

STRATEGIC OUTLOOK *for the 39TH PARLIAMENT*

House of Commons Administration

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 in the late 1940s and early 1950s by Cléophas Soucy and William F.K. Oosterhoff. 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).

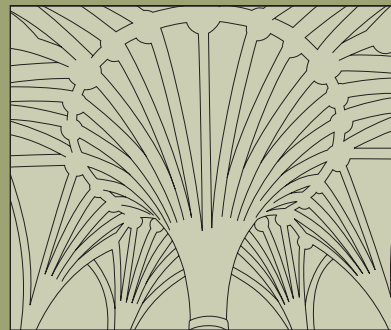


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MESSAGE *from the* CLERK



I am very pleased to present the *Strategic Outlook for the 39th Parliament*, which continues the House of Commons' new planning and reporting strategy that was developed in the previous Parliament. Let me begin by explaining how this particular approach came into being.

In the past, in much the same way as government departments and agencies reported annually on their plans and priorities and on their accomplishments, the House of Commons Administration reported annually on how it had supported the work of Members of Parliament and how it planned to improve such support in the future. However, tying these documents to the fiscal year made for awkward overlaps and repetitions since the House of Commons Administration naturally plans its proposals for the future over the life of a Parliament, favouring a more long-term and strategic approach. In time, it was decided to reflect this reality in the Administration's planning documents, tying them more closely to the parliamentary cycle rather than the fiscal year.

With the approval of the Board of Internal Economy, the House Administration decided to produce two documents: the *Strategic Outlook* and the *Report to Canadians*. The *Strategic Outlook* sets out the broad strategic objectives for a Parliament and identifies the Administration's major initiatives for achieving those objectives. The *Report to Canadians* provides the public with an annual update on Members' parliamentary activities, and the Administration's accomplishments and commitments in support of Members.

The first *Strategic Outlook* was published in 2004, following the general election for the 38th Parliament. The strategic objectives outlined in the document were based on the

Administration's mandate, vision and values, and on the factors affecting its operating environment. Key among those factors was a minority government, increased scrutiny of public-sector organizations, and a heightened awareness of security requirements. There was also a continued focus on environmental issues, opportunities to manage information and communicate through technology, and an anticipated increase in retirement rates among employees.

Because the 38th Parliament lasted only 17 months, these key factors are still pertinent, and the environment in which the Administration operates has not changed substantially. Thus, the strategic objectives developed in 2004 remain relevant and appropriate for the *Strategic Outlook for the 39th Parliament*, although the major initiatives for each objective have been updated to reflect the Administration's commitments for this Parliament.

The activities outlined in this document will be carried out by the five Service Areas that make up the House of Commons Administration, under the direction of the Board of Internal Economy and the Speaker. I am confident in the abilities of Administration employees to continue to provide Members of Parliament with excellent service and to exercise sound stewardship of resources. The 39th Parliament will offer the House Administration new avenues for strengthening the institution and supporting Members in their work, and we welcome those opportunities.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Audrey O'Brien".

Audrey O'Brien
Clerk of the House of Commons

Vision

To exercise leadership in supporting the House of Commons and its Members and in the advancement of parliamentary institutions.

Values

The employees of the House Administration are proud to serve the Parliament of Canada. We are guided by values that motivate us to provide excellent service and non-partisan expert advice to Members.

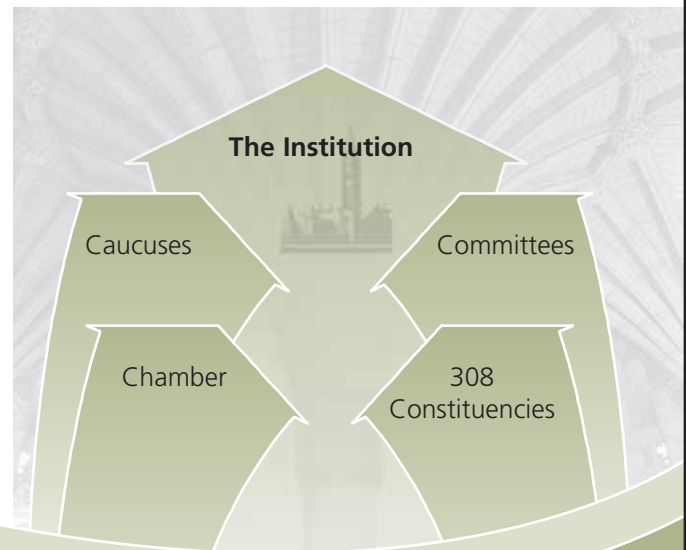
- **Respect for the democratic process:** We believe in the importance of parliamentary institutions and the democratic process, and we work to strengthen and foster respect for them.
- **Balancing continuity and change:** We preserve the collective memory and ensure institutional continuity, while supporting Members as their roles evolve and the institution evolves with them.
- **Professional excellence:** We work together to provide effective, accountable and non-partisan support, and we act with integrity, in a manner that is responsible and ethical.

