



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES

Report to Canadians
2007

The central column of Confederation Hall, located in the main foyer of Parliament's Centre Block, supports a beautiful vaulted ceiling. To represent the Confederation of Canada, this circular hall has been richly carved with provincial and territorial coats of arms, and Canadian flora and fauna. These images were sculpted from Tyndall limestone by Cléophas Soucy and William F.K. Oosterhoff in the late 1940s and early 1950s. The Nunavut coat of arms, sculpted by Maurice Joannis, was added to the hall in 2000. For more information on the sculpture and artwork of the Parliament Buildings, please visit the House of Commons Heritage Collection on the Parliament of Canada Web site (www.parl.gc.ca).

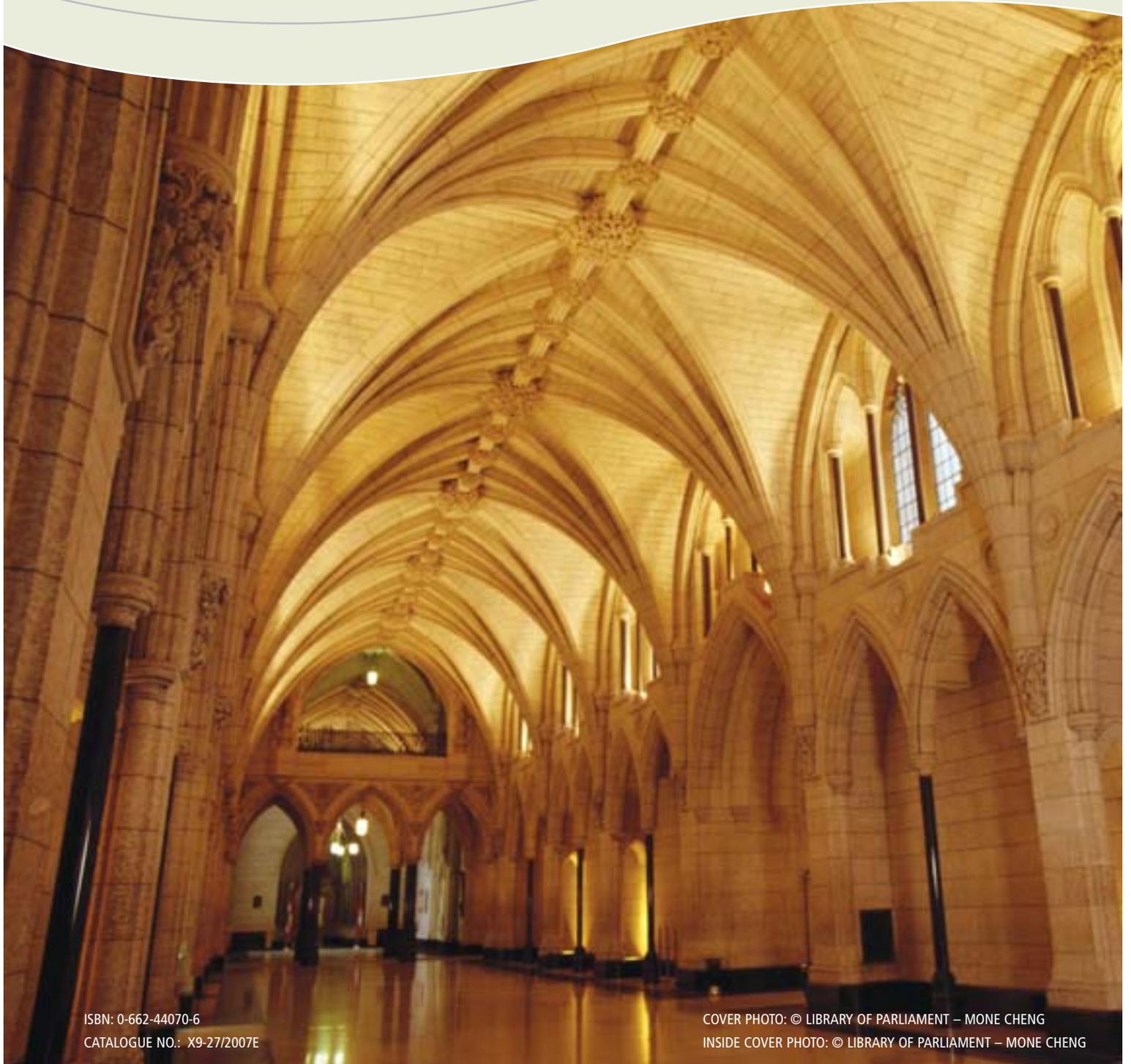
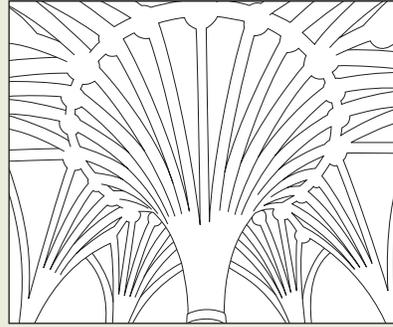




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Approved by the Board of Internal Economy



Letter from the Speaker

As Speaker of the House of Commons, I am pleased to present the *Report to Canadians 2007*. This report describes the accomplishments of Members of Parliament from April 2006 through March 2007, and the initiatives of the House of Commons Administration that support the Members in their work.



Peter Milliken, M.P.,
Speaker of the House
of Commons.

PHOTO: © HOUSE OF COMMONS/
BERNARD CLARK

While the activities described in the report are as varied as the issues that concern our nation, they all reflect a dedication to service. Members of Parliament come to Ottawa because Canadians have chosen them to be their representatives. Over the past year, they have carried out that role, introducing and debating legislation on such topics as the environment, trade, health, security and international aid. They have brought their constituents' views to the national stage by presenting petitions from Canadians and holding debates on issues in which the public has expressed interest. Their commitment to service also extends beyond Canada's borders, and Members have reached out to parliamentarians in Africa and Europe over the past year in order both to share experiences with and to learn from them. This report offers representative examples of these activities in words and in images.

There is another side to the House of Commons that is also devoted to service. The House Administration has a wide range of employees—proceduralists, computer experts, printers, chefs,

lawyers, administrative staff, financial experts, cleaners, security personnel—all of whom assist Members and the public in many ways. They ensure that the procedures they follow, and the technology and tools that they employ result in high-quality service to Members and Canadians and the sound stewardship of resources. Over the past year, for example, the House Administration has published a large volume of information online and has upgraded services supporting constituency communications. It has introduced policies, governance structures and systems to enhance all aspects of its activities, from financial management and security services to printing and asset management.

In this year's *Report to Canadians*, we are profiling the work of House of Commons committees. Committees play an important role in the legislative process through their detailed study of legislation. Over the years, they have also advanced our understanding of major issues and helped us move forward as a nation by considering such subjects as the national flag, the Constitution, health care and employment insurance. I hope that you enjoy the "vignettes" on committee activities as you learn about the work of Members and the House of Commons Administration.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter Milliken". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Peter Milliken, M.P.
Speaker of the House of Commons

Canada's House of Commons

Confederation Hall, shown on the cover of this report, probably best symbolizes the House of Commons. Arrange around a central column, the Hall represents the coming together of the provinces and territories to form a country. The many carvings that adorn this circular arcaded entrance foyer illustrate such Canadian values as peace, integrity and justice.

Like Confederation Hall, the House of Commons is a meeting place. Representatives from every corner of the country come together in the Chamber and committee rooms. They bring their constituents' ideas and concerns to share with their fellow Members of Parliament. They make decisions that can affect every aspect of our lives. The House of Commons also reaches out to Canadians with information and proposals, welcoming their feedback. These avenues of communication can take many forms, from face-to-face meetings to webcasts. Communication is essential to the House of Commons as a venue in which all ideas may be expressed.

The *Report to Canadians 2007* presents the work of Members and the House Administration from April 1, 2006 to March 31, 2007, and the Administration's goals for the upcoming fiscal year. It also offers information on membership in the House of Commons and on the activities of Members of Parliament.

PERIOD OF THE REPORT

April 1, 2006 – March 31, 2007

This report summarizes activities in the period corresponding to the standard government fiscal year.

PARLIAMENTARY SESSIONS COVERED IN THIS PERIOD

1st session, 39th Parliament

(April 3, 2006 –)

KEY DATE

April 3, 2006 – First session of the 39th Parliament begins

TOTAL NUMBER OF SITTING DAYS

2006–2007 130 days

The Role of a Member of Parliament

While most people think of Members of Parliament as legislators, they have many other duties as well; these include assisting constituents and representing Canada internationally. Their activities can be divided into four main areas:

Chamber activities—In the Commons Chamber, Members debate and vote on proposals, present documents and petitions, ask questions of the government, and raise issues of importance to Canadians.

Committee work—Members serve on committees, where they examine bills, departmental expenditures and current issues in depth.

