resources. Can you please give the committee an update on that process?

**Hon. Judy Foote:** Interestingly enough, I attended a session on homelessness last night. Part of the discussion was on the availability of existing federal buildings and how we could make them available, instead of selling them for the maximum dollar, as was previously done. From this government's perspective, we have to have more of a social conscience. We need to recognize that there could be other uses for that property. In fact, what I said last night at this meeting was that anyone who's aware of excess federal government property should feel free to get in touch with the department. We can look at possible uses of that property, rather than trying to sell it off. A number of departments might have property that could be made available for social housing.

**Mr. Raj Grewal:** Thank you, Minister.

You mentioned today the rehabilitation of the Sir John A. Macdonald Building and the Wellington Building. The key point I noted was that they're on time and on budget, which is very important. In the spirit of accountability and transparency, I would just ask that if these things change, you let the committee know so we can update Canadians if the budget changes. I worked in finance and I know that budgets can come and go, so I would request that you please update the committee if the numbers change.

I will now cede the remainder of my time to my colleague.

**Hon. Judy Foote:** If I could speak to that one point, that is certainly what we have committed to do in terms of being open and transparent with respect to procurement to take the mystery out of it and to make sure that Canadians know exactly what is happening. It's the same with members of Parliament: we want you to know where we are. We want you to know if costs go up, as well. It's one thing to be on time and on budget, which is really good, but things do happen and we want to make sure that you're aware when they do.

**Mr. Raj Grewal:** Thank you, Minister.

**The Chair:** Mr. Whalen, you have about two minutes.

**Mr. Nick Whalen:** Thank you very much.

Just continuing along the line of questions regarding Canada Post, I have to say that in addition to issues about housing for seniors, questions about Canada Post were probably the second most frequent ones I had during the campaign. Every street had someone who was being affected by the reductions in service. Indeed, in the dying days of the campaign, Canada Post shut down door-to-door mail delivery in a couple of ridings in the country—St. John's East, St. John's South—Mount Pearl, and Charlottetown—only days before the Prime Minister stated that this practice should cease. Indeed, many of the complaints were from people who had legitimate concerns about the location of mailboxes.

I have a couple of questions on that. First, I didn't see anything in the estimates allocating any additional funding or allotments towards the task force. Is this being done under existing estimates or will it be in the next budget?

Second, will the task force reach out to Canadians who made complaints and find out if Canada Post, in response, kept pushing forward with bad ideas or if took those complaints seriously and addressed them properly rather than simply using them as an opportunity to punish the people of my riding?

**Hon. Judy Foote:** Well, if they did it in your riding, they did it in mine too.

The cost of the task force will be covered by the department, as will be the secretariat out of the department. That's why you don't see additional requests for money. We will ask the task force to look at every possible decision made by Canada Post, and whether or not they responded to the complaints they received. That's all part and parcel of doing a complete independent review of Canada Post. Again, on a go-forward basis, they will make sure that if there are outstanding issues, those issues are addressed.

One of the issues we recognize, of course, is that Canada Post is an arm's-length corporation. In its operations, it does what it does because it has to be self-sustainable, and it will continue to have to be self-sustainable. At the same time, it delivers a service to Canadians from coast to coast to coast, and we want to make sure that this service will continue to be delivered. What that service will be will depend on what Canada Post can afford, because there will not be any money forthcoming from the government, as it is an arm's-length crown corporation. At the same time, we're expecting that the task force in its independent review will look at other avenues of business that could possibly be explored that will enable Canada Post to have more revenue to carry out its responsibility to deliver mail, or whatever else it intends to do or can do with the finances available to it.

• (1610)

**The Chair:** Thank you, Minister.

We're now going to a five-minute round, starting with Mr. McCauley.

**Mr. Kelly McCauley (Edmonton West, CPC):** I'm going to give the first 30 seconds to my colleague here.

**Hon. Steven Blaney:** For the record, I would just like to mention regarding the disposal of assets that the Canada Lands Company, which already exists, produces this. The goal is to work with the industry and work on a consultation-based approach in pursuing community-oriented goals, environmental stewardship, and heritage commemoration. I've worked with the Canada Lands Company for the last decade and they are very good at the disposal of land.

With that, I'll switch to Mr. McCauley.

**Mr. Kelly McCauley:** Thank you, sir.

I just want to follow up on my colleague's questions regarding your mandate letter. I'm probably approaching it from a different point of view. Instituting a modern fair wage policy contradicts your comment about making procurement easier for Canadian companies to do business with the government. You will end up excluding a huge number of family businesses, small businesses, and those who are working at a different competitive level.

How far down the path have you gone so far with the fair wage policy? We hear again and again: consult with Canadians, consult, consult, consult, and then we'll consult more. Are we doing this process with small businesses, non-union businesses, to discuss this fair wage policy and how it will affect procurement and a fairness process?

**Hon. Judy Foote:** The fair wage policy, of course, is something that would be looked at government-wide, not just through the Department of Public Services and Procurement Canada.

**Mr. Kelly McCauley:** The same comments apply government-wide. Thank you.

**Hon. Judy Foote:** Having said that, it's something that we haven't engaged in at this point. It would be led by another agency of government. I would expect Treasury Board would be heavily involved in this.

**Mr. Kelly McCauley:** But it's in your mandate letter.

**Hon. Judy Foote:** I expect it's in everybody's mandate letter.

**Mr. Kelly McCauley:** I don't see it.

**Hon. Judy Foote:** It's something we've been asked to look at, and we will look at it; but again, it would be government-wide.

**Mr. Kelly McCauley:** Okay.

Are you committing to consult, consult, consult as we're hearing again, again, again?

**Hon. Judy Foote:** Absolutely.

**Mr. Kelly McCauley:** Perfect.

It sounds like you're not really far down the path of that right now.

**Hon. Judy Foote:** Not right now.

**Mr. Kelly McCauley:** I think I've maybe answered Mr. Weir's question.

Getting back to the shipbuilding, we've seen in several reports that you're considering sending south the weapons packaging, some of the high-tech stuff and the real value-added stuff, the real industry-creating part of the shipbuilding industry. I realize there's money involved and we need the best value. However, a big part of the NSPS was recreating this dead industry. You've said you're not going

to preclude anything. But how far down the path has government gone on looking to send this business outside the country?