The Organization

The mandate of the House Administration is to support Members by providing the infrastructure, services and advice they need to carry out their work as legislators and representatives in the Chamber, in committee, in caucus, in their Parliament Hill offices, and in their constituencies.

The Board of Internal Economy is the governing body of the House of Commons and oversees its financial management and administration on behalf of Members and Canadians. It is chaired by the Speaker and composed of Members representing all recognized parties.

The Clerk of the House of Commons is the Secretary to the Board and, as the senior official of the Administration, reports to the Speaker. Five Service Areas, employing the equivalent of 1,685 full-time workers, report to the Clerk: Procedural Services; the Office of the Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel; Information Services; Parliamentary Precinct Services; and Corporate Services.



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES *and* MAJOR INITIATIVES

The House Administration has established four strategic objectives to focus its efforts and guide its activities during the 39th Parliament, and has identified major initiatives to be undertaken in support of each objective.

1. To respond to the evolving role of Members and the institution

As Canadians' expectations change, so does the role of Members. In response, the House of Commons Administration is constantly examining its practices, and finding new ways to modernize, work with its partners, and develop new tools to improve its operations and better serve Members and Canadians.

- *Supporting the evolution of parliamentary practices and rules:* As Members consider changes to the rules that govern House proceedings, the Administration will provide advice on how these changes may affect House business and will assist in implementing Members' decisions. The Administration will continue to support committees by developing a revised budget planning process, as well as reviewing committees' use of professional expertise in areas pertinent to their work.
- *Ensuring a flexible technology infrastructure:* As part of a multi-year plan to ensure a managed approach to the House of Commons' video and audio assets, a digital asset management tool will be implemented to provide on-demand access to proceedings for Members of Parliament through the ParlVU service.
- *Improving Members' access to parliamentary information:* The House Administration will continue implementation of "Today in the House," a renewed Chamber Business section for the House of Commons on the Parliament of Canada Web site that will serve as a central access point for online information about the activities of the House of Commons, featuring publications, Webcasts of proceedings, and information on bills, among other details. A new publishing tool will improve the production of online and paper documents, particularly the reports of international and interparliamentary delegations. Working with the Senate of Canada, the Library of Parliament, and Public Works and Government Services Canada, the House Administration will continue to improve the way in which information is shared throughout Parliament.
- *Involving Canadians in the parliamentary process:* During the 39th Parliament, the House Administration will continue to develop and implement new features for the Committees Web site (please visit www.parl.gc.ca and follow the links, "Committee Business" and "House of Commons Committees—Home").

2. To enhance ongoing services to Members and sustain the institution

Day to day, the House Administration strives to deliver and continuously improve the services Members require for their work, and to develop a strong foundation of systems and information to support the House of Commons into the future. Activities include ensuring a safe work environment for Members, their staff and Administration employees, providing public access to Parliament, using technology to share information, and ensuring continuity between Parliaments.

- *Renovating the Parliament Buildings:* Under the *Long-Term Vision and Plan*, a range of renovation and new construction initiatives are anticipated to ensure that Members are housed in facilities that meet the demands of a modern workplace, while respecting the historical significance and beauty of Parliament's buildings. During the 39th Parliament, the House Administration will pursue priority projects under the Plan. Working with Public Works and Government Services Canada, the House Administration will continue to oversee the planning, design and installation of facilities, information technologies and infrastructure to ensure readiness and to support the relocation of Members of Parliament, their staff and parliamentary functions.
- *Improving information technology services:* The House Administration will introduce a more user-friendly daily list of committee meetings, and promote the improved E-Notice Web site as a secure and convenient alternative to traditional written notices. The technology used to manage financial and human resources will continue to be reviewed and updated. The Administration will also explore the use of software that would lead to more efficient procurement and recruitment processes. The House Administration, as part of a multi-year accessibility program, will provide Web and television content that may be accessed by persons with special needs, as well as a real-time captioning service.
- *Refining the business continuity and resumption plan for the House of Commons:* A business continuity and resumption plan ensures that essential services will continue if an emergency situation forces the House of Commons to relocate in order to carry out its parliamentary activities. The House Administration will finalize functional plans for committee and caucus activities. It will test relocation plans within the National Capital Region and develop plans for alternate sites outside the region.
- *Training and orientation for Members and their staff:* The House Administration will continue to coordinate and review the Election Readiness and Orientation Program, which provides information and services to new, returning and defeated Members in the period surrounding a general election or by-election. During the 39th Parliament, the House Administration and its partner the Library of Parliament will continue to provide Members and their staff with training seminars.
- *Keeping the House of Commons secure:* The House Administration will continue to provide a secure environment in which to work while offering the safe and appropriate access required of a public institution. It will introduce the "Security is Everyone's Business" strategy to promote an increased awareness among employees of security issues and potential risks.