Helping constituents—Constituents contact their Members of Parliament when they need help in connection with federal government programs and services, and when they want to discuss matters of concern.

Representing Canada—Members have a role to play internationally by representing Canada's interests, promoting democratic institutions and strengthening ties with other countries.



Members in the House of Commons, 39th Parliament.

PHOTO: © LIBRARY OF PARLIAMENT/ROY GROGAN

IN MEMORIAM



Benoît Sauvageau (1963–2006)

Benoît Sauvageau was first elected to the House of Commons in 1993 as the Bloc Québécois representative for the riding of Terrebonne, and was re-elected in three subsequent elections for the riding of Repentigny. Mr. Sauvageau was admired for his dedication and, during his parliamentary career, served as vice-chair of the Public Accounts Committee and Bloc Québécois critic for various departments and agencies, including Treasury Board, Amateur Sport, International Trade and Official Languages. Prior to entering politics, Mr. Sauvageau taught social sciences and constitutional history.

As of March 31, 2007, party standings in the House of Commons were as follows:

	Cons.	Lib.	BQ	NDP	Ind.	Vacant	Total
Alberta	28						28
British Columbia	18	8		10			36
Prince Edward Island		4					4
Manitoba	8	3		3			14
New Brunswick	3	6		1			10
Nova Scotia	3	6		2			11
Ontario	40	53		12	1		106
Quebec	10	12	50		1	2	75
Saskatchewan	12	2					14
Newfoundland and Labrador	3	4					7
Nunavut		1					1
Northwest Territories				1			1
Yukon		1					1
Total Number of Seats	125	100	50	29	2	2	308

Party Membership in the House of Commons

While Members of Parliament belong to one of four parties, Members may also sit as independents. Listed alphabetically, these parties are: the Bloc Québécois, the Conservative Party, the Liberal Party, and the New Democratic Party. Senators and Members of the House of Commons who belong to the same political party attend regular and special caucus meetings, where they discuss party policies, parliamentary strategy and issues of concern to constituents.

For a more detailed breakdown of membership in the House of Commons, please see "Senators and Members" on the Parliament of Canada Web site (www.parl.gc.ca).

Getting to Know Members of Parliament

Canadians elect people from many different backgrounds and with a wide range of experience to represent them in the House of Commons. Members have experience in fields such as agriculture, the building trades, economics, management, the arts, religion and medicine, to name but a few. Members of Parliament have often established their careers in other fields before entering politics. Sitting in the Commons Chamber are lawyers, business people, labour representatives, journalists, authors, engineers and educators.

Membership in the House includes the Inuit, Métis and First Nations peoples of North America as well as people from many of the nationalities that have made Canada their home.

Members were born in countries such as Argentina, Cameroon, China, Haiti, Hungary, India, Italy, Ivory Coast, Pakistan, Portugal, and Tanzania.

The average age of Members in the 39th Parliament is 52 years, with the youngest Member being 27 and the oldest 73. Sixty-four of the 308 seats in the House of Commons are held by women.

For specific information about Members from the current and past Parliaments, visit the Parliament of Canada Web site (www.parl.gc.ca) and look under "Senators and Members."

HOW TO FIND YOUR MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT

A fold-out insert in the centre of this report shows Members elected to the 39th Parliament. If you are not certain who your Member of Parliament is, visit the Parliament of Canada Web site at www.parl.gc.ca and enter your postal code in the space provided. This site also offers information about Members and House of Commons activities.

Activities in the Chamber

Members carry out their work in the Chamber according to a Parliamentary calendar that runs generally from September to June. Meetings of the House of Commons are called “sittings” and are grouped together into larger units known as “sessions.” At the beginning of a session, the Governor General reads the Speech from the Throne, which sets out the government’s commitments for that session. A session ends when it is prorogued or when a Parliament is dissolved. If it is dissolved, a general election follows, and Canadians elect representatives to a new Parliament.

On January 23, 2006, Canadians voted in a general election to choose representatives to the House of Commons. April 3, 2006 marked the first sitting day of the 39th Parliament.

Keeping Order in the House

Large meetings are conducted more effectively when someone keeps order and ensures participants deal with the business at hand. In the House of Commons, that person is the Speaker. The Speaker is responsible for managing debate and preserving order in accordance with the rules of the House. The Speaker is elected by other Members in a secret ballot.

The Speaker is assisted by three deputies selected from among the Members to serve as presiding officers. The Speaker proposes candidates for these positions after consulting with the leaders of the recognized political parties in the House. At the beginning of the 39th Parliament, Peter Milliken was elected to serve as Speaker for the third consecutive time. Speaker Milliken is a member of the Official Opposition. The following Members were chosen to serve as presiding officers: the Hon. Bill Blaikie, Deputy Speaker and Chair of Committees of the Whole; Royal Galipeau, Deputy Chair of Committees of the Whole; and Andrew Scheer, Assistant Deputy Chair of Committees of the Whole. Mr. Blaikie is also a member of the opposition, making this the first Parliament in which both the position of Speaker and that of Deputy Speaker positions have been held by opposition Members.

THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

The Speaker has duties that extend beyond the Chamber. He represents the House of Commons in its relations with the Crown, the Senate and authorities outside Parliament. As part of this work, he welcomes many visiting dignitaries and delegations, and represents the House during national events and visits abroad. In addition to these duties, the Speaker also has the usual responsibilities of a Member of Parliament.

Making Laws for the Country

One of the most important functions of the House of Commons is that of making law. Laws start out as “bills” which are proposals to create new laws or amend existing ones. A bill must be approved by the Senate and the House of Commons, and receive Royal Assent before it becomes law. The time required for the passage a bill can vary, depending upon the urgency of the matter, its complexity and the degree of consensus among Members.

There are two main types of bills: public and private. Generally, public bills concern matters of public policy, such as immigration or finance. A public bill can be sponsored by the government and introduced by a Cabinet Minister (government bill), or sponsored by a Private Member (any Member who is not a Minister).

Private bills on the other hand, relate to the affairs of an individual or specific group and may confer special powers of benefit on that individual or group, such is the case with a bill to incorporate a private company.

Bills may be introduced either in the House of Commons or in the Senate; however, any bills to raise or spend public funds must be introduced in the House of Commons.

From April 1, 2006 to March 31, 2007, there were 45 government bills introduced in the House of Commons. These bills addressed a range of social, economic and political issues, such as:

- federal government accountability
- First Nations jurisdiction over education
- amendments to Criminal Code provisions, respecting conditional sentencing, street racing and dangerous offenders
- international adoption
- election dates
- air pollution
- softwood lumber
- sustainable development of fisheries
- military justice system
- establishment of the Public Health Agency of Canada

Over the past fiscal year, 208 Private Members' public bills were introduced. As with the legislation proposed by the government, these bills focused on a wide range of issues of importance to the public, such as:

- international development assistance
- prevention of Internet child pornography
- student loans
- amendments to Criminal Code provisions respecting violent crimes, hate propaganda and personal identity theft
- amendments to the *Employment Insurance Act* regarding benefit periods
- regulation of the pricing of motor fuels
- review of foreign investment

LEGISLATIVE STATISTICS FOR 2006–2007

<i>Government bills introduced</i>	45
<i>Private Members' public bills introduced</i>	208

The legislative process is so structured that Members of Parliament enjoy opportunities to suggest amendments to bills under consideration. Members proposed over 1,233 motions of amendment at committee and report stages in the period covered by this report.

For more information on the legislative process and the activities of the House of Commons, visit the Parliament of Canada Web site (www.parl.gc.ca).

Seeking Information from the Government

Another important function of the House of Commons is to provide a forum for questioning the government about its policies and actions, and for receiving answers to these questions. Members of Parliament ask questions during Question Period, submit questions to the government in writing, and select topics for debate on specified days.

45 minutes of each sitting day, are reserved for oral questions, or “Question Period” as it is more widely known. During this time, members of the Opposition Parties can ask questions of the Prime Minister, Cabinet Ministers and committee chairs. Members of the government who are not in Cabinet may also ask questions. These concern the programs, policies and activities which are the responsibility of the government’s or the activities of committees. When detailed, lengthy or technical information is sought from the government, questions can be submitted in writing. The government’s replies are subsequently tabled in the House of Commons. There were 4,995 oral questions asked and 191 written questions submitted in the past fiscal year.

Opposition parties can also raise issues of concern by selecting the topics for the House to debate on allotted days (also known as opposition or supply days). Each calendar year, 22 days are set aside for consideration of these motions sponsored by opposition Members. The allotted days are allocated on the basis of party representation and after consultations among opposition parties. During the past year, Members discussed the following issues on allotted days:

- the use of pesticides
- economic growth
- income support for older workers
- the aeronautics industry
- cultural diversity



Journalists wait in the House of Commons foyer to speak to Members after Question Period.

