

# LA RELÈVE, THE LEADERSHIP NETWORK, AND THE FORMATION OF THE CANADA SCHOOL OF PUBLIC SERVICE: AN OVERVIEW

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La Relève, the Leadership Network,  
and the Formation of the Canada  
School of Public Service:  
An Overview

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# Foreword

I have dedicated my career, over 50 years so far, to the field of public administration both as a practitioner in Canada and abroad and by conducting research.

In 2023, I started to collect my documents for their transfer to and safe keeping by Library and Archives Canada. In the process, I realised that the public records on many issues are lacking a public service perspective, including about events and changes that have shaped the Public Service as an institution over the years. This is due to many factors, including that:

- Canada does not have a tradition of documenting historical events as is the case in Europe, the USA, and many Asian countries.
- Memoirs and biographies focus primarily on political events, leaving unanswered the question of how ideas came about and how they were achieved in practice.
- There is no rigour to the transfer of public records to Library and Archives. In most countries, it is mandatory after 20 years. In Canada, this is left to each organisation. By the time records are transferred, there may not be anyone left with direct knowledge of the context.

Colleagues I consulted argued that the transfer of my documents should be accompanied by a number of essays to guide future readers and researchers. This was a useful suggestion. For instance, many of my papers as Clerk of the Privy Council were not written as detailed agendas or articles. They were speeches, not intended for publication. Speeches are vignettes of an exchange between a speaker and the community it aspires to reach at a given point in time. They were aimed at public servants, people with insider knowledge of the situation prevailing in the public sector at that point in time. Therefore, they do not explain the context but go straight to discussing the challenges ahead to generate a common sense of purpose and encourage convergence across the public service. They made sense for people who were there at the time. But, many years later, readers may be unaware of the context, the aspirations, or the significance of the actions taken at the time.

Putting these records into context grew into a broad research and archival project, an effort to trace ideas and their development, to remember public service history from a public service perspective, and to draw lessons for serving and governing in the 21st century. The PGI team has conducted interviews, gathered and reviewed additional records, and worked to record history. This paper is a product of that work.



The Hon. Jocelyne Bourgon  
President of PGI

# Introduction

In the earliest stages of Program Review, on June 22nd-23rd 1994, Jocelyne Bourgon held the first Deputy Ministers' Retreat of her time as Clerk of the Privy Council. By the end of the meeting, attendees were to "have reached some conclusions about the work plan that would lead us into the fall."<sup>1</sup> Bourgon's Public Policy Forum speech on October 13th 1994, four months later, reflects a key set of findings from the Retreat. From her first days as Clerk, Bourgon spoke of strengthening a public service undergoing transformation.<sup>2</sup> The PPF speech was more specific, laying out three goals to both mitigate the harm of a decade of continuous public service downsizing - something that, with Program Review underway, would continue - and to bring about a public service stronger than before: "to modernize our service delivery, strengthen our policy capacity and build a vibrant institution capable of serving today and in the future."<sup>3</sup> In August of 1995, these three goals became a full chapter of Bourgon's first annual report on the public service, explored in greater depth,<sup>4</sup> and each was handled with its own initiative: in order, an effort to modernize service delivery, the Policy Research Initiative, and La Relève.

Of the three, the issue of institutional rejuvenation received the least attention in the 1995 annual report. In about a page and a half, however, the report laid out initial reasons that renewal would have to be a priority. In short, an ongoing salary freeze was undermining recruitment and retention, while large portions of the senior ranks of the Public Service were nearing retirement age. There was a need to pay attention to "attracting and developing the leaders of tomorrow," there was a need to "fill the senior ranks of the Public Service and to ensure a smooth succession," and it was time to "reassess what leadership and management skills are required to best serve the Public Service of the future."<sup>5</sup> The Clerk's thinking on these issues would develop over time.

In 1995, the Clerk formed nine Deputy Minister Task Forces to probe various public service issues.<sup>6</sup> Each of the coming initiatives found some foundation here. For La Relève, the most important task force was John Tait's Values and Ethics task force, which resulted in an oft-republished report, *A Strong Foundation*. The report, which emphasized morale and the factors that damaged it, would be distributed by the eventual Leadership Network, an agency formed to further La Relève, along with a 1998 dialogue guide based on it.<sup>7</sup>

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1. Jocelyne Bourgon, "Government Priorities and Strategic Planning Role" (speech, Deputy Ministers' Retreat, Ottawa, ON, June 22, 1994), 1.
  2. Jocelyne Bourgon, "Change and Management in the Public Service" (speech, APEX, Ottawa, ON, May 11, 1994).
  3. Jocelyne Bourgon, "Key Challenges Facing Canada's Public Service" (speech, Public Policy Forum, Ottawa, ON, October 13, 1994), 4.
  4. Jocelyne Bourgon, *Third Annual Report to The Prime Minister on The Public Service of Canada* (Ottawa: Privy Council Office, 1995), 37-48
  5. *Ibid.*, 46-47
  6. A full list can be found in the preface of each Deputy Minister Task Force report.
  7. See *Dialogue on Values and Ethics: A Practical Guide* (Ottawa, ON: The Leadership Network, 1998).