**Hon. Judy Foote:** It is not our intention to send business outside the country. We are looking to make sure that work being done in Canada is of a high-tech nature, as well as any other opportunities that would become available.

We do realize we have to spend Canadian taxpayers' dollars wisely, but at the same time you bear in mind the trade-off in terms of the jobs that come with this.

It's a matter of consultation with industry, and we're doing that all the time, because they are our partners in this. So while we're the only—

• (1615)

**Mr. Kelly McCauley:** I think the report said that from the tech side, they hadn't been consulted. They were taken a bit by surprise. Is that incorrect, then, maybe?

**Hon. Judy Foote:** We've been consulting. I'm surprised to hear that. We've been consulting with the Canadian industry on all facets of procurement.

**Mr. Kelly McCauley:** I have one last question, because I'm almost out of time.

With Shared Services, I realize it's been a very difficult process, Mr. Parker, but I wonder if you could very briefly update us on where we are with it. What other resources do you need to get everything working properly? We saw recently that there was a plan to put in a server station at Trenton, but no one had discussed it with DND, and they're in dispute about it. How far down the road are we to getting all these issues fixed?

In the audit report, you were short about 800 people. Is it lack of skilled people, a shortage of people, or a myriad of issues? We obviously want it to succeed.

**The Chair:** We're running out of time.

**Mr. Kelly McCauley:** Answer in three seconds.

**Mr. Ron Parker:** We're in the process, Mr. Chair, of looking at all of the assumptions underpinning the transformation plan and working towards putting forward a new, revised, and updated plan in the fall of this year.

**The Chair:** Thank you so much, sir.

My list has Mr. Whalen next, for five minutes.

**Mr. Nick Whalen:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Thank you, everyone, for coming today.

I'll pick up again on the shipbuilding strategy. Many companies throughout Atlantic Canada are very encouraged by the independent process that allowed Irving Shipbuilding to win the award of the contract, and then there was silence, nothing. It almost feels as if the industry in Atlantic Canada, and indeed the country, on the shipbuilding side has atrophied after neglect. What is your department planning to do to move this file forward so that Canadians can get the ships built and the expected services delivered?

**Hon. Judy Foote:** Actually, we're very happy with what's happening with the shipyard in Halifax and Seaspan in Vancouver. They have started on their first builds, and we're very impressed with what we're seeing. They have invested the money. On Seaspan's front, they invested their own money to upgrade their facility. Halifax has also invested a considerable amount of money to upgrade the facility there.

We're very pleased with what we're seeing. We also see a real opportunity there for employment and other companies. Right now, 300 companies have benefited from the work that has already taken place both in Halifax and in Vancouver, and those are companies throughout the country.

That will be part of our update when we give our quarterly updates. It will certainly be part of our fall update. You will be able to see exactly where the money's being spent, what companies are availing of opportunities through the shipbuilding industry, how many people are being employed, and the types of contracts they are getting.

You will see it isn't just windows and doors, as was suggested, but some high-tech work as well. It's important that we take advantage of every opportunity for Canadian companies to avail of the work and offer the jobs.

**Mr. Nick Whalen:** It's great to hear that this is finally moving forward.

I'll go on to the issue of cybersecurity, and I thank Mr. Drouin for opening with his comments earlier.

From the perspective of the estimates process, it seems like quite a large increase is being requested on that particular line item. I realize it's extremely important. I can't tell from the way the estimates are structured how much of the line item was dedicated to cybersecurity in the larger, whatever it is, \$1.5 billion, or how much of that was cybersecurity before.

What does the department expect the rate of increase to be in the costs of cybersecurity protection efforts going forward? What can Canadians expect on that front? What is the delta we're currently looking at year over year in terms of increases in the costs of protecting our network infrastructure from cyberterrorism?

**Mr. Ron Parker:** Mr. Chair, I'm afraid I don't have the year-over-year growth rates in front of me, but we would be happy to get the numbers for you. In terms of cybersecurity overall, I can tell you that there have been steady increments in recent years. This underscores the importance of cybersecurity overall.

As well, the department has stood up from within the overall allocation it receives. The security operation centre provides 24/7/365 monitoring of the perimeter of the attempts to penetrate the Government of Canada network. There have been very significant efforts since the creation of Shared Services to bring this forward and advance this initiative.

• (1620)

**Mr. Nick Whalen:** Along the same lines, having one network to protect makes it a little bit easier versus trying to protect 63, so we can see some real benefits from the strategy on that front. In terms of downtime when networks go down, there's a concern that, if the

government network goes down, then it's not just one of 63 networks that has gone down; now everyone is down.

What types of efforts are being put into place, and from a budgetary perspective, how much effort are you devoting towards protecting our downtime? What sort of redundancy plans are being put in place? How much effort is going into making sure that uptime is maximized on this now-consolidated network?

**The Chair:** You have 20 seconds.

**Mr. Ron Parker:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The efforts are significant. We're moving from 50 siloed separate networks to one network. In the design of the network, we're paying very close attention to the redundancy and high availability of the network. That work is just starting. At this point, the contracts have been let to work on the new network, but it has not yet tangibly begun. The planning phase is under way. Those issues are front and centre. We look to have network availability that's very high.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Parker.

Mr. Blaney, you have five minutes, please.

**Hon. Steven Blaney:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Minister Foote, there was a troubling article in *The Hill Times* that Canada Post could be distributing material that is not complying with Canadian law—hate speech, and not really interesting attitudes toward minorities. Would you like to comment on this? Do you have any capability to ensure that Canada Post makes sure that the material it is distributing is complying with the law?

**Hon. Judy Foote:** Thank you for the question.

I am aware of the situation. I too have issues with the information that's being distributed, so much so that we've asked for a legal opinion on the content, to see if there's any criminal aspect to it. I am concerned about the content.

**Hon. Steven Blaney:** Is there any mechanism to ensure that the material being distributed overall is in compliance with Canadian law?

Or is it more on a case-by-case basis when such a thing occurs?

**Hon. Judy Foote:** That's right. That's why we've talked to Canada Post. My understanding is that the initial....

There was one instance where they had legal advice, and it wasn't an issue that would have them withdraw it. But now that there's another piece of literature that's being disseminated, there are concerns. I too have concerns with it, and we've asked for a legal opinion.

**Hon. Steven Blaney:** Okay. We certainly would like to be informed of your intention regarding this certainly regrettable course of action that has been undertaken.