PHOTO: © HOUSE OF COMMONS/BERNARD THIBODEAU

Members can also participate in special debates, called “take-note debates,” which focus on important public issues. These are held after the ordinary hour of daily adjournment and usually continue late into the evening. In 2006–2007, take-note debates were held and the following topics debated:

- agricultural issues
- Canada’s commitment in Afghanistan
- the situation in Sudan

Tabling Documents

Tabling a document is a formal way of presenting information to the House of Commons and placing it on the official public record. A variety of documents must be tabled, including the annual reports of various departments and agencies, documents concerning non-judicial Order-in-Council appointments, and government responses to committee reports. Ministers can table any report or paper concerning matters related to the administrative responsibilities of the government.

In 2006–2007, there were 1,844 sessional papers tabled in the House of Commons, including corporate plans and performance reports from departments and agencies, committee reports and government studies and policies.

Following the Rules

The daily activities in the Chamber are governed by a set of written rules known as the Standing Orders and by a body of practices and traditions, some of which came to Canada from Great Britain. The House of Commons continues to develop and modify its rules and practices in order to conduct business effectively. In 2006–2007, the House made several amendments to the Standing Orders concerned with committees. These amendments lead to the creation of four new committees and with the criteria for selection of the chair of the Standing Committee on the Status of Women (now from the Official Opposition), and the tabling of government responses to committee reports. The House also made permanent guidelines for the broadcasting of committee meetings by electronic media. Any committee may now allow the presence of the electronic media at its meetings, subject to the guidelines. Other amendments to the Standing Orders concerned time limits on speeches and debate in the House.

Practices can also be changed through rulings or decisions by the Speaker. These rulings involve the Speaker's interpretation of the rules and traditions of the House. In some cases, when more extensive procedural research is not required, the Speaker delivers these rulings immediately from the Chair.

When a more in-depth examination of the facts is required, a written ruling is prepared after a review of past practices and precedents. In the period covered by this report, the Speaker delivered 40 rulings on such questions as:

- the requirement for a royal recommendation for Private Members' bills;
- lowering the flag to half-mast on the Parliament Buildings;
- the admissibility of amendments adopted by a standing committee;
- funding cuts to the Law Commission of Canada;

- the disclosure of a government bill before its introduction in the House;
- alleged comments made by a Minister during Oral Questions;
- alleged intimidation of witnesses before a parliamentary committee;
- comments made by a Member during Statements by Members.



Seated at the Clerk's Table, in the centre of the Commons Chamber, the Table Officers provide procedural advice during sittings of the House, take the votes and keep the minutes of proceedings.

PHOTO: © HOUSE OF COMMONS

Committees: Examining Bills and Issues in Depth

Committee work is an important part of the work of the Members. In committee, they study proposed legislation, and examine departmental spending plans. Committees may also initiate their own inquiries or proposed study issues referred to them by the House. These issues relate to areas of public policy such as the environment, trade and health. Members can ask interested parties to submit briefs, and committees may travel across Canada or abroad to hear from individuals and groups with an interest in the subject under study. At the conclusion of a study, the committee presents a report to the House with its views and recommendations. Committee work can average four two-hour meetings a week per Member.

Selecting Committee Members

The House of Commons has 24 standing committees each consisting of 12 Members as well as two standing joint committees. Over the past year, there has also been an increased use of legislative committees, which are established to examine bills in detail before or after second reading.

Many Members sit on more than one committee. Representation on committees is based on party standings in the House of Commons. To determine membership, the Whips of the four political parties submit lists of candidates to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs. This Committee submits a final list to the House of Commons for approval.

Most standing committees are chaired by members of the governing party. Each chair is assisted by a first Vice-Chair, who is a member of the Official Opposition, and a second Vice-Chair, who is a member of an opposition party other than the Official Opposition. Exceptions to this rule include: the Standing Committees on Public Accounts; Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics; Status of Women; Government Operations and Estimates; as well as the Standing Joint Committee on Scrutiny of Regulations. Each of the latter committees is chaired by a member of the Official Opposition with the first and second Vice-Chairs, respectively, from the governing party and an opposition party other than the Official Opposition.

COMMITTEE STATISTICS FOR 2006–2007

<i>Total number of meetings</i>	1,394
<i>Total number of sitting hours</i>	2,351 hours, 31 min.
<i>Total number of witnesses</i>	4,594
<i>Total number of reports</i>	231

Committee Studies

In addition to studying legislation, committees investigate many subjects of concern to a modern democracy. Over the past year, House of Commons committees held a total of 1,394 meetings and produced 231 committee reports. A complete list of these reports is available on the Committees page of the Parliament of Canada Web site (www.parl.gc.ca). The following partial list offers a glimpse of the range of subjects studied by committees:

- Aboriginal rights
- grain transportation
- security certificates
- the Kyoto Protocol
- the situation in Darfur
- Canada's manufacturing sector
- museums
- the *Income Tax Act*

COMMITTEES: PLAYING A KEY ROLE

Committees enable Members to:

- examine complex matters in detail—this can be done more effectively by a small group than by the entire House of Commons;
- hear from experts on topics of national concern, and have this evidence placed on the public record; and
- examine policies and programs, and increase expertise in specific areas.

A committee is not a final decision-making body. When it has finished considering a matter, it presents its findings and recommendations in a report to the House. Committees can influence policies and decision-making and their reports may include a request that the government respond to its recommendations within 120 days.

FOCUS ON COMMITTEES

Committees have existed in some form in the British Parliament since the 1300s. Their earliest duty was to draw up legislation to carry out petitions approved by the Crown. By the mid-1500s, committees were a part of Parliamentary activities and could modify legislation. At one time, Members could not sit on a committee if they had spoken out against the matter being considered.

In Canada, the House of Commons followed basically the same rules for committees as had been used prior to Confederation. Canada has also introduced changes to the committee system, such as creating a committee structure that reflects the structure of public administration, and allowing standing committees to undertake studies of any matter relevant to the departments for which they are responsible.

Throughout this Report the work of committees past and present is featured in special “vignettes”.

STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS FOR THE 39TH PARLIAMENT

Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development
Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics
Agriculture and Agri-Food
Canadian Heritage
Citizenship and Immigration
Environment and Sustainable Development
Finance
Fisheries and Oceans
Foreign Affairs and International Development
Government Operations and Estimates
Health
*Human Resources, Social Development and the
Status of Persons with Disabilities*
Industry, Science and Technology
International Trade
Justice and Human Rights
National Defence
Natural Resources
Official Languages
Procedure and House Affairs
Public Accounts
Public Safety and National Security
Status of Women
Transport, Infrastructure and Communities
Veterans Affairs

STANDING JOINT COMMITTEES

Library of Parliament
Scrutiny of Regulations

TYPES OF COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEES

These are permanent committees that oversee the activities of government departments, and study proposed legislation and Estimates.

SPECIAL COMMITTEES

The House of Commons can appoint special committees to inquire into specific matters. They cease to exist after they have issued their final reports.

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEES

A legislative committee studies a bill referred to it by the House, and reports it back to the House with or without amendments. It ceases to exist once the bill has been reported to the House.

JOINT COMMITTEES

A joint committee are made up of a proportionate number of members of both the House of Commons and the Senate. Each may be either a standing or a special committee.

SUBCOMMITTEES

Standing committees may delegate any or all of their powers to their subcommittees, except the power to report directly to the House of Commons.

FOCUS ON COMMITTEES

WHO'S WHO ON A COMMITTEE

Committee members elect the Chair and Vice-Chairs of standing committees. The Chair is the presiding officer and spokesperson, and casts a vote only when there is a tie. The Chair's duties include maintaining order and decorum, and deciding on questions of order and procedure.

The committee clerk is a non-partisan and independent officer who serves all members of the committee and without regard to party affiliation equally. As an expert in the rules of the House of Commons, the clerk may be asked to advise on procedural questions. The clerk is the coordinator, organizer and liaison officer for the committee and is in frequent contact with members' staff.

Library of Parliament analysts are also important members of the committee team. They prepare background documents and draft reports for the committee.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL DEFENCE

Members of the Standing Committee on National Defence are briefed at Kandahar Airfield during a visit in late January 2007. Left to right: Stephen Blaney, M.P., Cheryl Gallant, M.P., Dawn Black, M.P., Colonel Dave Millar of the Strategic Joint Staff, the Hon. Carolyn Bennett, M.P., the Hon. Ujjal Dosanjh, M.P., the Hon. Joe McGuire, M.P., Claude Bachand, M.P., Rick Casson, M.P. and an unidentified member of Joint Task Force – Afghanistan.



PHOTO: © HOUSE OF COMMONS

In Touch with Canadians

AT WORK FOR CONSTITUENTS

Members represent their constituents' views and serve their interests in the Chamber, caucus and committees. They help constituents in their dealings with the federal government on such matters as visas and passports, employment insurance and taxation. They also attend a wide variety of local events in their ridings.

MPs are assisted in their work by their staff on Parliament Hill and in their constituency offices. Members from large or densely populated ridings may have more than one constituency office. Technology enables staff to work closely and to stay on top of issues.