# The Birth of La Relève

In 1996, with the peak of the national unity crisis and the core of Program Review past, the public service rejuvenation effort began to coalesce into something specific: La Relève, an effort to reform and revitalize primarily within the bounds of existing legislation.<sup>8</sup>

It is not clear where the name ‘La Relève’ came from. In the records available to me, it first appears in Bourgon’s June 1996 Assistant Deputy Ministers’ Forum speech: “I believe that we all want, at the end of our service, to leave behind a better institution than the one we inherited – which is the purpose of *La Relève*.”<sup>9</sup> There is no official English translation of the name - to this day, Bourgon is unsure how to best capture the meaning in English<sup>10</sup> - but as seen there, it has a ‘changing of the guard’ connotation. The term had an official backronym, used from 1997 on: in English, “Leadership Action Renewal Energy Learning Expertise Values Excellence,”<sup>11</sup> and in French, “Leadership Action Renouveau Energie L’apprentissage Expertise Valeurs Excellence.”<sup>12</sup>

The June speech largely expanded on the issues noted in the 1995 annual report. It added that a compensation gap between public and private sectors hampered public sector recruitment and retention, leaders were retiring earlier, interdepartmental mobility had collapsed, and the demographics of the public service had fallen out of line with the demographics of the public.<sup>13</sup>

A more important speech came five months later. On November 6, 1996, Jocelyne Bourgon made a speech at the Human Resources Centre of Canada Conference titled “*La Relève: Our Greatest Challenge*.”<sup>14</sup> The speech tied the staffing issues oft noted in the context of rejuvenation together with another of the Clerk’s recurring foci, the need to work across boundaries (departmental or otherwise) and with partners in and out of government.<sup>15</sup> The speech also included a grand statement defining La Relève:

What are the modern reasons for people to reaffirm their commitment to a career in the public service? How can we fulfil our duty to ensure that Canadians and their elected representatives can continue to rely on one of the world’s best public services? Neither of those questions has an obvious answer. However, I believe the solution lies in the sum of what I call La Relève.

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8. See Office of the Auditor General of Canada, *Public Service Management Reform: Progress, Setbacks and Challenges* (Ottawa, ON: Public Works and Government Services Canada (PWGSC), 2001), 5. Peter Harrison highlights the role of Public Service 2000’s legislative reforms in laying some of the legal foundation of La Relève – Peter Harrison, interview by Justin Fiacconi, June 20th 2023

9. Jocelyne Bourgon, “Reform in the Public Service of Canada: Human Resources Management and Partnerships” (speech, Assistant Deputy Ministers’ Forum, Ottawa, ON, June 25, 1996), 3.

10. Richard Rochefort, once Director General for Leadership Network Development at The Leadership Network, found the name ambiguous, but in a way that caught attention and enabled the initiative. – Richard Rochefort, interview by Justin Fiacconi, June 9th 2023

11. La Relève Task Force, *La Relève: A Commitment to Action* (Ottawa, ON: Privy Council Office, 1997), 8

12. La Relève Task Force, *La Relève: Un parti pris pour l’action* (Ottawa, ON: Privy Council Office, 1997), 8

13. Jocelyne Bourgon, “Reform in the Public Service of Canada: Human Resources Management and Partnerships” (speech, Assistant Deputy Ministers’ Forum, Ottawa, ON, June 25, 1996), 3-4

14. Jocelyne Bourgon, “La Relève: Our Greatest Challenge” (speech, Human Resources Centre of Canada Conference, Cornwall, ON, November 6, 1996).

15. *Ibid.*, 2-5. Working across boundaries and with partners became a major theme of Bourgon’s later New Synthesis.

La Relève is a challenge. It is the challenge of building a modern and vibrant institution focused on people, and leaving for those who follow us a better institution than the one we inherited. La Relève is a commitment by each one of us to do everything in our power to ensure we have a modern and vibrant organization for the future. La Relève is the duty we have to those who come after us. We, the caretakers and guardians of this institution, have a duty to leave an organization staffed with the most qualified and competent people.

La Relève is: What can you do and what can I do? And how can we be mutually supportive and helpful to one another? It is everybody's responsibility. And it needs everyone's commitment. This is La Relève – it is not a master plan, it is not a list. If you wait for a report to be tabled in Parliament, and a script to follow, it will not happen. We do not need more study, more analysis. We need action – pragmatic and decisive action.<sup>16</sup>

## The La Relève Task Force

The main announcement came at the start of February 1997. In the *Fourth Annual Report to the Prime Minister on the Public Service of Canada*, an entire chapter was dedicated to La Relève. Bourgon declared that a “quiet crisis” was underway in the Public Service, “quiet because few people are aware of the crisis and even fewer people have started to do something about it”<sup>17</sup> – a crisis of recruitment, retention, knowledge development, and morale. Action was needed, both at the departmental level – each department was to prepare a new human resource action plan, focused on modernization, representativeness, and employee support – and at the broader corporate level.<sup>18</sup> At that higher level, the report listed several corporate initiatives: an accelerated executive development program, assistant deputy minister prequalification, ADM appointment to level, compensation and retention efforts, support for professional communities, and external recruitment programs.<sup>19</sup> Altogether, the effort was meant to (among other things) bring dignity and pride, to bring new public servants in after years of downsizing, and to prepare new leaders before an aging management force would retire en masse.<sup>20</sup>

Coordinating all of this across the government was a new La Relève Task Force, formed a month prior and headed by Peter Harrison.<sup>21</sup> La Relève had been given its initial coordinating body. The Task Force was tasked with leading the preparation and aiding the review of departmental La Relève plans, overseeing the development and implementation of corporate initiatives, and coordinating communications.<sup>22</sup> Task Force members, who

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16. Ibid., 6.

17. Jocelyne Bourgon, *Fourth Annual Report to The Prime Minister on The Public Service of Canada* (Ottawa: Privy Council Office, 1997), 38. In the years afterward, there was some debate within the public service as to how accurate this assessment of a “quiet crisis” was – see David Johnson and Andrew Molloy, “The quiet crisis and the emergence of La Relève: A study of crisis perception and executive leadership within the Canadian federal public service, 1997-2002,” *Canadian Public Administration* 52, no. 2 (2009).

18. Bourgon, *Fourth Annual Report*, 46-48

19. Ibid., 48-52

20. Canada, Parliament, Senate, Standing Senate Committee on National Finance, *Evidence*, 36th Parliament, 1st Sess, No 14 (10 June 1998). <https://sencanada.ca/en/Content/SEN/Committee/361/fina/14ev-e>

21. The Deputy Minister Task Force reports of December 1996 make reference in their prefaces to the La Relève Task Force having formed, but La Relève material consistently says the Task Force was launched in January 1997.