Second, you mentioned that we would expect Immigration to be involved, but you mentioned that you were involved in the welcoming of Syrians. Can you explain more specifically what your involvement was, and how much was invested in that operation? Is it part of your estimates? Do you expect there will be growing costs, as there's an increasing number of Syrian refugees who will arrive? Especially in terms of training and housing, are you expecting any cost increases in that regard?

**Hon. Judy Foote:** Yes. We have indicated that our request is in fact for more money to enable us to do more. Our job was actually in terms of procurement, and that was with winter jackets, housing, or anything that would be required to accommodate the refugees while they are here. We are expecting that we will need additional resources to be able to respond to more refugees coming to our country.

•(1625)

**Hon. Steven Blaney:** Okay.

My colleague has to leave, but I'd like him to be able to ask his last question before he does.

**The Chair:** You have two minutes, Mr. McCauley.

**Mr. Kelly McCauley:** Perfect. I'll ask very quickly.

You stated, and I was very pleased for the taxpayers about Canada Post, no other taxpayers' money from the government. I agree that they have to find new revenue streams to increase their service, but can we commit that they will not be moving into areas already well served by private companies, smaller companies, or using their inherent competitive advantage to drive out already operating small businesses and other private businesses?

**Hon. Judy Foote:** Well, you know, there are some areas where Canada Post is already competitive with existing business. What we have to do, if we're going to deliver a service to Canadians, is find a way to do that. Again, Canada Post is a crown corporation and has to be self-sustainable. What other lines of business they'll be able to do, I don't know, but that's why we want to have a comprehensive, independent review, to see what the opportunities are.

I recognize the concern you raise in terms of competitiveness with small and medium-sized enterprises. I'm sure all of that will be factored into the review that's done.

**Mr. Kelly McCauley:** Yes, but we would just like assurances that the big guy will not trample on small businesses that are already offering courier or other home delivery services right now.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

For the final five-minute round, we'll go to Monsieur Ayoub.

**Mr. Ramez Ayoub (Thérèse-De Blainville, Lib.):** Thank you, Chair.

[Translation]

Madam Minister, ladies and gentlemen, thank you for joining us today.

I need some information specifically about the process involved in requesting additional funds.

Let me give you an example. You may possibly find others if you look around. The Quebec City Armoury, on the Grande Allée, was destroyed by fire in 2008. That is eight years ago now. I see that the first funds to rebuild it, some \$72 million, were approved only last year. If you take away a year, it means that it took seven years before a decision was made to rebuild the famous Quebec City Armoury. I know the building well because it is located in an area I lived in as a child.

A year later, additional funds were requested. So I am trying to find out about the budget forecasting process that led to those funds being requested. We know what the Quebec City Armoury was and what it should be. One year later, which is not very long, why is there a request for a 30% increase over the amount of \$72 million? Was the planning poor to start with? Why, one year later, do you as the new minister end up with this problem on your hands?

[English]

**Mr. George Da Pont:** That actually does come up from time to time, particularly when you're renovating buildings that have significant historical features that have to be preserved.

Obviously, we do inspections of the buildings as part of setting the initial estimates and we often engage third-party experts to do that. It's not unusual when you actually start the work and you begin taking out things and you discover things that did not come out in the initial inspection.

It's not that different from homeowners doing their own project and once they get into it you, they find there are things that they had not anticipated doing, so we do have that happen from time to time.

When that happens, if it cannot be covered in the initial budget that was set, you would look at supplementary funding to cover it. That's often the explanation.

**Mr. Ramez Ayoub:** Is it reasonable to say that from time to time it would be 30% over budget?

**Mr. George Da Pont:** Well—

[Translation]

**Mr. Ramez Ayoub:** In all projects, there is always usually an amount identified as a contingency. My concern is that, a year later, there is request for an additional 30%. The project itself does not concern me because, of course, the Quebec City Armoury is a jewel that needs to be rebuilt. I do not know the details, but I am worried about the planning and about the fact that we have all this to deal with one year later.

•(1630)

**Mr. George Da Pont:** The last thing I would add is that sometimes work is distributed over two or three contracts. There is not one single contract for everything.

[English]

In this case, this is a new contract. It's not an extension of a previous contract. It does go to finding things you didn't expect and basically having not just one contract for everything but contracts for different parts of the work.

[Translation]

**Mr. Ramez Ayoub:** I am Syrian by origin and welcoming Syrians affects me somewhat.

Last year, the Liberal party wanted to bring in a certain number of Syrians. To start with, it was 10,000 Syrians, then another 15,000 were added for a total of 25,000. An additional amount of \$5.4 million was requested to deal with the intake of those Syrians.

Will that amount be used now, or is it spread over a number of years? How is that additional amount broken down?

[English]

**The Chair:** A very short response, Minister.

**Hon. Judy Foote:** In terms of the money we require, the request would be made through the immigration department. They would identify the number of refugees and then, based on our work with them, we would determine what costs we would incur to do more of what we've already done for the 25,000 who came.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Minister.

Minister, I have the time as 4:32. You indicated you had to leave at approximately 4:30, so on behalf of the committee, we thank you for your attendance, and you are excused.

**Hon. Judy Foote:** Thank you. I look forward to continuing to work with the committee, particularly on the Canada Post file. If that is something the committee feels is appropriate, then I would appreciate that.

**The Chair:** Thank you, again, Minister.

For the benefit of committee members, I have two quick points. We'll find this becoming more commonplace as we go down the road with committee meetings, but normally, if we have meetings for two hours and there are two separate panels coming in, after the first panel is finished their presentations, wherever we are in the speaking order, we go back to the initial rotation.

However, after consultations with Madam Ratansi, and given the fact that we have a similar panel before us, we'll continue with the ongoing rotation, which means that the next question will be to Mr. Weir, for three minutes, and then we'll go back to the seven-minute round.

However, as I mentioned at the last meeting, we also have to allow at least 10 minutes toward the end of this meeting for a series of votes on the supplementary estimates (C). At approximately 5:20 I will adjourn our hearing from the witnesses and we'll go to the votes on the various supplementary estimates (C).

Mr. Weir, for three minutes, please, questions and answers combined.

**Mr. Erin Weir:** I'd like to pick up on the point from across the table about the importance of affordable housing. This past week a troubling story emerged about the Government of Saskatchewan putting some homeless people on buses to British Columbia.

I wonder if the officials could provide some information about how quickly the federal government's proposed measures for affordable housing could be put in place in our province of Saskatchewan.