There are many ways for Canadians to reach their Members of Parliament, these include postage-free correspondence or contact by telephone, e-mail or fax. The Parliament of Canada Web site lists contact information for all MPs. Many offer toll-free telephone lines for their constituents, and many have Web sites providing information and answers to questions frequently asked by constituents. Members also send out mailing to constituents to inform constituents of their activities.

Presenting Petitions

Members can present petitions on behalf of their constituents or other Canadians, to address issues of public interest or to ask Parliament to take action. Under the rules of the House of Commons, the government must table a response to each petition. In 2006–2007, there were 1,351 petitions presented in the House. The following is a list of the top issues presented in the form of petitions:

- the automobile industry
- marriage
- immigration
- national child-care program
- sexual exploitation of minors

FOCUS ON COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

This Committee studies and reports on subjects related to Canadian foreign and development policy, international affairs and international organizations. Committee members are shown here on a recent trip to Norway. Left to right: Angela Crandall (clerk of the Committee), Alexa McDonough MP, Peter Goldring, Deepak Obhrai M.P., (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs), Omar Alghabra MP, Kevin Sorenson MP (Chair of the Committee), Jillian Stirk Canada's Ambassador to Norway, Diane Bourgeois M.P. and H el ene Couture-MacTavish (interpreter).



PHOTO:   HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuning to Parliament

Canadians can watch the activities of the House and its committees on television and via the Internet. The House inaugurated television broadcasts of its proceedings nearly 30 years ago, and today, approximately one million Canadians tune in each week to the Cable Public Affairs Channel (CPAC). During the last year, CPAC broadcast about 1,200 hours of Chamber proceedings.

ParlVU, the Webcast service maintained by the House, also carries live proceedings of the Commons, televised committee meetings and live audio of all other House of Commons committee meetings that are open to the public.

The Parliament of Canada Web site (www.parl.gc.ca) is a source of information about the Senate, the House of Commons and the Library of Parliament. Visitors can quickly locate information on Members' activities, bills under consideration, committee activities, and guided tours. In 2006–2007, close to 7.4 million Internet users visited the site.

Providing Information Services

The Library of Parliament provides valuable assistance to the Senate, the House of Commons and Canadians. Library staff respond to hundreds of requests for information and reference services daily from Members' offices, parliamentary committees and associations, and Parliamentary officials.

Through its public programs, the Library provides Canadians with information and services concerning Parliament, such as programs and products for teachers, print and electronic publications, guided tours, interpretive exhibits, and on-site and e-commerce boutiques.

GETTING THE FACTS

Members of Parliament and Canadians can count on timely, accurate information from the Library of Parliament. The Library's Information Service can be reached toll-free at 1-866-599-4999.

<i>Requests for information</i>	<i>50,678</i>
<i>Documents distributed</i>	<i>289,525</i>

DISCOVER PARLIAMENT HILL

Canadian and international visitors alike learn about Parliament through the Library of Parliament's tours and interpretive programs.

<i>Total Centre Block tours</i>	<i>12,184 (372,000 visitors)</i>
<i>Total East Block tours</i>	<i>1,281 (11,355 visitors)</i>
<i>Total school group visits to Centre Block</i>	<i>1,721 (62,881 visitors)</i>
<i>Total visitors to Peace Tower and Memorial Chamber</i>	<i>261,344</i>

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Young Canadians can learn about Parliament first-hand by working as House of Commons pages or parliamentary guides. Each year, the House of Commons hires 40 students to serve as pages, and the Library of Parliament hires another 40 students in the summer to provide guided tours of Parliament. Other summer opportunities are available for students interested in learning about the House of Commons while they gain administrative experience. See the Parliament of Canada Web site for application information.

FOCUS ON COMMITTEES

TALKING TO HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMITTEES

Witnesses enable committee members to better understand the topics they are studying. Most witnesses are either Cabinet Ministers, public servants, experts in a particular field, representatives of groups and organizations, or private individuals. Committees advertise their hearings in newspaper or on the Committees Web site. Anyone interested in submitting a brief or making an appearance can contact the clerk of the committee.

For each study, the committee may decide how long it will spend hearing witnesses, how many witnesses it will hear and which witnesses will appear. Once the committee's witness list is established, the committee clerk gets in touch with the chosen witnesses to schedule their appearances. Witnesses are sometimes heard in videoconference.

Representing Canada Internationally

Members of Parliament play an active role on the international scene through parliamentary diplomacy. Their international activities serve a number of purposes: they further Canada's interests at international conferences and meetings and promote democracy, economic and social ties with developing nations.

Welcoming Foreign Parliamentarians and Dignitaries

The Parliament of Canada hosted the following official visits by foreign Speakers and delegations during the year:

- His Excellency France Cukjati, President of the National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia
- His Excellency Mohammadmian Soomro, Chairman of the Senate, and His Excellency Chaudhry Amir Hussain, Speaker of the National Assembly of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan
- His Excellency Victor Alcides Bogado González, President of the Chamber of Deputies of the Republic of Paraguay
- The Honourable Rory O'Hanlon, Speaker of the House of Representatives of Ireland
- The Honourable Paul Calvert, President of the Senate of Australia
- His Excellency Foued Mebazaa, President of the Chamber of Deputies of the Republic of Tunisia
- His Excellency Dr. Abdul Aziz Abdul Ghani, Speaker of the Consultative Council of the Republic of Yemen
- His Excellency Eduardo Frei Ruiz-Tagle, President of the Senate, and His Excellency Antonio Leal Labrin, President of the Chamber of Deputies, Republic of Chile
- Her Excellency Nino Burjanadze, Chairperson of the Parliament of Georgia

As part of their diplomatic function of receiving world leaders, the Speaker of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Commons welcomed the following distinguished guests:

- The Honourable John Howard, Prime Minister of Australia, who addressed Senators and Members of the House of Commons in a joint session of Parliament

- His Excellency Hamid Karzai, President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, who addressed a joint session of the two Houses of Parliament during his first visit to Canada
- Her Excellency Vaira Vike-Freiberga, President of the Republic of Latvia
- Their Majesties Carl XVI Gustaf, King of Sweden, and Queen Silvia



His Excellency Hamid Karzai, President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.

PHOTO: © HOUSE OF COMMONS/CHRIS DIOTTE

In addition to these visits, the Speakers of the Senate and the House of Commons cultivate parliamentary relations with other countries by conducting courtesy calls with newly accredited Ambassadors to Canada and Ambassadors leaving the country. The Speaker of the House of Commons held 68 such courtesy calls in 2006–2007.

Representing Canada's Interests and Sharing our Experience

The Speaker and Members are regularly invited to visit other legislatures to discuss common issues, foster relationships, and share knowledge and expertise. In January 2007, Speaker Milliken led an all-party delegation of Canadian Parliamentarians to Benin, Burkina Faso and Mali. Offering a seminar on the Canadian experience of parliamentary democracy, members of the delegation engaged their counterparts in discussions on topics of mutual interest, such as the independence of Parliament from the executive, the role of women in politics, the funding of political parties and the representation of minorities. Speaker Milliken also traveled with parliamentary delegations to Mongolia, South Africa and the Russian Federation.

Such foreign visits allow Parliamentarians to share ideas with their counterparts from around the world, to explore common concerns, and to learn from each other. These discussions also promote cooperation and reinforce Canada's relationships with other countries. Frequent topics of discussion include Parliamentary democracy, international security, agriculture, immigration, trade and investment, environment and international development.

The Parliament of Canada is also a member of various parliamentary associations. Each of these associations holds conferences, seminars and meetings. These events offer Canadian Parliamentarians further opportunities to promote Canada's interests abroad, and to maintain bilateral and multilateral relationships with other countries.

For example, in March of 2007, the Canadian Section of the Inter-Parliamentary Forum of the Americas hosted a Hemispheric Trade Knowledge Network Seminar with Parliamentarians from North and South America. This was a timely and important event given the ongoing negotiations on trade-related issues in the region. In April of 2006, the Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group participated in a conference entitled "Canadian-United States Border: A Unified Focus," which enabled Canadian Parliamentarians to share Canada's views on



His Excellency Mr. Cyril Svoboda, Foreign Affairs Minister of the Czech Republic and the Speaker of the House of Commons.

PHOTO: © HOUSE OF COMMONS

this sensitive issue. Finally, the Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association attended, in its capacity as an observer, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) to participate in discussions on the Canadian seal hunt. By informing Europeans of the reality of the hunt and of its significance to the economic life of maritime communities in Canada, the delegation's objective was to ensure that Canada's position on the subject was well understood.

Information and reports on these events are available on the Parliament of Canada Web site (www.parl.gc.ca) under "Interparliamentary Affairs."