22. La Relève Task Force, *First Progress Report on La Relève: Overview* (Ottawa, ON: Privy Council Office,

came from across the government, worked remotely from various offices – it was rather decentralized. Regular weekly meetings with the Clerk allowed members to build a strong connection with her.<sup>23</sup>

The Task Force moved quickly. As it formed, several Deputy Ministers were nominated as ‘champions’ for departments, communities, and key issues.<sup>24</sup> Separately, some DMs were placed on a Plans Review Committee, which reviewed La Relève plans and submissions from each department and central agency, functional communities of employees, and regional councils of senior officials.<sup>25</sup> At Deputy Minister breakfasts, DMs from all departments discussed their action plans, sometimes growing competitive in their ambitions.<sup>26</sup> In sum, departments would generate reform and improvement ideas and plans, with coordination and oversight from the Task Force and above.

By October 1997, departments had identified 1200 actions to carry out, spanning everything from culture, values, pride and recognition to training, development, recruitment and communications.<sup>27</sup> Central agencies had similar projects lined up.<sup>28</sup> A few months later, in March 1998, the Task Force reported substantial progress in research, discussion, and implementation, with more expected to come over the next years.<sup>29</sup> Long-term goals were announced: modernization of human resources management, lining public service demographics up with the Canadian public, reorienting towards citizen service and accountability for results, building an enabling work environment, supporting learning and development, and fostering effective leadership.<sup>30</sup>

## AEXDP and ADMPQP

At the higher corporate level, in January 1997, as part of the La Relève effort, the Public Service Commission launched two particularly important programs: the Accelerated Executive Development Program (AEXDP) and the Assistant Deputy Minister Pre-Qualified Pool (ADMPQP). Both programs were designed to accelerate the identification and development of new leaders and managers, recognizing the coming need for successors. Applicants could receive focused personalized training with help from the Canadian Centre for Management Development (CCMD), and efforts were made to find them placements and assignments.<sup>31</sup> This was, notably, focused on positions beyond those covered by pre-existing

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1998), vi

23. Peter Harrison, interview by Justin Fiacconi, June 20th 2023

24. La Relève Task Force, *A Commitment to Action 2*. What a Deputy Minister Champion is precisely is not clear from the material available. At least some, such as 1998’s Champion for Middle Managers Michelle Comeau, reported on topics for and/or represented their community’s interests to the Committee of Senior Officials (COSO), a committee of deputy ministers involved in human resource management – see Office of the Auditor General of Canada, “Streamlining the Human Resource Management Regime: A Study of Changing Roles and Responsibilities,” in *Report of the Auditor General of Canada* (Ottawa, ON: Office of the Auditor General, 2000), 23; The Leadership Network, “The View From Here: Results of Middle Manager Consultations 1998,” 1998, archived April 26th 2001 at the Wayback Machine, [https://web.archive.org/web/20010426181128/http://lareleve.leadership.gc.ca:80/static/library/view\\_from\\_here/view\\_e.shtml](https://web.archive.org/web/20010426181128/http://lareleve.leadership.gc.ca:80/static/library/view_from_here/view_e.shtml)

25. La Relève Task Force, *A Commitment to Action 2*

26. Peter Harrison, interview by Justin Fiacconi, June 20th 2023,

27. La Relève Task Force, *A Commitment to Action 28*

28. *Ibid.*, 6

29. La Relève Task Force, *First Progress Report Overview*; La Relève Task Force, *First Progress Report on La Relève: Detailed Reports* (Ottawa, ON: Privy Council Office, 1998)

30. La Relève Task Force, *First Progress Report Overview*, 39-45.

31. La Relève Task Force, *A Commitment to Action*, 28-30

training and development programs.

These programs were aimed at solving problems that resulted from years of downsizing. With few opportunities for promotion and few opportunities for lateral movement, junior executives had not been in a position to develop the skills necessary to replace senior executives who were reaching retirement age.<sup>32</sup> They were implemented by the Public Service Commission “in concert with Deputy Ministers and other Central Agency partners.”<sup>33</sup>

The AEXDP was aimed at providing EX-1 to EX-3 executives the chance to obtain a diversity of experience and to help them rapidly advance their careers, with an aim to reach the Assistant Deputy Minister level. Alongside personalized CCMD-supported training were competency-developing work assignments – assignments usually at a higher level than the executive’s current one, aimed at building experience with a broader range of core functions (line operations, policy development, central agency experience, regional operations, corporate services, and exposure to the political level).<sup>34</sup>

The ADMPQP was a further step in the career development pipeline. Executives already meeting qualifications to become ADMs could apply to be included in a pool of prequalified, quickly appointable candidates for any coming ADM positions. When ADM positions opened up, Deputy Ministers could pick straight from the prequalified pool rather than going through the standard competitive process. Executives accepted into the PQP would, in addition, have personal learning plans supported by the CCMD.<sup>35</sup>

The two programs immediately found high demand. The first wave of operations, at the start of 1997, had a total of 460 applicants altogether for AEXDP or ADMPQP – representing over 15 percent of the Executive Group. 20 candidates were retained in the PQP, more than half of whom were placed within six months, and 51 candidates were accepted into the AEXDP.<sup>36</sup>

## Compensation and Collective Bargaining: Restoring Normality

The public service had suffered years of wage controls, a years-long salary freeze, years of limited compensation. La Relève could support all sorts of measures to improve morale and retain employees, but without proper financial compensation for work, it is doubtful that awards and training would have enough effect. In Bourgon’s eyes, “a widening wage gap between private and public sectors [...] is affecting our ability to retain those we have recruited and trained over the years.”<sup>37</sup> By March 1998, when the Task Force’s first progress report was released, substantial progress had been made:

After six years of wage and salary controls, the government announced in 1996 a return to collective bargaining. As of February 1998, six collective agreements had

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32. Bourgon, Fourth Annual Report, 48-49; Jocelyne Bourgon, “Achievements of the Public Service and the Task Ahead” (speech, Assistant Deputy Ministers’ Forum, Ottawa, ON, February 6, 1997), 4; La Relève Task Force, *First Progress Report Overview*, 28-29

33. Public Service Commission, “Executive Programs,” archived June 4th 1997 at the Wayback Machine, <https://web.archive.org/web/19970714015701/http://www.psc-cfp.gc.ca/releve/broche.htm>

34. Ibid.

35. Ibid.

36. La Relève Task Force, *First Progress Report Overview* 28-29

37. Jocelyne Bourgon, “Reform in the Public Service of Canada: Human Resources Management and Partnerships” (speech, Assistant Deputy Ministers’ Forum, Ottawa, ON, June 25, 1996), 3

been completed and ratified. Other collective agreements are being negotiated actively – 20 ongoing sets of negotiations, eight of which are at various stages of third-party assistance.

In February 1997, the President of the Treasury Board created the Advisory Committee on Senior Level Retention and Compensation. The committee made public its first report on February 12, 1998.<sup>38</sup> The initial recommendations focused on concerns considered most pressing for the management of the executive cadre, namely, the need for continuing cultural and human resources renewal, and competitive compensation. On February 20, the government announced its acceptance of the recommendations. It will be moving on their implementation starting April 1998.

Central to progress will also be the review of compensation policy and structures which must be ready for the Universal Classification Standard implementation.

Pay equity is another important element of the government's compensation policy. Resolving outstanding issues is of importance to many current and former public servants and to the successful achievement of many La Relève goals. The employer is committed to pay equity.

Finally, public service pension reform will be another critical element in the government's public service compensation policy. As announced by the President of the Treasury Board on February 27, 1998, the employer will consult with pension plan member representatives on a new joint management approach for the plan. The objective will be to ensure the long-term sustainability and security of the program.<sup>39</sup>

## The Leadership Network

On June 4th 1998, Prime Minister Chrétien announced the creation of The Leadership Network, a formal horizontal agency taking over much of the work<sup>40</sup> of the La Relève Task Force. Peter Harrison, head of the Task Force, was appointed head of the new agency.<sup>41</sup> It was essentially the way the Task Force was institutionalized. The new mandate and mission: “promote, develop and support networks of leaders throughout the Public Service of Canada, and to assist them in the ongoing challenge of public service renewal.”<sup>42</sup> Soon afterward, at the start of 1999, Jocelyne Bourgon moved on from the position of Clerk of the Privy Council to become the President of the Canadian Centre for Management Development.

In its first fiscal year, ending March 31st 1999, the Leadership Network served as a support agency. It supported administrative and leadership networks, funded leadership

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38. This report can be found in the Government of Canada Web Archive: [https://webarchiveweb.wayback.bac-lac.canada.ca/20071122221016/http://www.psagency-agencefp.gc.ca/reports-rapports/acslr-PR\\_e.asp?printable=True](https://webarchiveweb.wayback.bac-lac.canada.ca/20071122221016/http://www.psagency-agencefp.gc.ca/reports-rapports/acslr-PR_e.asp?printable=True)

39. La Relève Task Force, *First Progress Report Overview*, 25-26

40. The AEXDP and ADMPQP were left with the Public Service Commission.

41. Prime Minister's Office, “Prime Minister Announces Creation of the Leadership Network,” June 4, 1998, archived February 28th 2002 at the Wayback Machine, [https://web.archive.org/web/20020228204703/http://pm.gc.ca/default.asp?Language=E&Page=newsroom&Sub=NewsReleases&Doc=news\\_re19980604796\\_e.htm](https://web.archive.org/web/20020228204703/http://pm.gc.ca/default.asp?Language=E&Page=newsroom&Sub=NewsReleases&Doc=news_re19980604796_e.htm)

42. The Leadership Network, *Performance Report For the period ending March 31, 1999* (Ottawa, ON: PWGSC, 1999), 3

development activities, worked with the CCMD to support university public administration programs, and worked with the Deputy and Assistant Deputy Minister communities. The Network distributed tools and research reports. As well, working with Clerk Jocelyne Bourgon, it produced the Sixth Annual Report to the Prime Minister on the Public Service of Canada, her final report and the first such report in video form.<sup>43</sup> The second fiscal year was similar. A new website (leadership.gc.ca) was established, and was considered a major highlight, having garnered positive attention from Sympatico's *NetLife* magazine and other out-of-government web guides. The website allowed for interactive discussions and events tied to the Leadership Network's various purposes, helped distribute the organization's publications, and helped train and support Assistant Deputy Ministers.<sup>44</sup>

## Pride and Recognition

Much of the Leadership Network's own work, including a large portion of its in-house products, was dedicated to instilling a sense of what it called pride and recognition. Through recognition - formal and informal acknowledgement, rewards, opportunities - it sought to bring pride at both the individual and institutional levels, repairing morale after many years of damage and decay. The Network had, dating back to the La Relève Task Force period, a Committee of Senior Officials sub-committee dedicated to the subject. The Sub-Committee on Pride and Recognition produced a summary report in 1998, providing advice on how to build pride in the public service and highlighting various efforts.<sup>45</sup> In 2001, they published a general guide to building a culture of recognition, *Bravo!*,<sup>46</sup> with additional information available on the Leadership Network website.