3. To promote understanding and to support the advancement of legislative institutions

By producing publications and developing online resources, the House Administration promotes an understanding of our parliamentary system and the role of Members of Parliament, thereby facilitating participation in our parliamentary institutions. By sharing best practices with its counterparts in Canada and abroad, the Administration also supports the development of existing and emerging legislative institutions.

- *Updating major publications on parliamentary procedure:* In addition to a Web version of the *Annotated Standing Orders* and a second edition of *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, the House Administration will produce a guide for Chair Occupants and a practical work guide for Table Officers.
- *Providing learning opportunities for parliamentarians and legislative officials from jurisdictions in Canada and abroad:* Procedural training will be offered to the broader community of House employees and, in cooperation with the Senate and the Canada School of the Public Service, to employees of the federal public service. Parliament will host some 1,300 delegates at three major conferences: the 12th Asia-Pacific Parliamentarians Conference on Environment and Development; the 44th Regional Conference of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Assembly; and the 52nd Annual Session of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly. For more information, please visit www.parl.gc.ca, “Interparliamentary Affairs.”

4. To apply the highest standards of public sector governance in a parliamentary context

There is an increased focus on accountability and transparency in all public sector institutions, and a commitment to meeting high standards of governance. The House Administration will continue to show leadership in this respect by promoting the sound management of its resources.

- *Strengthening House of Commons management practices:* The House Administration will continue to implement its multi-year policy plan to foster best management practices and sound stewardship. It will also audit and review programs, policies and systems as part of a multi-year review plan, and obtain an annual independent opinion on the fairness of the House financial statements. A risk management approach will be refined to ensure that the Administration identifies and mitigates potential risks that could affect the outcome of its initiatives.
- *Managing parliamentary information:* The House Administration will continue to develop best practices and introduce technology to manage information in a consistent, user-friendly manner. Software will be introduced that allows the Administration to update online information quickly and easily, and repackage it for use in a variety of documents. Initiatives will be launched to produce a wider range of reports on parliamentary exchanges and associations, and track membership more accurately. Parliamentary Web sites will be enhanced to provide easier access to information. Procedural researchers will benefit from an improved system for recording procedural events of interest, and the creation of a consistent set of terminology for identifying information. An annual review of the financial management and policy guide will also be conducted to support Members in their committee work.

The House Administration will ensure that investments in information management/information technology assets are supported by a life-cycle management program, and that the reliable, secure and responsive information technology environment continues to meet the evolving needs of Members.

- *Sustaining a motivated and effective workforce:* Like all organizations adapting to an aging workforce, the House Administration anticipates an increase in retirement in the next few years. It is carrying out a number of activities to preserve corporate memory and ensure that employees have the required skills to fill the available positions. The continued development of competency profiles and the assessment of learning needs will help the Administration to identify the skills and qualities required for positions, and to evaluate employee performance. A recruitment and retention strategy and employment equity plan will support efforts to create a diverse workforce.

To increase the level of employee health, the Administration will explore the expansion of the health-risk assessment program and fitness activities, and will continue to hold monthly sessions on health-related topics.