Participating in Conferences

The Parliament of Canada regularly hosts international conferences for Parliamentarians. In April 2006, the Speakers of the Senate and the House of Commons hosted the 12th General Assembly of the Asia-Pacific Parliamentarians' Conference on Environment and Development in British Columbia. The theme of the conference was "Natural Disasters: Prevention and Response," and over 140 parliamentarians from 20 countries discussed ways to strengthen legislative activities surrounding sustainable development. Parliamentary staff developed a policy on making parliamentary conferences more environmentally friendly and received the 2006 Partners for a Green Hill Environmental Award.

In November 2006, the Canadian Branch of the NATO Parliamentary Association hosted the 52nd Parliamentary Assembly in Quebec City. The association is the parliamentary arm of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation and consists of delegates from 26 member states. This assembly provides a critical forum for international parliamentary dialogue on security, political and economic matters. The Secretary General of NATO, the Speaker of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Commons and representatives of Cabinet addressed the 600 delegates.



Speaker Milliken delivers the keynote address at the 52nd NATO Annual Session.

PHOTO: © HOUSE OF COMMONS



On October 24, 2006, the Speaker of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Commons were honoured to welcome Their Majesties Carl XVI Gustaf, King of Sweden, and Queen Silvia.

PHOTO: © HOUSE OF COMMONS

Parliamentary Associations – The Parliament of Canada belongs to five bilateral associations and seven multilateral associations

- *Bilateral associations*
 - › *Canada-China Legislative Association*
 - › *Canada-France Interparliamentary Association*
 - › *Canada-Japan Interparliamentary Group*
 - › *Canada-United Kingdom Interparliamentary Association*
 - › *Canada-United States Interparliamentary Group*
- *Multilateral associations*
 - › *Canada-Africa Parliamentary Association*
 - › *Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association*
 - › *Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie*
 - › *Interparliamentary Union*
 - › *NATO Parliamentary Association*
 - › *Interparliamentary Forum of the Americas*
 - › *Commonwealth Parliamentary Association*

Interparliamentary Groups – Interparliamentary groups strengthen relations between Canadian parliamentarians and their counterparts from other countries. These groups promote cooperation and understanding between nations. The Parliament of Canada is involved in official interparliamentary groups with Germany, Ireland, Israel and Italy. The activities of these groups are supported financially through the membership fees from individual parliamentarians.

Parliamentary Exchanges – Exchanges enable parliamentarians to enhance relations with other countries to share ideas, knowledge and common interests. These exchanges can take several forms: visits to Canada by Speaker-led foreign delegations; delegations of Canadian parliamentarians abroad headed by the Speaker of the Senate or of the Speaker of House of Commons; and the *Parliamentary Officers' Study Program*, which enables senior parliamentary staff from foreign legislatures and other Canadian legislatures to learn about the workings of the Parliament of Canada.

Behind The Scenes: The House of Commons Administration

SUPPORTING MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

Members of Parliament represent the institution's most public face. Supporting them are the employees of the House of Commons Administration, who apply a wide range of skills to help Members do their job and to strengthen the House of Commons.

The House of Commons Administration is made up of six service areas: Procedural Services; the Office of the Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel; Information Services; Parliamentary Precinct Services; Finance Services; and Human Resources and Corporate Planning Services. All service areas, which draw on some 1,737 full-time employees, are accountable to the Clerk of the House of Commons, who reports to the Speaker and serves as Secretary to the Board of Internal Economy.

The Board of Internal Economy governs the House Administration. It is chaired by the Speaker and made up of Members from all recognized political parties. The Board is responsible for all matters of financial and administrative policy affecting the House of Commons.

Strategic Objectives

In the *Strategic Outlook for the 39th Parliament*, the House of Commons Administration presented four main objectives that reflect its vision, values and mandate. It also provided a framework for its activities in support of Members. The four objectives are as follows:

- I. Respond to the evolving role of Members and the institution
- II. Enhance ongoing services to Members and sustain the institution
- III. Promote understanding and support the advancement of legislative institutions
- IV. Apply, in a Parliamentary context, the highest standards of public-sector governance

BOARD OF INTERNAL ECONOMY



PHOTO: © HOUSE OF COMMONS/CHRIS DIOTTE

Standing from left to right:

Mr. Joe Preston, M.P. (CPC); Hon. Lucienne Robillard, P.C., M.P. (Lib.); Hon. Jay Hill, P.C., M.P., Secretary of State and Chief Government Whip; Mr. James Moore, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services and Minister for the Pacific Gateway and the Vancouver-Whistler Olympics; Hon. Peter Van Loan, P.C., M.P., Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform; Libby Davies, M.P., House Leader of the New Democratic Party.

Sitting from left to right:

Mr. Michel Guimond, M.P., Whip of the Bloc Québécois; Hon. Peter Milliken, M.P., Speaker of the House of Commons and Chairman of the Board of Internal Economy; Ms. Audrey O'Brien, Clerk of the House of Commons; Hon. Karen Redman, P.C, M.P., Whip of the Official Opposition.

This section of the *Report to Canadians* describes the key achievements of the House Administration in relation to these objectives, and its major commitments for 2007–2008.

I. Responding to the Evolving Role of Members

Technology makes it possible for people to obtain information and services whenever and wherever they need them. The House Administration is providing speedier and easier access to information on the work of the House of Commons for Members and the public.

IMPROVING MEMBERS' ACCESS TO PARLIAMENTARY INFORMATION

- With the launch of the first phase of "Today in the House," Members, staff and the public have better access to online information about the daily activities of the House of Commons. From this central point, they can easily navigate the Parliament of Canada Web site and connect to information about House proceedings and publications, committee reports and Members. Upcoming enhancements will provide easier access to more information on Members, items of business under consideration and documents tabled in the House of Commons.
- The Senate, the House of Commons and the Library of Parliament are committed to a common long-term vision and strategy for enhancing parliamentary information services. As part of this strategy, the partners have developed a governance structure reflecting their specific roles and responsibilities. This structure will be implemented over the coming year, enabling the partners to deliver information more effectively through joint programs and projects.
- The House Administration introduced new processes to shorten the production time for publications and research tools:
 - Production time for Private Members' bills was reduced by 25 percent, and a common template was introduced for Private Members' bills and government bills.
 - Preliminary indexes for the House of Commons *Debates* are now available within three hours of publication, and detailed indexes within 24 hours. The consistency of the French and English indexes was also improved.

FOCUS ON COMMITTEES SPECIAL COMMITTEE STUDYING BILL 98 ON UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE — 1940



PHOTO: © LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA

House of Commons committees have played a key role in shaping national programs and legislation. The House of Commons adopted the Unemployment Insurance Act on August 7, 1940, one month after the adoption of the constitutional amendment making it possible.

ENSURING A FLEXIBLE TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE

- The House Administration provided Members with on-demand access to proceedings through the ParIVU service. During the initial phase of implementation, all televised Chamber and committee proceedings were made accessible. In the coming fiscal year, Members and the public will also receive on-demand audio access to all public committee events, and will benefit from an online request service for video content.
- As part of its effort to develop a secure and high-performing technology environment, flexible enough to ensure continued services to Members, the House Administration completed underground connections and cabling to buildings, and the planning and design of technology services and infrastructure for future needs.

INVOLVING CANADIANS IN THE PARLIAMENTARY PROCESS

- The Committees Web site was reviewed to identify ways to improve its structure and features. This site provides access to detailed information about the work of committees, including minutes, reports and contact information. Over the coming year, the site will be enhanced to make it more user-friendly. It will also offer better access to information on witnesses and committee members, and improved subscription features so that users can follow the work of committees more closely.
- An e-consultation strategy and guidelines were developed to help committees plan their online public consultations, and select the approach that best meets their needs.

II. Enhancing Ongoing Services to Members and Sustaining the Institution

Sustaining an institution involves ensuring that information, practices and facilities are maintained and improved. The House Administration has implemented enhanced management and planning practices, upgraded facilities and shared information to serve Members, employees and the public more effectively.

FOCUS ON COMMITTEES

THE COMMITTEES WEB SITE

The House of Commons Committees Web site offers a wealth of information about individual committees and the committee system in general. Committee names, membership and contact information are all available at the click of a mouse. The site offers links to committee reports, government responses and other documents. For general information, "Committees: Practical Guide" is a good starting point. More specific details on appearing as a witness or preparing a submission are also available. If you're interested in tuning in to committee proceedings, see the broadcast schedule for CPAC, or tune in to the ParIVU Webcasts.

To get to the Committees site, go to the Parliament of Canada Web site (www.parl.gc.ca), click on "Committee Business" and then on "House of Commons: Committees Home."