One of the Leadership Network's projects was a magazine, published from 1999 to 2002 initially in print and online and eventually online only: *A Day in the Life of the Public Service of Canada*. The magazine was aimed towards both pride and recognition for active public servants and recruitment of future public servants. That is to say, it was aimed at both morale-boosting and succession-preparing. Initially focused on short profiles of workers throughout the federal government, showing off their jobs and lives, the magazine grew in the electronic-only period to feature articles and interviews on each issue's subject, usually linking directly to employee-oriented services. 2002's Learning & Development issue, for instance, extensively covered the concept of the learning organization, highlighted and directed readers to the government's new learning policy, and featured an interview with Bourgon as President of the Canadian Centre for Management Development, the post she took after her time as Clerk.<sup>47</sup>

As well, the Leadership Network helped organize awards - notably, the revival of the Outstanding Achievement Award and the creation of the Head of the Public Service Award.<sup>48</sup> The former, first launched in 1966 and revived for 1998, recognized distinguished senior

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43. Ibid, 6-13.

44. The Leadership Network, *Performance Report For the period ending March 31, 2000* (Ottawa, ON: PWGSC, 2000)

45. Sub-Committee on Pride and Recognition, *Recognizing Achievement, Fostering Pride* (Ottawa, ON: The Leadership Network, 1998)

46. Sub-Committee on Pride and Recognition, *Bravo! A guide to implementing a culture of recognition in the Public Service of Canada* (Ottawa, ON: COSO Sub-Committee on Pride and Recognition, 2001)

47. The Leadership Network, *A Day in the Life of the Public Service: Learning & Development*, June 2002, archived February 7th 2003 at the Wayback Machine, [https://web.archive.org/web/20030207223203/http://leadership.gc.ca/static/dayinthelife/learning/menu\\_e.shtml](https://web.archive.org/web/20030207223203/http://leadership.gc.ca/static/dayinthelife/learning/menu_e.shtml)

48. Both are highlighted in The Leadership Network, *1998-99 performance report*, 10

public servants and was presented by the Governor General. The latter, first given in 1998, was presented by the Head of the Public Service/Clerk of the Privy Council to select employees who worked to meet the challenges identified in the Clerk's Annual Report.<sup>49</sup> These were grand, visible, celebratory events. They were publicized, recipients and their bios published and press releases sent out. Outstanding Achievement Award ceremonies were held in Rideau Hall with press attention,<sup>50</sup> and Head of the Public Service Award ceremonies, held at various locations, were similarly promoted and similarly covered.<sup>51</sup> After years of downsizing, salary freezes, staffing freezes, and general morale trouble, the creation of such major celebrations of the public service - and the encouragement of department and agency-level programs to the same effect - was a very deliberate message of care.

## Later Years

At the end of its third fiscal year, April 2000-March 2001, an announcement was made: the Leadership Network would be transferred to the Treasury Board Secretariat "given the increased responsibilities [the President of Treasury Board had] been given for achieving the government's commitment to the modernization of human resources management."<sup>52</sup> Orders in Council finalized the transfer in April 2001, ahead of the Network's scheduled June end-of-mandate. The 2000-2001 performance report laid out similar work to that of the previous year, with further emphasis on the website;<sup>53</sup> the Treasury Board's 2001-2002 report barely mentioned the Network at all.<sup>54</sup>

Prior to the transfer, the Network had been one of many groups working on human resources, with some tensions as a result. In interviews conducted for this archive project, members of the Network indicated mixed experiences with other human resources bodies, the Network both getting support and finding opposition/impediments. In a February 2001 report broadly critical of La Relève, the Auditor General found that the human resource management space was splintered and overly complex, and that a "'fracturing' of responsibility has led to a lack of clarity in direction, leadership, and accountability for human resource management."<sup>55</sup>

The Leadership Network continued on as a leadership training and development body. It was handed over to the newly created Public Service Human Resources Management Agency of Canada on December 12th 2003, and by 2004, it was working closely with the Canada School of Public Service to deliver training, with programs such as the ADMPQP and AEXDP handed over to it from the Public Service Commission.<sup>56</sup> In October

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49. The booklet for the December 1998 Head of the Public Service Award, including remarks from then-Clerk Bourgon, is in our collection.

50. See, for instance, Kate Jaimet, "Public servant 'deeply honoured': Governor General presents awards for outstanding service," *Ottawa Citizen* (Ottawa, ON), May 19, 2000.

51. See, for instance, Joanne Laucius, "Public service honours its finest: Awards recognize exceptional work," *Ottawa Citizen* (Ottawa, ON), December 8, 1998; Sean Hatchard, "Modern libraries owe debt to public servant: Award recognizes work of Louis Forget," *Ottawa Citizen* (Ottawa, ON), December 10, 2002.

52. The Leadership Network, *Performance Report For the period ending March 31, 2001* (Ottawa, ON: PWGSC, 2001), 1

53. Ibid.

54. Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, *Performance Report For the period ending March 31, 2002* (Ottawa, ON: PWGSC, 2002)

55. Office of the Auditor General, *Public Service Management Reform*, 27

56. The Leadership Network, "Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)," October 15th 2004, archived April 13th 2005 at the Wayback Machine, <https://web.archive.org/web/20050413051327/http://www.hrma-agrh.gc.ca/lead->

2007, it was renamed the Leadership and Talent Management Sector,<sup>57</sup> continuing to manage leadership development programs and pride and recognition events.<sup>58</sup> It is difficult to trace the Network after that point.

The words “La Relève” faded, but to an extent, ideas remained. Task Force and Leadership Network members from its main years took the ideas with them as they moved on. Others, knowingly or not, continued to express La Relève values. La Relève-tied tools, such as those (co-)developed by Bob Chartier, continued to circulate, be built on, and be republished throughout the public service, and as noted above, some programs and events continued for years to come.