**Mr. George Da Pont:** The role of our department in affordable housing will be a support role, but a very significant support role.

To date, we have a full inventory of buildings and structures that the department has, which have some potential for being turned over to affordable housing. That is feeding into work being led by CMHC, which is taking the broad policy lead across government because, as the minister mentioned, other departments have potential properties and structures that could be used. That is all feeding in and they're leading the development of an approach to strengthen affordable housing possibilities.

• (1635)

**Mr. Erin Weir:** Might I ask how many of those properties are in Saskatchewan?

**Mr. George Da Pont:** I don't have that information, but I'll turn that over to my colleague, Kevin Radford, who heads up our real property area. He may or may not have it, and if he doesn't, we'll make that available.

**Mr. Kevin Radford (Assistant Deputy Minister, Real Property, Department of Public Works and Government Services):** With respect to Saskatchewan specifically, we have provided a list of all of our properties that are up for disposal. We've categorized them by criteria: are they in an urban setting; are they in a rural setting; are they commercial; are they possibly residential, etc.?

The idea is that we take 30% of the holdings that we have and provide a mechanism, or at least a catalyst for other custodians of property, like the RCMP, National Defence, etc., to follow up pro forma to move the program and at least understand our asset base much more clearly.

Within that list, there certainly are some properties in Saskatchewan, and I would need to dig into those and provide them to you.

**Mr. Erin Weir:** Yes, could you come back to the committee with that information?

There are also some items here that we're going to look into, around the use of Canadian-made steel in the Champlain Bridge replacement. That would be very interesting.

**The Chair:** We'll go back to a seven-minute round and we'll start with Mr. Graham.

**Mr. David de Burgh Graham (Laurentides—Labelle, Lib.):** Thank you, Chair.

As a former technology journalist specializing in free and open-source software, I intend to get a bit into the weeds of Shared Services, so if there are any technical staff accompanying you I'd encourage them to move up to the table and identify themselves.

First of all, of the 23,000 servers across 485 data centres the minister referred to, how many of them run on open-source software? Are we exploring a significant migration away from proprietary software models toward open-source software options as you transition toward seven data centres? For example, on the Hill, I cannot use anything but Internet Explorer because we are told that it is the only browser that meets our security standards, which anyone who has been in the industry more than a few hours knows is kind of funny.

On the server side, the various flavours of Linux make very nice replacements for the various flavours of UNIX and Windows. I want to ensure that we're considering open-source software in a serious way, as we move forward.

**Mr. Ron Parker:** I'm not a technologist, I'm afraid. I'll say that right up front. I'm going to ask the technology expert, Patrice Rondeau, to take on that question.

**Mr. Patrice Rondeau (Acting Senior Assistant Deputy Minister, Data Centers, Shared Services Canada):** Good afternoon, Mr. Chair.

Open source has been and continues to be an area that we focus our attention on when we have to expand our platform. Especially as part of the workload migration in moving from the older legacy environment to the new, we're looking at opportunities to exploit open source software.

On the data center side, we have 26,000 physical servers, but we have up to 74,000 OS instances, so we have virtual servers sitting on physical servers, and I would say that approximately 15% are running Linux.

**Mr. David de Burgh Graham:** What are the other 85% running, generally?

**Mr. Patrice Rondeau:** The remainder, you mean?

**Mr. David de Burgh Graham:** Yes. Are they legacy Unix systems or are we looking at Windows servers or some combination?

**Mr. Patrice Rondeau:** We're running Windows servers for a large percentage. We're running all flavours of Unix. We have HP-UX. We have IBM AIX. We have a lot of mainframe capability also. The larger departments still rely heavily on mainframe computers.

**Mr. David de Burgh Graham:** Are we still using 32-bit signed integers to store time anywhere in government or are we going to be vulnerable to the Y2K38?

• (1640)

**Mr. Patrice Rondeau:** I'm sorry. I didn't hear the question.

**Mr. David de Burgh Graham:** Are we still using 32-bit signed integers to store dates anywhere in government or are we ready for the Y2K38 bug?

**Mr. Patrice Rondeau:** We're still using 32-bit machines, but mostly 64-bit machines, if that's what the question is.

**Mr. David de Burgh Graham:** That's the question.

**Mr. Patrice Rondeau:** We still have a lot of RISC-based environments. We still run some Solaris, some HP-UX, and some IBM pSeries. What we inherited four or five years ago were all the flavours of probably every type of server and computer that existed at the time.

**Mr. David de Burgh Graham:** I'm always surprised to hear RISC still exists, but that's another story.

I am probably the only member of Parliament to have a PGP key, and I'm definitely the only member of Parliament to be in the Debian keyring. Will government employees be encouraged to adopt PGP key signatures, trust rings, or another cryptographic authentication system?

**Mr. Patrice Rondeau:** I cannot really respond to this question, but I can follow up and get back to the committee.

**An hon. member:** [*Inaudible—Editor*] what is it?

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Ramez Ayoub:** I'm looking for some translation here.

**Mr. David de Burgh Graham:** It's not the kind of translation they can help us with.

PGP is "Pretty Good Privacy". It's a fairly old standard, but it allows cryptographically signed or encrypted emails. It's something that I've used in the open-source community for many years.

**Ms. Yasmin Ratansi:** It's good privacy.

**Mr. David de Burgh Graham:** Yes, it's pretty good privacy, implemented to the GNU privacy guard. It's a long thing.... But it's a very reliable and very well-known system outside of government in the technology community, and I would like to see it or some kind of variant used in government. It's another level of security to have PGP signed emails with a trust ring, where I've sign your key and you've signed my key.

I'd like to at least have the government explore that, if that's possible.

**Mr. Patrice Rondeau:** Okay. We can explore and get back to the committee.

**Mr. David de Burgh Graham:** When the response comes back, I'll translate it back for you, Mr. Blaney.

**Mr. Ron Parker:** Mr. Chair, we'll come back with an explanation of what we do in terms of secure keys and that type of service, but I'll just note that Shared Services Canada does not provide services to the House of Commons.

**Mr. David de Burgh Graham:** No, that's fair, but this is government-wide. This is a lot of email accounts, a lot of servers, and a lot of systems.

Are we moving the government over to full IPv6 support across the network?