SUSTAINING THE INSTITUTION AND IMPROVING SERVICES

- Based on consultations with Members and a review of program activities, the House Administration refined its Members' Orientation Program to better meet their needs. This program provides information and services to Members in the period surrounding a general election or by-election. Working with the Library of Parliament, the Administration also offered seminars to Members and their staff on procedural subjects, governance and financial reporting. Training sessions continue to be offered throughout the Parliament.
- To support Members and to prepare newly-elected representatives for committee work, the House Administration and the Library of Parliament held briefing sessions on their services to committees. A session was also offered to committee chairs on such subjects as managing a committee meeting and organizing the work of a committee.
- A number of measures were taken to facilitate the financial management of committee activities. They included a redistribution of the funding envelope to allow for greater flexibility, provision of more information for witnesses on obtaining expense reimbursements, a review of practices for contracting expert services, and a new template for reporting on committee travel. An updated version of the *Financial Management and Policy Guide for Committees* was also launched. These reporting tools will continue to be refined in the next fiscal year.
- The House Administration introduced a new governance structure to streamline decision-making, and better coordinate and monitor the production of committee reports. The standard number of printed copies of committee reports was reduced from 550 to 350 to lower costs and environmental impacts, and to promote the use of the Committees Web site. Future activities will include examining the roles of all partners involved in report production and fine-tuning of the existing process.

RENOVATING THE PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

- The House Administration positioned itself to meet the key objectives of the updated Long-Term Vision and Plan (LTVP) for the Parliamentary Precinct and Implementation Strategy. The plan sets out a program of major new construction and renovation work for the next two decades to preserve the Parliament buildings and grounds in order to prepare them for future needs, while minimizing the impact on parliamentary operations and services.
- In partnership with Public Works and Government Services Canada, the House Administration continued the planning, design and installation of facilities, infrastructure and information technologies to support the creation of interim accommodations. This planning will allow for the relocation of members of Parliament, their staff and parliamentary functions from the West Block.
- Construction of interim accommodation at 131 Queen is nearly complete. The planning and design work for La Promenade Building, and the major rehabilitation of the Wellington and the Bank of Montreal Buildings continue. These facilities will provide office space for Members and temporary committee rooms during renovations of the West Block. The renovation work at La Promenade Building is scheduled to begin in the fall of 2007.
- The planning for the major rehabilitation of the West Block continues. Plans for masonry repairs to the West Block towers were completed, and the Southeast tower restoration will take place in 2007–2008.

IMPROVING INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES

- The House Administration assessed voice recognition technologies to provide real-time closed captioning in French during Question Period. This service will be offered in 2008–2009. Real-time closed captioning of these proceedings is currently provided in English, with sign-language interpretation in French. Consultations were held with the hearing-impaired community.
- The House Administration is implementing a Data Quality Management Program to improve the quality of financial and human resources data, and is proceeding with the upgrading of the the Human Resources Management System (HRMS). These measures will enable the Administration to improve services to Members and employees.

FOCUS ON COMMITTEES

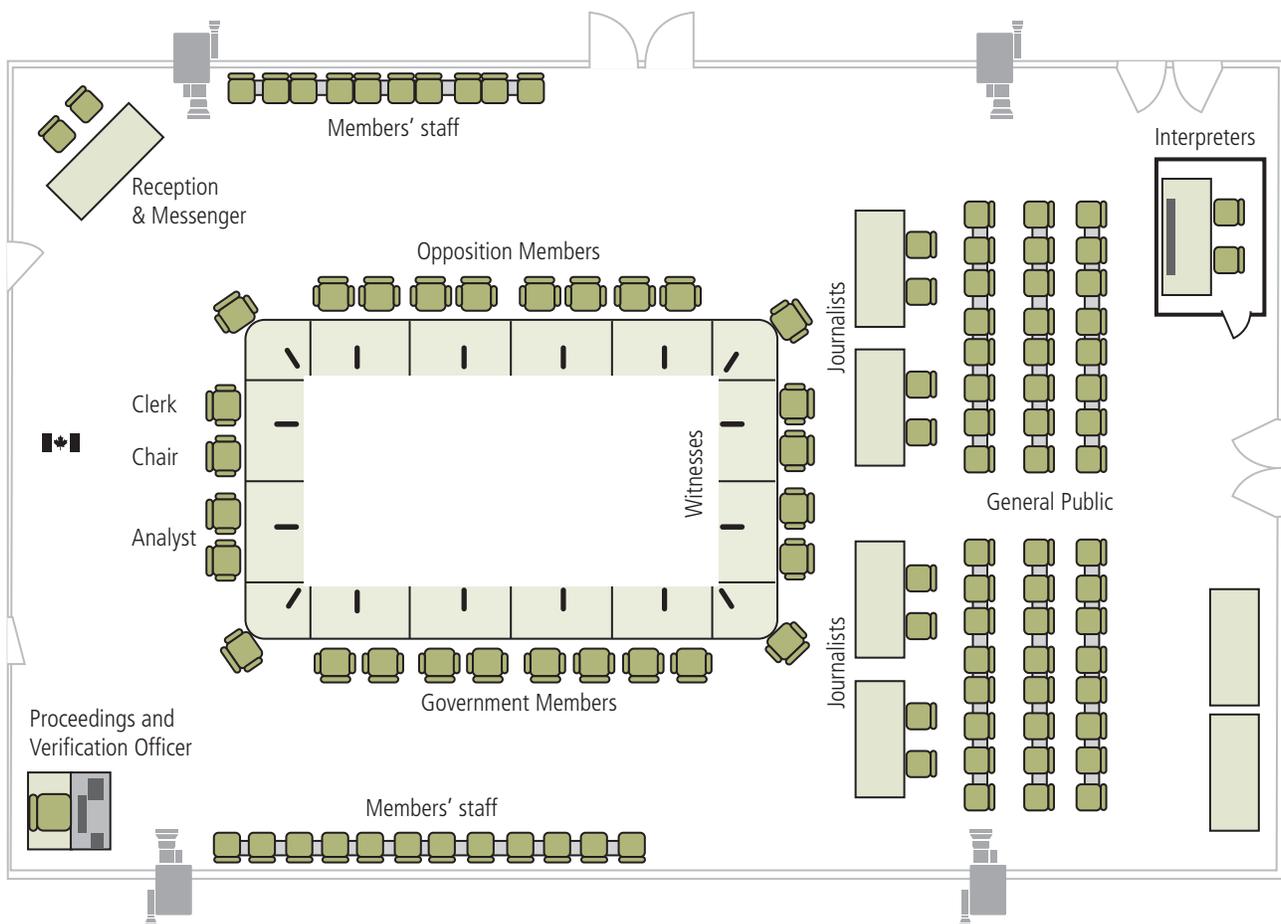
INSIDE A COMMITTEE MEETING

Most committee meetings take place during preset timeframes. Notices are posted on the Web site indicating the purpose, location and time of the meeting, the agenda, and any witnesses invited to appear. Meetings are usually held in one of the designated committee rooms located throughout the Parliamentary buildings. These rooms are outfitted with facilities for recording the proceedings and for simultaneous interpretation.

In a typical committee room, the tables are arranged in a large rectangle with the committee Chair, the committee clerk and research staff at one end. Government committee members sit to the Chair's right, and opposition members to his or her left. Witnesses sit at the far end opposite the Chair.

Usually, witnesses make introductory statements followed by a question-and-answer period. Committees may also hold round-table discussions to exchange ideas with witnesses, or "town hall" meetings in which members of the public can express their views without making a formal presentation. Transcripts and minutes of meetings are posted on the Internet.

The Layout of a Typical Committee Room



- The House Administration renewed its Web publishing policy and standards to reflect its ongoing commitment to provide information services that can be accessed by persons with special needs.
- The House Administration upgraded services for wireless and constituency communications to support the Members' requirement for access to information from remote locations.

REFINING THE BUSINESS CONTINUITY AND RESUMPTION PLAN FOR THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

- Through its Business Continuity and Resumption Plan, the House of Commons has developed the capability to relocate in the event of an emergency and to continue its activities. Management plans were developed to ensure that the critical business of the Chamber and committees can continue, and an analysis was conducted to identify critical service needs of other areas of activity. Emphasis was placed on ensuring that special equipment or resources are readily available in alternate locations. Management plans will be completed in 2007–2008.

III. Promoting Understanding and Supporting the Advancement of Legislative Institutions

The House of Commons is committed to helping Canadians, Parliamentarians and international representatives learn more about our parliamentary system. The Administration supports this commitment by producing print and online materials, and providing opportunities for people to come together to discuss parliamentary issues.

PROVIDING LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

- The Afghan National Assembly shares certain characteristics with our Parliament: it works in two official languages and includes an upper house and a lower house. These parallels make the Canadian Parliament the ideal place to share its parliamentary knowledge with Afghan officials. In June 2006, the Parliament of Canada hosted 13 senior administrators from the National Assembly of Afghanistan as participants in the Parliamentary Officers' Study Program. Designed to support the development of a strong, stable parliament in Afghanistan, this intensive training program focused on parliamentary procedure, the legislative process,

FOCUS ON COMMITTEES

TELEVISIONING COMMITTEES



PHOTO: © HOUSE OF COMMONS

Committee activities were first broadcast on a case-by-case basis. Certain committees received special permission to broadcast their meetings, such as was the case with the Special Joint Committee on the Constitution of Canada (1982). The response was positive.