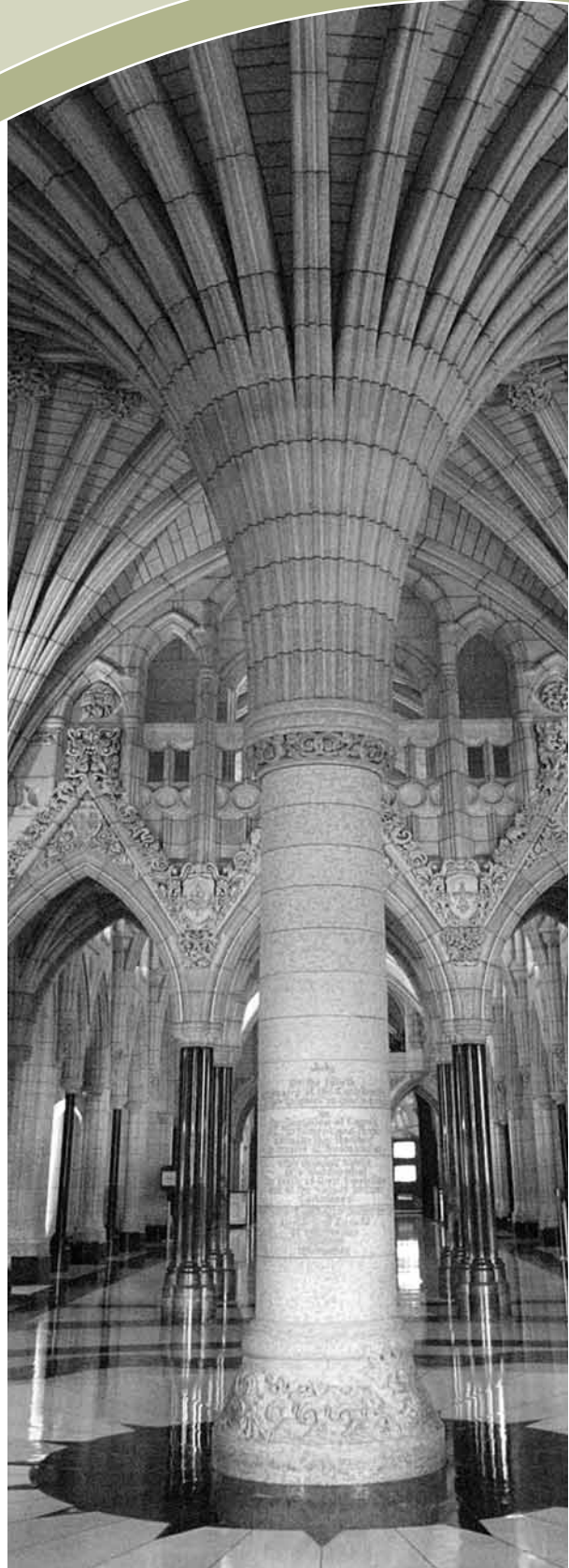
- *Improving environmental management on the Hill:* Partners for a Green Hill will continue to promote new programs and initiatives to improve environmental management on the Hill, including a chemical products review and promotion of the transit pass program. For more information, please visit www.parl.gc.ca, "About Parliament."

MOVING FORWARD

Implementation of the initiatives outlined in this document will bear the hallmarks of the Administration's approach to its work. These include a commitment to providing high-quality and non-partisan service and expertise, anticipating future needs, employing technology to its fullest capacity, and maintaining good governance and sound stewardship of resources.

As mentioned earlier, an annual progress report will be provided in a *Report to Canadians*. This report will outline the continued efforts of House Administration staff to support Members and sustain the institution, and the pride and leadership they demonstrate in their work.

A graphic representation of the various strategic elements, and their interaction is featured in this document and is found on the following page—Strategic Framework.





MANDATE

Supporting Members of the House of Commons in their four lines of business (Caucuses, Chamber, Committees, Constituencies), and sustaining the institution of the House of Commons

VISION

To exercise leadership in supporting the House of Commons and its Members and in the advancement of parliamentary institutions

VALUES

Respect for the democratic process
Balancing continuity and change
Professional excellence

INTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

BOARD OF INTERNAL ECONOMY

CLERK'S MANAGEMENT GROUP

SERVICE AREAS

- Procedural Services
- Office of the Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel
- Information Services
- Parliamentary Precinct Services
- Corporate Services

EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

REPORT to CANADIANS

Annual summary of Members' parliamentary activities and update on the Administration's results and commitments in support of Members and the institution

STRATEGIC OUTLOOK for the 39TH PARLIAMENT

The Administration's strategic objectives to support Members and sustain the institution:

- To respond to the evolving role of Members
- To enhance ongoing services to Members and to sustain the institution
- To promote understanding and to support the advancement of legislative institutions
- To apply the highest standards of public sector governance, in a parliamentary context

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

An outline of how the House Administration supports Members, sustains the institution, and reports against its key objectives