**Mr. Patrice Rondeau:** IPv6? I'm the data centre ADM at—

**Mr. David de Burgh Graham:** Then we can have a nice long conversation and nobody will have a clue as to what we're talking about.

**Mr. Patrice Rondeau:** No, no. I'm quite familiar with IPv6.

**Mr. David de Burgh Graham:** I know that you and I will.

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Patrice Rondeau:** We have initiatives under way, mostly with our network area or our network branch. They've been implementing and looking at implementing IPv6, but I couldn't give you all the details. I would have to go back to our network branch specialists.

**Mr. David de Burgh Graham:** What kind of hardware are we running mostly? Do you know?

**Mr. Patrice Rondeau:** For network?

**Mr. David de Burgh Graham:** In the network and the server side.

**Mr. Patrice Rondeau:** On the server side, we're running all existing hardware, probably from the last 15 years, that we have in our 400 or so data centres right now, but the newer platforms are mainly blade-type servers.

**Mr. David de Burgh Graham:** How much time do I have?

**The Chair:** You have about 45 seconds.

**Mr. David de Burgh Graham:** Okay. That's a little bit.

Out of morbid curiosity, perhaps, can I ask how many domain names we own as a government? Do you have any idea?

**Mr. Patrice Rondeau:** I couldn't respond. We have one main domain, which is ".ca".

**Mr. David de Burgh Graham:** That's CIRA. That's not us.

**Mr. Patrice Rondeau:** Yes, it's NFS. For a specific domain names count, I would have to check with our security person. Our network experts would probably be able to give you that count.

**Mr. David de Burgh Graham:** Okay. I look forward to doing this again sometime. It's very interesting.

**Mr. Patrice Rondeau:** Would you like us to go back?

**Mr. David de Burgh Graham:** Well, I believe my time is up.

**The Chair:** Perhaps if you could get that information to the committee at a later date, that would be appreciated.

Now, speaking of someone who's still trying to figure out how a fax machine works, I'll turn the conversation over to Mr. Blaney for seven minutes.

**Voices:** Oh, oh!

**Hon. Steven Blaney:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. That's not to call me a dinosaur, but I appreciate that.

My question will be on the mandate letter, on the replacement of the CF-18s, and also on the parliamentary precinct rehabilitation program.

[Translation]

I would like to have asked the minister some questions about the CF-18s. We are aware of the exceptional contribution that the fighters made to the mission against the so-called Islamic State. But we know that the CF-18s are reaching the end of their life. The minister's mandate letter calls for a process to replace the CF-18s. This afternoon, we heard that we will have an update about the shipbuilding strategy in November.

Can you give us an overview of this situation and tell us what are the next steps in replacing the CF-18s, a process that is already underway, and when those steps will be taken? Can you give me any information about that this afternoon?

● (1645)

[English]

**Mr. George Da Pont:** Thank you for the question. As you've noted, the government has made a commitment to replace the CF-18, and to make sure, obviously, that the air force has the plane it needs to do its job.

The department is working with the Department of National Defence to design, as the government committed to, an open and

transparent competition process to replace the CF-18 fighter jets. That work is under way. I think an update will come at a point when the government has made a choice on how to proceed.

**Hon. Steven Blaney:** Okay. We're certainly looking forward to that.

If I bring you into the domain of the parliamentary rehabilitation program. I was pleased to see that the projects have been accomplished on time and on delivery. I understand that eventually we will have to leave Centre Block and move to East Block. Can you tell us when this will happen?

**Mr. George Da Pont:** The intent is to vacate the Centre Block in 2018 and to move people into alternate locations while, obviously, the rehabilitation work is done in the Centre Block.

I'll turn to Rob Wright, who is the assistant deputy minister in charge of our parliamentary precinct. I'm sure he can provide you a little more detail, if you'd like, on where people are being moved.

**Mr. Rob Wright (Assistant Deputy Minister, Parliamentary Precinct Branch, Department of Public Works and Government Services):** Absolutely. Thank you very much for the question.

The projects, as you noted, are all proceeding on time and on schedule. By 2018 a suite of five major projects will be completed, which will enable the Centre Block to be completely emptied, and for its restoration to begin.

Last year we completed the Sir John A. MacDonald facility, which provided new conference facilities for the Parliament of Canada. Within the next couple of months we will complete the Wellington Building at the corner of Wellington and Bank, which will allow MPs to be accommodated, and which is a critical part of being able to empty the Centre Block. As well, at the very end of 2017, we will complete the West Block and phase 1 of the visitor welcome centre. That will enable the chamber to be relocated from the Centre Block into the West Block, and all the legislative functions will take place in the West Block.

On the Senate side, we are rehabilitating the government conference centre, directly across from the Château Laurier. The Senate chamber and legislative functions will be relocated to the Government Conference Centre. The combination of these projects will enable the Centre Block to be completely emptied and its restoration to begin.

**Hon. Steven Blaney:** Following what took place and the fact that all the security services were grouped, has it had any impact on the design of the project?

Also, can you mention the visitors' centre and its impact on the parliamentary precinct and access to it, because this is certainly an issue that has generated some concern given what's been experienced.

**Mr. Rob Wright:** Absolutely.

We work very closely with the new Parliamentary Protective Service, which was put in place last summer. I would note that prior to its creation, we worked very closely with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police as well as the security services of the Senate and the House of Commons.

In many respects, for us there has been little change. We've continued to work with the security forces as we had before. The design and construction of all these projects have adhered to the requirements that have been laid out by the RCMP as well as the Senate and House security forces and now we're working with the Parliamentary Protective Service.

● (1650)

**Hon. Steven Blaney:** So the visitor centre will be located on Wellington Street and prior to accessing the precinct, you would undergo some security check?

**Mr. Rob Wright:** The visitor welcome centre, phase 1, will be located in-between the West Block and the Centre Block. You may note a large excavation in that area right now. That excavation is specifically for phase 1 of the visitor welcome centre. You will enter essentially from the east into the visitor welcome centre, phase 1, which will provide security screening before entering the West Block, as well as visitor greeting services.

When the Centre Block undergoes rehabilitation, the visitor welcome centre will be expanded to connect underground with the Centre Block and the West Block. So the visitor welcome centre will be largely underground and will provide a secure screening before entering into the main Parliament Buildings.

**Hon. Steven Blaney:** Thank you.

Mr. Chair, it would certainly be interesting to have a maybe more in-depth presentation of this important project and also the budgetary envelope.

[Translation]

Thank you very much.