The House felt that broadcasting committees enabled Canadians to arrive at a better understanding of Members' work, and it decided to begin broadcasting committee proceedings on an experimental basis in 1992. Today, the audio of all committee meetings, except those held in camera, is broadcast live over the Internet in both official languages. Televised meetings are broadcast on the Cable Public Affairs Channel (CPAC).

committees, the financial cycle and accountability.

- The Senate and the House Administration provided weekly presentations on Canadian system of government to new recruits to the public service in order to increase their understanding and appreciation of how Parliament functions.

UPDATING MAJOR PUBLICATIONS ON PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

- To provide information to parliamentary experts and the public alike, the House Administration continually develops and updates publications explaining the activities and traditions of the House of Commons:
 - A team of procedural experts is working on the second edition of *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, scheduled for publication in print and online in 2009.
 - The *Annotated Standing Orders*, which trace the evolution of the rules of the House, was launched in an online format. In addition, three new chapters were added to the online publication *Compendium of House of Commons Procedure*, which provides up-to-date information on the practices and procedures of the House.

IV. Applying the Highest Standards of Public-Sector Governance in a Parliamentary Context

The House Administration strives to manage its activities effectively and to exercise responsible stewardship of its resources. It does so by establishing strong planning and policy frameworks, adhering to high standards of governance and accountability, and maintaining a healthy and fulfilling workplace.

SUSTAINING A MOTIVATED AND EFFECTIVE WORKFORCE

- To ensure a workforce with the skills necessary to meet Members' needs into the future, the House Administration focused its activities on the following areas:
 - promoting recruitment by participating in job fairs and promoting employment opportunities on the Parliament of Canada Web site;
 - improving career management and professional development tools;
 - increasing the number of competency profiles for positions, and offering competency-based training.

- An occupational health and safety policy was approved in the past fiscal year, and training sessions for House employees will follow in 2007–2008. Activities to promote employee health included a week-long event "Just for the Health of It," as well as exercise programs and monthly sessions on health-related topics.
- House Administration employees were offered procedural training and a program entitled, "The Many Facets of Parliament Hill", which explains how their work supports Parliamentarians.

KEEPING THE HOUSE OF COMMONS SECURE

- The House Administration introduced "Security is Everybody's Business," a strategy to enhance security by encouraging employees to follow security protocols when they are at work. Activities included security awareness sessions for employees focusing on security protocols for five key areas: identification cards, visitors, packages, office security and personal safety. Awareness sessions for Members and their staff have started and will continue through the coming year, and all employees will receive further information on security issues.



Participants of the Parliamentary Officers' Study Program for Afghanistan with Speaker Milliken.

PHOTO: © HOUSE OF COMMONS

- The Senate, the House Administration and the RCMP began work on a Parliamentary Precinct Master Security Plan, which will provide strategic orientation on security issues and will be aligned with the Long-Term Vision and Plan (LTVP) for construction and renovation. In 2007–2008, as an initial stage, the partners will produce a report on the guiding principles for security, and strategy options for such areas as security technologies, resources and accountabilities.

STRENGTHENING THE HOUSE OF COMMONS MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

- The House Administration will work with the Senate to develop performance indicators for Parliament’s international and interparliamentary activities. These indicators will help to ensure the best possible performance and promote a better understanding of these activities.
- The House Administration completed a *Framework for Investment Planning* as part of its activities to introduce a lifecycle approach to managing assets such as IM/IT, real property, equipment and vehicles. The plan includes a long-term investment plan and guidelines for investment proposals. Investment planning will be integrated into the Administration’s management practices over the coming fiscal year.
- Based on a multi-year policy plan that guides policy review and development, the House Administration reviewed financial, human resources and materiel management policies on: the delegation of financial signing and human resources management authorities; ex-gratia payment; classification; and corporate credit cards. Policies still under review include employment equity, learning and procurement. The House Administration also held information sessions on workplace accommodation and conflict of interest policies. Future policy work will focus on asset management, managing personal information, harassment prevention and a financial and materiel management accountability framework.

- Auditing financial statements is an important component of sound management practices. The House Administration appreciates this, and has an annual audit of its financial statements performed by an independent public accounting firm. The audit determines whether appropriate controls are in place and functioning properly, and tests transactions on a sample basis to determine whether the financial statements present a true picture of the situation. The audit report provides a summary of any significant findings as well as recommendations for improvement. The most recent audit completed of the 2005–2006 financial statements, was extremely positive in that it resulted not only in an unqualified audit opinion, but also raised no new observations for remediation by management.
- The House Administration continues to develop an integrated risk management approach and methodology to support decision-making processes that affect the achievement of the House’s strategic and financial goals. It has developed and is piloting audit planning and assessment tools to identify key risks facing the organization’s programs and service areas. In the future, it will integrate these processes within the House’s internal controls.

MANAGING PARLIAMENTARY INFORMATION AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ASSETS

- The House Administration used existing PRISM and Smartbook technologies to compile information about parliamentary exchanges and associations, to standardize documents and to publish reports directly to the Parliament of Canada Web site. Further improvements are planned for the coming year to speed up and facilitate the compiling and publication of reports and other documents. Improvements were also made to the section of the Web site devoted to international and interparliamentary affairs in order to make it more user-friendly.
- To improve services to Members participating in international activities, and to share knowledge among employees, the House Administration developed an electronic operations manual dealing with such subjects as travel preparation and meeting planning.

FOCUS ON COMMITTEES

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE CANADIAN FLAG



PHOTO: © LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA

December 15, 1964 — In response to the recommendations of a special committee formed in October of 1964, the House of Commons adopted a national flag. The new flag featured a red maple leaf on a white background between two bands of red. The flag was flown for the first time on Parliament Hill on February 15, 1965.

- Separate databases for tracking proceedings in the Chamber and committees were combined to create a more powerful research tool providing users with access to a wider range of information. The technology used to make this possible will be adapted to permit publication of the *Procedural Digest*, a concise, weekly review of activities in the House.
- The House Administration continued efforts to make records management more consistent, to facilitate search and retrieval, to share information, and to preserve corporate memory. Future activities will include records management training, and the development of a strategy for the long-term management of information stored on shared drives, personal drives and e-mail.
- The House Administration worked with the Senate and the Department of Justice with a view to implementing a shared information system for publishing legislation.
- Through its IT security management program, the House Administration evaluates and addresses risks to the Parliamentary precinct network. To ensure that Members work in a secure IT environment, it has enhanced anti-virus and anti-spyware technology, and introduced a system to monitor the network and block non-sanctioned activity.

IMPROVING ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT ON THE HILL

- Working with its partners, the House Administration redesigned its environmental awards program and was invited by the Canada School of Public Service to present the program as a model for other organizations.
- In 2002, Printing Services at the House of Commons underwent a stringent process to receive EcoLogo certification from Environment Canada. This certification identifies Printing Services as a supplier of environmentally preferable products and services. To maintain its certification, the House Administration must constantly seek out new ways to improve its environmental performance. In 2006–2007, it introduced a water treatment system for its printing operations that will minimize waste and downtime, and ensure the high performance of printing machinery. A system was also introduced to recover and recycle liquid waste from rags used in the printing process.

FOCUS ON COMMITTEES

SEEKING OUT INFORMATION

This map shows some of the locations that House of Commons committees have visited in recent years. With the approval of the House, committees can travel to hear evidence, hold consultations or visit locations relating to their studies. When they hold meetings in other parts of Canada, committees follow the same process as they do on Parliament Hill. The evidence and proceedings are recorded and made public. The committees retain all their powers, and members and witnesses are protected by parliamentary privilege. When committees travel outside the country, they can consult groups and individuals and visit facilities. They do not hold official hearings or otherwise exercise their powers.



Conclusion

The many activities described in this report make for a very active working environment. The subjects debated in the House affect all Canadians. Whether discussing health care, the economy or international issues, Members represent the ideas and needs of their constituents, shape legislation and represent Canada throughout in the world. The House Administration provides the support necessary to enable them to carry out this work.

As illustrated by the “vignettes” in this report, committees have performed an important service over the years, shaping our national symbols and the programs and policies that are distinctly Canadian.



PHOTO: © LIBRARY OF PARLIAMENT/TOM LITTLEMORE

Members represented Canadians by presenting their concerns in a national forum, and served Canada on the world stage by meeting with other parliamentarians to discuss trade, parliamentary democracy and other issues.

The House of Commons Administration has continued to emphasize service delivery by finding new tools and ways of working. These measures include providing speedier access to critical Parliamentary information, improving environmental practices and ensuring the sound stewardship of resources. The Administration not only focused on the day-to-day needs of Members and the public, but also kept an eye to the future to guarantee that it can continue to meet the needs of a modern workplace.