## The Canada School of Public Service

In the meantime, as the Leadership Network ran through its independent years and shortly beyond, major changes were underway at the former Clerk’s new workplace. When Bourgon announced to all employees of the Public Service that she would become President of the Canadian Centre for Management Development (CCMD), a centre for training and development for public service managers, at the end of her time as Clerk, she stated that “these new functions are an extension of the reforms that we [the public service] have initiated together in the context of La Relève. It will allow me to continue to work with you and” - echoing the La Relève emphasis on pride and recognition - “applaud your future achievements.”<sup>59</sup>

### Research and Relationships

One of the CCMD’s major duties was to produce practical knowledge for managers - a research role. The organization, and the public service as a whole, needed to learn from within and without, and needed to spread its knowledge within and without. In her first speech as President of the CCMD, Bourgon laid this out clearly: “We are committed to research, because public service managers need a sense of country, a sense of the future and a sense of the best management practices wherever they might emerge in the world. That means working in partnership with others - academia, domestic and international research institutes, the Policy Research Secretariat and The Leadership Network - to expose managers to the best in the world.”<sup>60</sup>

Under Bourgon, the CCMD launched four waves of year-long research projects using what it called an action-research process - a method it had been developing for the past six years.<sup>61</sup> Experts and practitioners were brought together, generally in roundtables, to

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ership/faqs\_e.asp

57. Canada Public Service Agency, “Leadership and Talent Management Sector,” archived January 24th 2009 at the Wayback Machine, [https://web.archive.org/web/20090124145007/http://www.psagency-agencefp.gc.ca/arc/leadership/ld\\_e.asp](https://web.archive.org/web/20090124145007/http://www.psagency-agencefp.gc.ca/arc/leadership/ld_e.asp)

58. Canada Public Service Agency, “About LTM,” archived June 13th 2008 at the Wayback Machine, <https://web.archive.org/web/20080613005824/http://www.psagency-agencefp.gc.ca/arc/leadership/about-propos/index-eng.asp>

59. Jocelyne Bourgon, “Letter from the Clerk of the Privy Council and Secretary to the Cabinet to All Employees of the Public Service of Canada,” (Ottawa, ON: Privy Council Office, Dec 14th 1998), archived January 25th 2000 at the Wayback Machine, [https://web.archive.org/web/20000125030218/http://www.pco-bcp.gc.ca:80/ClerkSP-JB/message\\_e.htm](https://web.archive.org/web/20000125030218/http://www.pco-bcp.gc.ca:80/ClerkSP-JB/message_e.htm)

60. Jocelyne Bourgon, “Directions for the Canadian Centre for Management Development for the New Millennium” (speech, CCMD Open House, Ottawa, ON, February 10, 1999).

61. Notably, the Citizen-Centred Service Network grew from and around an action research approach in 1997

examine, research, and discuss various topics, such as workplace well-being, the management of horizontal initiatives, e-learning, and crisis management. Roundtables brought experts and practitioners from within government together with those from outside, spreading knowledge across boundaries. The aim was to produce practical and cutting-edge products - research reports, guides, learning and reference tools - for public managers. The first report, covering the Social Union Framework Agreement, was released in 2000; it was followed by several more each year - see **APPENDIX A** for a full list.

The CCMD's research role also entailed building relationships beyond government, enabling collaboration and allowing knowledge to move across boundaries. Almost immediately after taking her new position, Bourgon, in partnership with the Leadership Network, began touring schools of public administration across Canada, meeting faculty and students. A series of meetings and dialogue sessions took place in February and March 1999, allowing Bourgon and the CCMD to build interest and build connections. Partnerships were a point of emphasis.<sup>62</sup> In at least one speech, Bourgon highlighted opportunities for graduate researchers and other partners to work with CCMD;<sup>63</sup> CCMD, Public Service Commission, and Leadership Network representatives provided information about employment at several events.<sup>64</sup> Also carried out early on was the revitalization of the Fellows Program, announced November 29th 1999. The Fellows Program brought both public servants and outside experts in to help teach and research for multi-year terms.<sup>65</sup>

This was in addition to the CCMD's routine work. One highlight: since 1987, an Annual University Seminar brought Canadian public servants together with the (mostly) Canadian academic community. From 1999, this included PhD students, who, in Bourgon's words, "represent 'La Relève' of the academic community."<sup>66</sup> The Annual University Seminar was held in conjunction with the CCMD's flagship Manion Lecture - named for John Manion, first Principal of the CCMD, the Manion Lecture was given each year from 1991 on by a distinguished public administration scholar or practitioner, often from outside Canada. Manion Lectures, which continue to this day, are published afterwards.

International knowledge-sharing and partnerships were important. In April 2000,<sup>67</sup> the CCMD launched a project across the Canadian government, the Partnership for International Cooperation, to respond to growing demand around the world for Canadian public sector knowledge and to allow Canadian public servants to learn from others' experience.<sup>68</sup> It was "a voluntary grouping of federal departments, agencies, parliamentary institutions and

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– see Brian Marson and Ralph Heintzman, *From Research to Results: A Decade of Results-Based Service Improvement in Canada* (Toronto, ON: Institute of Public Administration of Canada, 2009), 10

62. The Leadership Network, "Dialogue Sessions in partnership with CCMD President Madame Jocelyne Bourgon," September 27th 1999, archived July 14th 2001 at the Wayback Machine, [https://web.archive.org/web/20010714193613/http://leadership.gc.ca/static/info/tln-trl/events/ccmd\\_dialogue\\_sessions\\_e.shtml](https://web.archive.org/web/20010714193613/http://leadership.gc.ca/static/info/tln-trl/events/ccmd_dialogue_sessions_e.shtml)

63. Jocelyne Bourgon, "Canada's Public Service – Looking to the Future" (speech, l'École nationale d'administration publique, Montreal, QC, February 11, 1999), 9

64. The Leadership Network, "Dialogue Sessions"

65. Canadian Centre for Management Development, "Canadian Centre for Management Development Announces Revitalized Fellows Program and Announces Two Appointments," November 29, 1999, archived March 11, 2004 at the Wayback Machine, [https://web.archive.org/web/20040311190847/http://www.ccmd-ccg.gc.ca/about/newsroom/release/newsrel3\\_e.html](https://web.archive.org/web/20040311190847/http://www.ccmd-ccg.gc.ca/about/newsroom/release/newsrel3_e.html)