[English]

**The Chair:** Thank you very much for that answer, Mr. Wright. I know all parliamentarians are going to be very interested in the progress being made as we change Hill locations, particularly of the House of Commons.

We're now have seven minutes for Mr. Weir.

**Mr. Erin Weir:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I think we have an all-party consensus at this committee about the need for greater clarity on the government's shipbuilding strategy.

I'd like to take up my colleague's line of questioning about aircraft procurement.

It was said that the government has committed to finding a replacement for the CF-18. I would note that the governing party also very clearly committed during the election campaign not to purchase the F-35. Yet it was recently revealed that the Government of Canada paid \$45 million to remain part of the F-35 consortium and keep open the option of purchasing that aircraft.

I wonder if, from a public service perspective, you could confirm whether or not the F-35 is actively being considered in this procurement competition.

**Mr. George Da Pont:** No, all I can confirm, as I said earlier, is that we are working with the Department of National Defence to develop an open competitive process, and when the government makes a decision it will obviously announce it.

In terms of one point you raised, participation in the joint strike fighter program, I think the important point to note is participation in the program does not commit anyone to purchasing the F-35.

**Mr. Erin Weir:** I certainly take the point that it's not a commitment, although it does seem strange that a government would spend that much money if it didn't have much interest in buying the aircraft.

To ask the question a different way, it doesn't sound as though the F-35 has been excluded from the process at this point.

**Mr. George Da Pont:** No, I think the main consideration is that by participating in the program, it provides the mechanism whereby Canadian companies can compete for contracts and become part of the supply chain for the F-35 process, which quite a number have already done.

I think significantly more money has been provided to Canadian companies under those contracts than the government has paid to be part of the program. However, if you are not paid up as part of the program, the companies in your jurisdiction can't compete. The important point is that it's a benefit and an opportunity for Canadian companies, but there's absolutely no commitment, no requirement, to purchase the F-35.

**Mr. Erin Weir:** Understood.

To shift gears a little bit, in the estimates we also have Shared Services Canada seeking some funding for increased biometric screening at the Canadian border. I wonder what the rationale for that screening would be. Is it something we feel that we have to do as part of bilateral agreements with the United States, or is there another reason?

**Mr. Ron Parker:** Mr. Chair, thank you for the question.

Our participation in this initiative, which is mainly the immigration department's responsibility, is to support the IT infrastructure side of this initiative.

In terms of the broader initiative, Graham, do you want to say something about the purpose?

● (1655)

**Mr. Graham Barr (Director General, Strategic Policy, Planning and Reporting, Shared Services Canada):** Sure. As Mr. Parker said, it's the Department of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship that's leading the initiative. More broadly, it's to expand the use of biometric screening to all travellers requiring visas who are seeking entry into Canada. Our responsibility is to provide the IT hardware, the servers and the storage, etc., and the software to support that activity.



**Mr. Erin Weir:** Is that a totally new initiative for Shared Services Canada, or are you engaged in some biometric screening already?

**Mr. Graham Barr:** Our role is to provide the IT infrastructure for it.

**Mr. Erin Weir:** [*Inaudible—Editor*] bought an IT infrastructure for it already, or is this a new item?

**Mr. Graham Barr:** It's not new. It's incremental.

**Mr. Erin Weir:** Okay.

I guess another thing in the estimates I was interested in was the \$5 million to remediate contaminated federal government sites. I'm just looking for some information on how many sites there might be, how contaminated they might be, and what the risk might be to public health?

**Mr. George Da Pont:** I'll turn the details over again to my colleague Kevin Radford, but this is part of a long-standing program to remediate many contaminated sites across the country, and they vary from very large sites with significant problems to small sites throughout the country. A lot of the information is posted on websites, as to where the sites are and what's being cleaned up.

The funding for this happens on a regular basis in tranches of two or three years, usually. That's the way the funding has been going. The sites have been rated in terms of risk, and obviously the sites with the greatest risk are addressed first.

Kevin.

**Mr. Kevin Radford:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, for the question.

I don't have much to add. Suffice it to say that there is a list, as my colleague George has mentioned, of decontaminated sites.

I will mention, though, that these decontaminated sites are part of our optional services that we provide to other departments. If the decontaminated site is on an air force base, it's part of National Defence. It's quite probable they could come to us and ask for our expertise, or if it's a property that's owned or run by another department, it's part of that suite of services that we offer. We bill those departments for our services.

**Mr. Erin Weir:** Thank you.

Shared Services Canada is also seeking funding to help with the implementation of the government's response to the Syrian refugee crisis. There's no doubt that the government response to that crisis is a big initiative that has costs associated with it. I'm just wondering if you can zero in on the role that Shared Services Canada would play in that.

**Mr. Ron Parker:** Mr. Chair, I'm happy to.

Our role is principally to supply the support tools necessary for the public service employees engaged in the initiative, such as mobile telephony and mobile laptops, and to help make sure the servers that support the initiative and the screening of the refugees are up and running on a very high availability basis. It's those types of services that we're providing through the funds we're requesting from Parliament in the supplementary estimates (C).

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr. Parker.

The final seven-minute round goes to Madame Ratansi.

**Ms. Yasmin Ratansi:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you all for being here.

As I have been listening to your presentations and your responses, I am glad you are taking your role of due diligence and the minister's mandate very seriously and consulting so that we have the right answers.

The first thing I'd like are a few examples of how you are modernizing procurement and how are you making it simple. Everybody knows that government is a mammoth body. Sometimes they feel like it's an elephant that can't move. I come from Africa. Elephants move pretty fast, so I think they're being maligned for nothing.

Number one, could you just give me an example of how we simplify things? Then I'll ask the other questions.

**Mr. George Da Pont:** I can give you several examples, and the general point you made is exactly the feedback that we've gotten from consultations with a very large number of companies, most of which are small and medium-sized companies, that do business with the Government of Canada. They've made the same point that you've made. It's complicated. It's difficult. It's more expensive than it needs to be.

We have worked with what we now call the "supplier advisory committee" and they've given us a list of quite a number of things they'd like to see as improvements to the procurement process. Some of them are under way and some of them are major initiatives that we need to tackle.