Over the coming year, Members will continue to serve Canadians in the halls of Parliament and in their constituencies with the support of the House Administration.

Financial Report*

Planned Versus Actual Spending by Authority

(in thousands of dollars)

2006-2007

Vote	Main Estimates	Supplementary Estimates and Adjustments	Total Authorities	Actual Spending	Variance
5 PROGRAM EXPENDITURES	256,312	4,466	260,778	244,954	15,824
(S) MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS **	109,397	(5,573)	103,824	103,824	0
(S) CONTRIBUTIONS TO EMPLOYEE BENEFIT PLANS	34,615	(4,688)	29,927	29,927	0
SUBTOTAL	144,012	(10,261)	133,751	133,751	0
TOTAL	400,324	(5,795)	394,529	378,705	15,824

** Salaries and allowances of Officers and Members of the House of Commons under the Parliament of Canada Act and contributions to the Members of Parliament Retiring Allowances Account and the Members of Parliament Retirement Compensation Arrangements Account

Planned Versus Actual Spending by Program Activity

(in thousands of dollars)

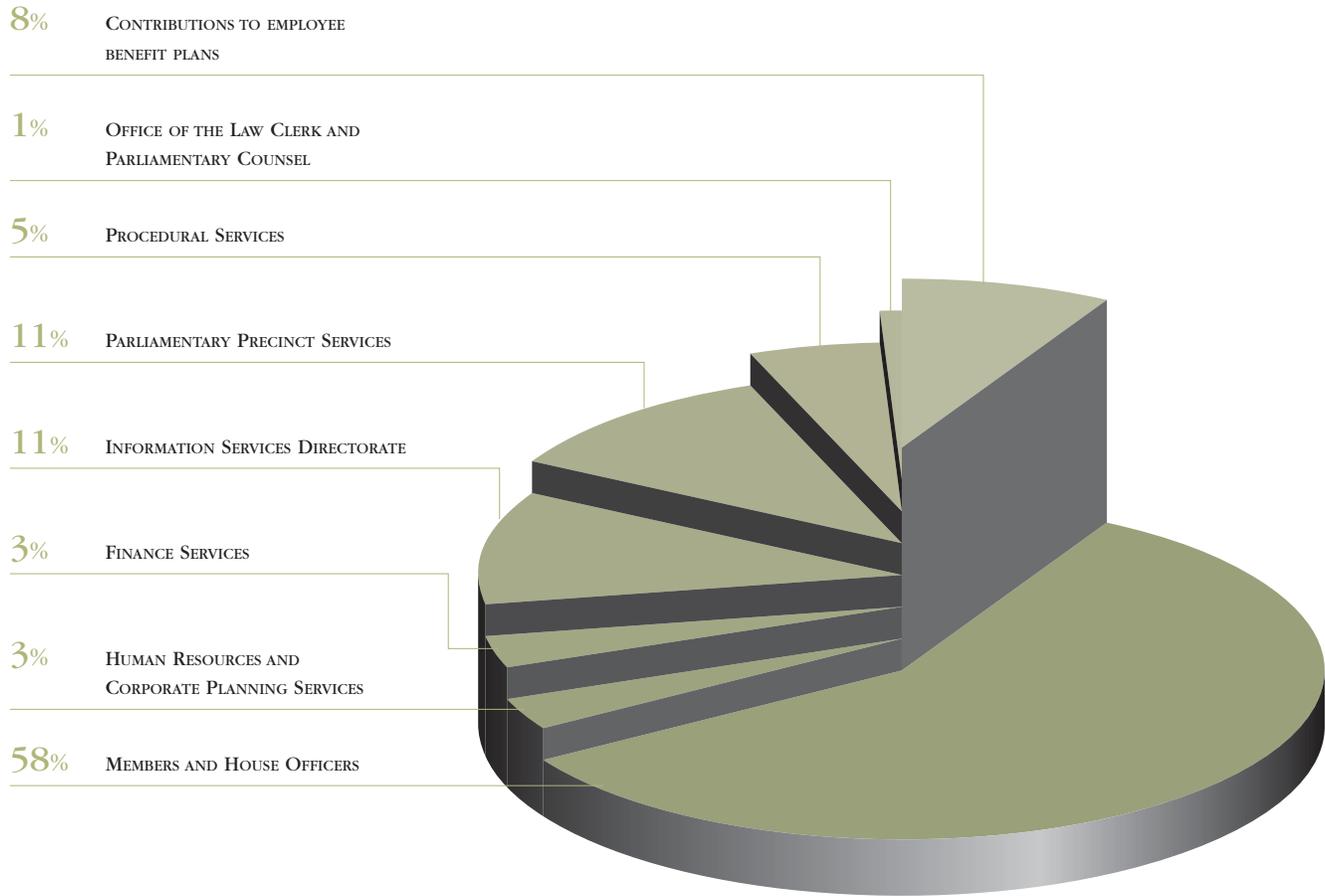
2006-2007

Program Activity	Main Estimates	Supplementary Estimates and Adjustments	Total Authorities	Actual Spending	Variance
MEMBERS AND HOUSE OFFICERS	226,664	(2,440)	224,224	215,941	8,283
HOUSE ADMINISTRATION					
OFFICE OF THE CLERK AND SECRETARIAT	0	1,823	1,823	1,615	208
OFFICE OF THE LAW CLERK AND PARLIAMENTARY COUNSEL	2,525	252	2,777	2,770	7
PROCEDURAL SERVICES	17,437	(509)	16,928	16,375	553
STANDING COMMITTEES	6,000	0	6,000	1,711	4,289
PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATIONS	2,210	210	2,420	2,331	89
PARLIAMENTARY PRECINCT SERVICES	42,045	2,234	44,279	43,181	1,098
INFORMATION SERVICES DIRECTORATE	42,040	900	43,030	42,922	108
CORPORATE SERVICES ⁽¹⁾	26,788	(26,788)	0	0	0
FINANCE SERVICES	0	10,712	10,712	9,958	754
HUMAN RESOURCES AND CORPORATE PLANNING SERVICES	0	12,409	12,409	11,974	435
SUBTOTAL	139,045	1,333	140,378	132,837	7,541
CONTRIBUTIONS TO EMPLOYEE BENEFIT PLANS	34,615	(4,688)	29,927	29,927	0
TOTAL	400,324	(5,795)	394,529	378,705	15,824

⁽¹⁾ Approved budget for Corporate Services was allocated among the Office of the Clerk and Secretariat, Parliamentary Precinct Services, Finance Services and Human Resources and Corporate Planning Services during fiscal year 2006-2007. Expenses are shown against the respective services.

* Financial results may be subject to minor revisions.

2006-2007 Actual Spending by Service (in percentage)



Increase in Main Estimates Over Previous Fiscal Year

(in thousands of dollars)

Main Estimates

Vote	Program Name	2006-2007	2005-2006	Variance
5	PROGRAM EXPENDITURES:			
	MEMBERS AND HOUSE OFFICERS	117,268	111,670	5,598
	OFFICE OF THE LAW CLERK AND PARLIAMENTARY COUNSEL	2,524	2,358	166
	PROCEDURAL SERVICES	25,647	23,442	2,205
	PARLIAMENTARY PRECINCT SERVICES	42,045	40,683	1,362
	INFORMATION SERVICES DIRECTORATE	42,040	39,502	2,538
	CORPORATE SERVICES ⁽¹⁾	26,788	23,940	2,848
	SUBTOTAL	256,312	241,595	14,717
(S)	MEMBERS AND HOUSE OFFICERS	109,397	106,465	2,932
(S)	CONTRIBUTIONS TO EMPLOYEE BENEFIT PLANS	34,615	35,161	(546)
	SUBTOTAL	144,012	141,626	2,386
	TOTAL	400,324	383,221	17,103

⁽¹⁾ Approved budget for Corporate Services was allocated among the Office of the Clerk and Secretariat, Parliamentary Precinct Services, Finance Services and Human Resources and Corporate Planning Services during fiscal year 2006-2007.

Full-Time Equivalents - House Administration

Main Estimates

Program Sub-activity	2006-2007	2005-2006
OFFICE OF THE LAW CLERK AND PARLIAMENTARY COUNSEL	24	22
PROCEDURAL SERVICES	217	211
PARLIAMENTARY PRECINCT SERVICES	737	725
INFORMATION SERVICES DIRECTORATE	505	471
CORPORATE SERVICES ⁽¹⁾	316	308
TOTAL	1,799	1,737

⁽¹⁾ Full-Time Equivalents for Corporate Services was allocated among the Office of the Clerk and Secretariat, Parliamentary Precinct Services, Finance Services and Human Resources and Corporate Planning Services during fiscal year 2006-2007.



Your Portal to a Wealth of Information

The fold-out insert at the centre of this document include photographs of Members elected to Canada's Thirty-ninth Parliament. Canadians can use their postal code to identify their Member of Parliament by visiting the Parliament of Canada Web site at:

www.parl.gc.ca