66. Jocelyne Bourgon, "Opening Dinner – 2001 University Seminar" (speech, 2001 University Seminar, May 2, 2001), 2

67. See Partnership for International Cooperation, "The Partnership", archived January 6th 2002 at the Wayback Machine, [https://web.archive.org/web/20020106184359/http://international.gc.ca/public/2\\_1\\_about\\_us.asp](https://web.archive.org/web/20020106184359/http://international.gc.ca/public/2_1_about_us.asp)

68. Canadian Centre for Management Development, *Annual Report*, July 2000 (Ottawa, ON: CCMD, 2000), 8-9

tribunals that pursue international, sector-specific cooperative projects and initiatives in the fields of governance and public sector management.”<sup>69</sup> On top of that, the CCMD engaged more directly, partnering with international organizations and other public service learning organizations, supporting study tours and international projects, and in partnership with the Singapore Civil Service College, continuing to cohost an international conference on public sector leadership.<sup>70</sup>

## Building the Learning Organization

A central task ahead, highlighted by Prime Minister Chrétien in remarks to the CCMD,<sup>71</sup> was to help make the public service a learning organization, an organization able to continuously integrate, generate, and disseminate knowledge and able to adapt flexibly and creatively. This had been a major objective listed in the March 1998 Fifth Annual Report on the Public Service of Canada.<sup>72</sup> Public service training and development was also a priority in the 1999 Speech from the Throne.<sup>73</sup> The Government of Canada had ambitions to prepare for the knowledge-based economy, and for that, in Bourgon’s eyes, Canada’s public service had to become a learning organization with a commitment to lifelong learning.<sup>74</sup> In early 1999, the new Clerk, Mel Cappe, made Bourgon the chair of a new Deputy Ministers’ Committee on Learning and Development.<sup>75</sup> The committee was strongly tied to CCMD, assembled by Bourgon<sup>76</sup> and with its web presence being part of the CCMD’s website.

Building a learning organization entailed building a new overarching learning policy, the first of its kind for the federal government. As head of the Committee on Learning and Development, from March through June 2000, Bourgon travelled across the country, hosting a series of conferences and consultation with public servants across the government. Each event opened with a similar speech, usually titled “A Public Service Learning Organization from Coast to Coast to Coast,” laying out highlights from prior meetings, giving the context of the effort, and effectively pitching the idea of a learning organization.<sup>77</sup> This process led to a pair of Learning and Development Committee reports, *A Public Service Learning Organization: from Coast to Coast to Coast: A Policy Discussion Paper* and *Directions for the Future*. The former introduced and extensively discussed six core principles defining a learning organization: that it “values knowledge, ideas and relations building as an integral

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69. Canadian Centre for Management Development, *Performance Report For the period ending March 31, 2002* (Ottawa, ON: PWGSC, 2002), 10

70. *Ibid.*, 9-10.

71. Jean Chrétien, “Challenges for the Canadian Centre for Management Development for the New Millennium” (speech, CCMD Open House, Ottawa, ON, February 10, 1999), transcript archived January 22nd 2001 at the Wayback Machine, <https://web.archive.org/web/20010122014200/http://www.ccmd-ccg.gc.ca/newsroom/speeches/challenge.html>

72. Bourgon, *Fifth Annual Report*, 21-22

73. Adrienne Clarkson, “Speech from the Throne to Open the Second Session Thirty-Sixth Parliament of Canada” (speech, House of Commons, Ottawa, ON, October 12, 1999), [https://lop.parl.ca/sites/ParlInfo/default/en\\_CA/Parliament/throneSpeech/speech362](https://lop.parl.ca/sites/ParlInfo/default/en_CA/Parliament/throneSpeech/speech362)

74. Jocelyne Bourgon, “Serving in the Knowledge Age: A Commitment to Lifelong Learning” (speech, Seventh Annual Technology in Government Week, Ottawa, ON, October 19, 1999).

75. The Leadership Network’s then head Mary Gusella was one of the members.

76. Canada, Parliament, House of Commons, Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates, *Evidence*, 37th Parliament, 2nd Sess, No 31 (28 April 2003). <https://www.ourcommons.ca/DocumentViewer/en/37-2/OGGO/meeting-31/evidence#Int-511771>

77. Several of these speeches, as well as a generic variant, are in PGI’s collection.

part of its business,” “learns from past and current experience and from experimentation,” “values people and their diversity of ideas, values, cultures, skills and capabilities,” “integrates learning in its leadership and management practices,” “learns for serving,” and “evaluates both the processes and outcomes of learning.”<sup>78</sup> The latter report expanded on each, proposing 44 initiatives to achieve them. Among them was a call to establish an overall policy framework to guide learning and development.<sup>79</sup>

Work continued from there. In April 2001, the Committee released a policy proposal for an overarching continuous learning framework.<sup>80</sup> The Treasury Board Secretariat moved forward from there, carrying out another round of consultations resulting in a final proposal to Treasury Board Ministers in April 2002.<sup>81</sup> The final Policy for Continuous Learning in the Public Service of Canada came into effect on May 1st 2002, with only minor changes compared to the 2001 policy proposal. It made eight commitments, including support for lifelong learning, measurement of progress and annual reporting, year over year increases in training and development expenditures for three years, and by March 31st 2004, training/development/learning policies and action plans in every organization and opportunities for all permanent employees to have a personal learning plan. Gaining a commitment to increasing training and development expenditures had been a major objective - as of June 2002, the public service was investing less than 1% of its total payroll into training and development, falling well behind the near 1.8% of the average Canadian large private enterprise; the CCMD’s Board of Governors recommended not only catching up, but going above and beyond and becoming an exemplar of learning.<sup>82</sup>