I'll give you an example. I think one of the number one things we heard was that the systems that we use when businesses go online to see what opportunities there might be, or to actually put bids in, are overly complicated. They're really archaic, they're old, and there are about 40-odd different systems that are used right now. One of our biggest initiatives is that we're looking at putting in place as quickly as we can what we call an "e-procurement package", so we will have one system. It's off the shelf. It's proven. It's user-friendly and I think it will be one big simple improvement in companies' ability both to find opportunities and to put in bids. We've accelerated that project and we intend to have the system roll out in 2017-18.

If I go to the other end, we are looking at correcting a series of chronic administrative issues or problems. If someone puts in a bid and somehow a page gets lost—a minor administrative thing—they're rejected. We're looking at putting in place a series of those administrative fixes so that as long as it doesn't affect, obviously, the critical points and are not changing the bid in any way or affecting price or content, they can repair that.

Another significant refinement will be our initiative to simplify our contracts, which are very complicated and often out of proportion to the value of the actual expenditure. Obviously, if you're replacing the Champlain Bridge, a multi-billion dollar project, you would expect a big, complicated contract. Of course you would. But ours are overly complicated, so we're looking at an initiative to simplify our contracting and are aiming at the same rough timeframe of 2017-18 for that. So those are three specific examples.

• (1700)

**Ms. Yasmin Ratansi:** That's good. I'm sure all of us as MPs have small and medium-sized enterprises in our ridings. Do you have any idea how many small enterprises have succeeded in bidding?

I remember my days from 2004 to 2011 when I was on this committee and addressed the same problems. Has there been any solution? We have too many small businesses telling us that they cannot get government contracts. If you don't have figures in front of you, that's okay. You can supply those to us.

**Mr. George Da Pont:** I actually do have figures in front of me and I think it's 80%. Eighty per cent of the contracts basically do go to small and medium-sized businesses, so they are very successful in an aggregate sense. Now that's 80% of the contracts. That's not 80% of the value of procurement. I want to make sure that this distinction is recognized.

**Ms. Yasmin Ratansi:** I quite concur with you, because I do not think that the small and medium-sized enterprises have the capacity to bid on large contracts.

**Mr. George Da Pont:** Yes.

**Ms. Yasmin Ratansi:** We have been talking about Canada Post and how consultation is taking place and we get people who want the service and Canada Post employees who are talking about new ways of doing business. So my next question is, have you any idea when the task force is going out there to consult and get answers?

**Mr. George Da Pont:** I really can't add anything to the comments the minister has already made on Canada Post.

**Ms. Yasmin Ratansi:** Okay, fair enough.

My third question is this. I see that PWGS is transferring \$19.6 million and \$4.4 million to the Canada Revenue Agency and the Communications Security Establishment respectively for under-utilization of the rent. I can see that you have a large real property database. How do you decide which stock will go to social housing, and what are some of the challenges that you will face when you transfer stock to social housing? Are there any buildings containing asbestos? Who will be responsible for those costs when the stock is converted to social housing?

• (1705)

**The Chair:** Mr. Da Pont, we only have about 20 seconds.

**Mr. George Da Pont:** Then I'll give you a 20-second answer. I think you've already flagged in your question that some of the significant challenges are that many of these properties might well need investments, repairs, and conversions to be suitable for social housing. That really would be the biggest challenge when the opportunities are there.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, sir.

We're down to our last two five-minute question and answer sessions. Then we'll excuse our witnesses as we go into voting on supplementary (C)s.

The first five-minute question and answer period is for Monsieur Blaney.

[Translation]

**Hon. Steven Blaney:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

My question is about replacing the visitors' centre at Vimy.

The veterans have reached an agreement with what was formerly Public Works and Government Services Canada so that a new visitors' centre will be built for the 150th anniversary of Canada and the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge. The present centre is run-down and completely inadequate.

I was wondering if it is possible to have an update on that.

Can you confirm that the visitors' centre at Vimy will be operational on June 9, 2017?

[English]

**Mr. George Da Pont:** Again, thank you for the question. Actually, I received an update on that a few weeks ago, and at that time it was on schedule.

**Hon. Steven Blaney:** Okay. Is it possible to get the pricing, because I believe there's a partner, the Vimy Foundation. Is that correct?

**Mr. George Da Pont:** Again, I'll ask Kevin Radford.

**Mr. Kevin Radford:** Yes, we can provide the costing data, etc. Actually, George is being modest. He asks me for an update every Monday morning on this particular project, so we provide an update and it is, so far, on schedule.

**Hon. Steven Blaney:** It's on schedule. That's good to know.

You referred to the Champlain Bridge. This is a very important project, and again I believe you are on track. Can you provide us with an update as well on this very important project for the Montreal and south shore region?

**Mr. George Da Pont:** The one thing I should say that I probably should have said in my initial response, which I'm sure you know, is that the overall responsibility for that project is with Transport and Infrastructure; it is not with our department. We've worked with and supported them very closely on handling all of the contracting aspects of that. For instance, in response to the question on steel, I will have to go back to them for the information, but I do know that, again, it's part of the regular updating I get, and it is on its projected schedule.

[Translation]

**Hon. Steven Blaney:** Thank you.

[English]

Were you involved in the tender process for the Champlain Bridge and, if so, since it's the will of the new government not to have the toll system, is it having an impact on the mandate or the modifications of the project?

Should I ask that of you or Transport maybe?

**Mr. George Da Pont:** I think the question is better asked to Transport, because it is a policy question around tolls.

**Hon. Steven Blaney:** Okay. Good.

You mentioned—and maybe this will be a more interesting question—that you were proud of this new pay system, Phoenix. It seems like I didn't notice—I still get my due—but is it working well?

**Mr. George Da Pont:** I think you've answered the question. If you had noticed, I think we would be having a much more difficult discussion at this committee.

**Hon. Steven Blaney:** Good.

**Mr. George Da Pont:** I think people often say that in government you can't effectively manage big projects. I want to say that this was an enormous project of consolidating pay administration that was divided among every department and agency in government. Consolidating it into a pay centre in Miramichi and at the same time introducing a new system that automates a fair bit of the work should be significant improvements.

I think people sometimes underestimate how challenging managing projects of that size and that nature are. I'm not going to declare victory yet, but we went through the first pay period this week, and it worked very well. I'd feel a little more comfortable going through at least one or two more pay periods before I crack the champagne open, but I do want to say that I think this has been a remarkable job by the team that has worked on that in our department and in other departments. The fact that you didn't notice a difference is exactly what we were aiming for.

