



Immigration, Refugees
and Citizenship Canada

Immigration, Réfugiés
et Citoyenneté Canada

Deputy Minister

Sous-ministre

Ottawa K1A 1L1

Mr. John Williamson, M.P.
Chair of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts
House of Commons
John.Williamson@parl.gc.ca

Dear Mr. Williamson:

I am writing to you in my new capacity as the Deputy Minister for Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC). Having joined the department in July 2022, I look forward to working with you and the committee in reviewing government administration as it relates to immigration matters and demonstrating progress against audit reports tabled at your committee.

I want to thank you for your correspondence dated April 4, 2022, requesting additional information stemming from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada's (IRCC's) government response to:

- [Report 10 \(43rd Parliament, 2nd Session\), Request for Government Response to the 69th Report from the 42nd Parliament, 1st Session, Processing of Asylum Claims, Report 2 of the 2019 Spring Reports of the Auditor General of Canada;](#) and
- [Report 11 \(43rd Parliament, 2nd Session\), Request for Government Response to the 70th Report from the 42nd Parliament, 1st Session, Call Centres, Report 1 of the 2019 Spring Reports of the Auditor General of Canada.](#)

In particular, this is to respond to the outstanding request for additional information around Recommendation 3 to Report 10:

Recommendation 3 — on the proper collection and use of data, that, by 31 October 2019, the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA), Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), and the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRB) will provide the House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Accounts with a report outlining its progress with regard to:

- the quality assurance process designed and implemented by CBSA and IRCC for refugee intake and the collection of required information, such as, biometric data into the Global Case Management System (GCMS);***
- the results of the information gap assessment and plans to share information between CBSA, IRCC and IRB; and***
- the timeline established to complete the shift from paper to digital processing of claims and real time information sharing through integrated information technology systems.***

The response stated that through the Asylum Interoperability Project (AIP), IRCC, the CBSA, and IRB were on track to complete the work required to shift from paper to digital processing and implement automated near real-time information-sharing by

June 2022. The Committee would like to receive an update on implementation of this upgraded system by 30 September 2022.

The Asylum Interoperability Project (AIP) has made significant progress to date; however, in 2020, the COVID-19 lockdowns as well as the redirection of government-wide efforts to support urgent COVID-19 responses required departments to reprioritize efforts. This was further compounded by the limited number of departmental resources available and the high number of competitive and conflicting priorities, including supporting the Government of Canada's response to Afghanistan and Ukraine. These exceptional circumstances resulted in project delays.

As a result, a request to extend the original planned end-date to February 2024 was brought forward and approved by Treasury Board. This new timeline was developed with all impacted departments and agencies, taking into consideration each organization's priorities, obligations and interests. The projects remains within its original approved Expenditure Authority and no additional funding is needed as a result of these changes.

Despite delays, the project has progressed. Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), Canadian Border Service Agency (CBSA) and the Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB) have been working together to strengthen the sharing of information among the three organizations and have achieved a lot in terms of document exchange which has increased efficiencies and promoted access to justice. For example, departmental systems have enhanced their interfaces and share additional information such as PRRA, Examination and Removal data. Also, automation rules have been added to systems to auto-create a removal case when a negative Refugee Protection Division (RPD) are received with no appeal. In all, over half of all project work packages are now complete, and more than half of the remaining are partially complete and underway (Annex A provides additional details).

That said, the challenges that have contributed to delays in the delivery of the AIP work remain a concern and I recognize that the department needs to organize itself to respond to crises while maintaining operations.

The progress of the work on the project will continue to be closely monitored to ensure that the new timeline is respected. The remaining functionalities to be delivered have been re-scheduled according to current departmental capacity and short-term future projections of resource availability.

Should you require additional information on this project or on any other recommendation or priority, I would be more than happy to provide this to you and the committee.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Christiane Fox', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Christiane Fox
Deputy Minister

Annex A: Additional Project Work Package Details

AIP is made up of 28 main work packages, many with multiple sub work packages, which when combined together provide the following three high level sets of capabilities:

1. Automated Data exchange and new digital interfaces upgrades with agency partners (CBSA, IRB, Provinces/Territories, CSIS, and RCMP) to ensure all systems contain common data values across all systems;
2. Changes to GCMS allowing for data automation, advanced data capture, and data sharing;
3. Digital Intake tools that allow applicants to apply for asylum online.

Work completed to date:

15 of the 28 AIP work packages have been completed in full, including:

1. Enhancing the IRB GCMS-NOVA Interface for Enhanced Information Sharing;
2. Making changes to existing Siebel functionality to allow for more automation of steps, based on rules;
3. Increasing document upload size, and automating batch rules and triggers;
4. Ability to automatically block TR applications, from either submitting or being finalized, based on automation rules;
5. Providing answers reporting for Refugee Claims and PR applications/ H&C;
6. Automating a claim when a Refugee Appeal Decision (RAD) is filed;
7. Adding PRRA, Examination and Removals answers to GCMS;
8. Adding support for predictive models development and implementation for Refugee Claims application
9. Ability to generate automated reports on the volume and monetary value of removal fees collected by the CBSA and IRCC.
10. Upgrade the GCMS-NOVA Interface to allow for a near real-time two-way connectivity solution between NOVA and GCMS;
11. Create an online applications framework for Refugee Claims (Ref CLM) that can be submitted to GCMS by a client. It will feature an Intake Tool, Back End, and Integration Layer;
12. Creation, configuration and implementation of the National Case Management System (NCMS) to GCMS infrastructure (i.e., settings, firewall rules, digital certificates etc.) to enable NCMS to trigger, in real time, the call to the GCMS web service whenever there is information to transmit;
13. Enhance GCMS-NCMS interoperability for processing PRRA applications;
14. Auto-create a 'Removal' case when negative RPD decision is received, unless an appeal is filed;
15. Enable officers to capture and populate multiple transporter violations and update the Examination case in GCMS to facilitate accurate tracking and reporting.

Of the remaining 13 work packages, eight (8) have been partially implemented and will be completed along with the outstanding five (5) in future releases.