**Hon. Steven Blaney:** Good.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

**Hon. Steven Blaney:** Thank you.

• (1710)

**The Chair:** Our final five-minute question-and-answer session will be led by Monsieur Drouin.

**Mr. Francis Drouin:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just have one comment. Before I said that millennials were tech savvy. We're not tech savvy like Mr. Graham over here is.

I have just one more comment before I go on to questions. I want to thank Mr. Blaney for being passionate about defending shipbuilding jobs in Canada. I hope he looks to have her platform. I am reading with interest how in budget 2010 the Conservative government had announced a 25% tariff reduction to allow imports of vessels into Canada so shipowners could buy vessels abroad, thereby not protecting Canadian jobs. I hope he shares the same passion that he had back in 2010.

**Hon. Steven Blaney:** We called it free trade.

**Mr. Francis Drouin:** I have a question for Shared Services. This has to do with PSPC now. How is SSC managing the transition between legacy technologies and their related contracts and new technologies and their contracts? Just as one example, I know PWGSC or PSPC is managing some of the older contracts, legacy contracts like NESS.

I am asking because some companies are finding themselves in limbo. They are awaiting a new procurement vehicle. SSC wants to buy new technology, but it can't because it doesn't have the procurement vehicle. Is there a strategy you have adapted towards transition? I know we won't be talking about this in five years, because everything will be resolved, but in the meantime, is there a strategy that's being applied?

**Mr. Ron Parker:** Absolutely. The procurement instruments have been developed, and as of September 1 last year, the remainder of

the national standing offers moved over to Shared Services Canada. We are operating on the basis of that, taking the orders from the departments to fulfill their needs. So the instruments are there, and they're working very effectively.

**Mr. Francis Drouin:** Pardon my ignorance; I was in a campaign.

Mr. Blaney was mentioning the Vimy monument. He said it was on time and on budget. When exactly is it going to be completed?

**Mr. Kevin Radford:** Unfortunately, I don't have that specific information with me, but it's something we can certainly provide for you. I just didn't bring the data with me. I apologize.

**Mr. George Da Pont:** I can supply the actual date.

**Mr. Francis Drouin:** Okay. It's just that the 150th anniversary is coming up.

**Mr. George Da Pont:** Obviously it will be in time for the 150th anniversary, but I've forgotten the specific date.

**Mr. Kevin Radford:** Or there will be a new ADM of real property here the next time.

**Voices:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Francis Drouin:** I wanted to ask another question for the benefit of the committee. I know that SSC is working on the ETI initiative in the data centres, but what other initiatives is SSC working on as well?

**Mr. Ron Parker:** Those are very large initiatives to start with. But there's also a network initiative related to consolidating the 50 siloed networks down into one network for the Government of Canada. Those three projects comprise work that is of an unprecedented scale in terms of the transformation. We also undertake many projects on behalf of the partners, our clients. Whether it's the biometrics project or other projects that are in the portfolio, we're involved in practically every initiative a department undertakes that involves IT infrastructure. There's a big suite of projects that are running for the RCMP, DND, or whichever department. There are literally hundreds of projects there.

• (1715)

**Mr. Francis Drouin:** I know a few years ago there were a few orders in council, and then you guys were responsible for the workplace technology initiative, and applications were still with Treasury Board. Is that still the case today, or are you guys completely responsible for everything related to IT?

**The Chair:** Mr. Parker.

**Mr. Ron Parker:** I couldn't hear the question.

**Mr. Graham Barr:** No, Shared Services Canada is not responsible for the applications.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much. That takes us to the end of our five-minute round.

Gentlemen and ladies, I thank you on behalf of all committee members for your appearances here today. The information that you have provided committee members has been very helpful and informative. Thank you again for taking time out to visit us today, and we hope to be talking with you again sometime in the upcoming years.

Yes, Mr. Drouin, go ahead.

**Mr. Francis Drouin:** Mr. Chair, I hope the whole committee will wish the deputy minister a happy retirement, which he announced last week. You share my comments.

**The Chair:** Thank you for your years of service.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. George Da Pont:** Thank you very much. I will certainly miss these appearances.

**Voices:** Oh, oh!

**The Chair:** To those officials who had to deliver answers in very constrained timelines, I thank you for your economy of words.

We will wait a few moments while our witnesses depart the table. In the interim, I will advise committee members that over the break week I will be asking the clerk to send out a communiqué indicating what we will be doing at the following Thursday's meeting. If we are able to bring in a group of witnesses to deal with some of the work identified by the subcommittee on agenda, we will have a full meeting. If not, then we will have a subcommittee meeting, but it will be during that time frame, between 3:30 p.m. and 5:30 p.m., on Thursday, March 24.

Now we have votes before us, lady and gentlemen. These are on the supplementary estimates (C).

**Ms. Yasmin Ratansi:** Where are the votes? Did I go and do something funny with my papers?

**The Chair:** I will be verbally going through them and asking for either your approval or your non-approval.

**Mr. Nick Whalen:** Mr. Chair, which document in SharePoint should I open? I closed SharePoint by accident. Could somebody point me to the information?

**The Chair:** That's fine. Basically, all I will be doing is asking you verbally, for example, shall vote 1c under Privy Council carry?

You have all seen the estimates, so you have a determination now whether you want to approve them, amend them, or negative them.

We will be going through that process verbally and asking for your show of hands.

Unless anyone wants a recorded vote, I will just be asking for yeas or nays.

PRIVY COUNCIL

Vote 1c—Program expenditures.....\$3,644,076

(Vote 1c agreed to)

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

Vote 1c—Program expenditures.....\$1

(Vote 1c agreed to)

PUBLIC WORKS AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES

Vote 1c—Operating expenditures.....\$72,238,881

Vote 5c—Capital expenditures.....\$40,231,331

(Votes 1c and 5c agreed to)

SHARED SERVICES CANADA

Vote 1c—Operating expenditures.....\$20,712,999

Vote 5c—Capital expenditures.....\$12,326,933

(Votes 1c and 5c agreed to)

TREASURY BOARD SECRETARIAT

Vote 1c—Program expenditures.....\$43,981,086

Vote 20c—Public service insurance.....\$469,200,000

(Votes 1c and 20c agreed to)

**The Chair:** Finally, shall the committee request the chair to report the supplementary estimates back to the House tomorrow?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

Ladies and gentlemen, I think we've completed that. Thank you very much. I appreciate all your efforts.







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