In the meantime, the public service was undergoing another cycle of human resource management reforms. In April 2001, Prime Minister Chrétien announced the formation of a new Task Force on Modernizing Human Resources Management in the Public Service, aimed at making legislative changes. It was headed by Ranald Quail, Deputy Minister of Public Works and Government Services Canada and a member of the Learning and Development Committee.<sup>83</sup>

In this context, there was an opportunity to streamline learning and development, something the CCMD and the Committee on Learning and Development already much desired. The Committee on Learning and Development, back in June 2000, had identified

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78. Learning and Development Committee, *A Public Service Learning Organization: from Coast to Coast to Coast: A Policy Discussion Paper* (Ottawa, ON: Canadian Centre for Management Development, 2000), 21

79. Learning and Development Committee, *A Public Service Learning Organization: from Coast to Coast to Coast: Directions for the Future* (Ottawa, ON: Canadian Centre for Management Development, 2000), 25-26

80. Learning and Development Committee, *A Proposed Continuous Learning Policy for the Public Service of Canada* (Ottawa, ON: Canadian Centre for Management Development, 2001). Archived November 22nd 2003 at the Wayback Machine, [https://web.archive.org/web/20031122003620/http://www.ccmd-ccg.gc.ca/ldc/2001/cont\\_learn/cont\\_learn\\_pg1\\_e.html](https://web.archive.org/web/20031122003620/http://www.ccmd-ccg.gc.ca/ldc/2001/cont_learn/cont_learn_pg1_e.html)

81. Learning and Development Committee, *Progress Report 2001-2002 July 2002* (Ottawa, ON: Canadian Centre for Management Development, 2002). Archived January 17th 2004 at the Wayback Machine, [https://web.archive.org/web/20040117192003/http://www.ccmd-ccg.gc.ca/ldc/2002/progress\\_rpt/prog\\_rep\\_05\\_e.html](https://web.archive.org/web/20040117192003/http://www.ccmd-ccg.gc.ca/ldc/2002/progress_rpt/prog_rep_05_e.html)

82. “Interview with Jocelyne Bourgon: Why the Public Service of Canada must become a model learning organization,” *A Day in the Life of the Public Service*, June 2002, archived October 27th 2003 at the Wayback Machine, [https://web.archive.org/web/20031027040341/http://www.leadership.gc.ca/static/dayinthelife/learning/features/interview\\_e.shtml](https://web.archive.org/web/20031027040341/http://www.leadership.gc.ca/static/dayinthelife/learning/features/interview_e.shtml)

83. Prime Minister’s Office, “Prime Minister Announces Formation of Task Force on Modernizing Human Resources Management in the Public Service,” April 3rd 2001, archived April 26th 2001 at the Wayback Machine, [https://web.archive.org/web/20010426081736/http://pm.gc.ca/default.asp?Language=E&page=newsroom&sub=newsreleases&doc=managementtaskforce.20010403\\_e.htm](https://web.archive.org/web/20010426081736/http://pm.gc.ca/default.asp?Language=E&page=newsroom&sub=newsreleases&doc=managementtaskforce.20010403_e.htm)

the governance system for Public Service learning as “fragmented and uncoordinated,” needing to be “clarified and simplified to provide clear direction and accountability.”<sup>84</sup> The CCMD’s 1996-2001 five-year review noted the fragmentation and endorsed greater integration of learning and development across the Public Service, including bringing the various learning institutes into an increasingly aligned network.<sup>85</sup>

The work of Quail’s Task Force led to the Public Service Modernization Act, Bill C-25, introduced to the House of Commons on February 6th 2003. One of the act’s components, crafted with the help of the CCMD, was an attempt to streamline and consolidate teaching in the form of the creation of the Canada School of Public Service (CSPS). The Canada School of Public Service was intended to be a merger of the Canadian Centre for Management Development, which focused on managers, and Training and Development Canada, which focused on other workers.<sup>86</sup> It was, as Bourgon explained in testimony before the Standing Committee on Government Operations, not an attempt to entirely centralize training and development - departments would continue to provide their own core job training, being best positioned to do so - but an attempt to form a single unified supporting school of public administration, focusing on “common knowledge, common know-how, corporate priorities, and best practices.”<sup>87</sup> Asked whether she would apply to be the president of the new CSPS, Bourgon answered:

After my little stint as secretary to the cabinet, which went on for five years, I asked to be given and I had the great privilege of being given the opportunity of running the Canadian Centre for Management Development, where I had another stint of four years. I’ve spent the last year and a half laying the foundation of what will, if you agree, become the school. I think it is time now for a change of leadership. It’s the right time. So we go from one cycle, which was to rebuild the capacity of CCMD, integrating with the policies and the practice of TDC, and now, if you pass the legislation, I think it’s ready for a new leader who is going to be there for the next four or five years.<sup>88</sup>

Bill C-25 was granted royal assent on November 7th 2003. By that point, Bourgon had moved on as planned, taking a new position as ambassador to the OECD in June. Janice Cochrane was the final President of the Canadian Centre for Management Development and the first of the Canada School of Public Service.

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84. Learning and Development Committee, *Directions for the Future* 23

85. Canadian Centre for Management Development, *CCMD 5 Year Review – Canadian Centre for Management Development Report to Parliament December 2001* (Ottawa, ON: CCMD, 2001), 54-56

86. After C-25 passed, the CSPS took in Language Training Canada as well.

87. Canada, Parliament, House of Commons, Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates, *Evidence*, 37th Parliament, 2nd Sess, No 31 (28 April 2003). <https://www.ourcommons.ca/DocumentViewer/en/37-2/OGGO/meeting-31/evidence>

88. *Ibid.*

# Appendix A:

## Action-Research Projects Launched Under Jocelyne Bourgon, By Year of Completion

### 2000

- Roundtable on the Implementation of the Social Union Framework Agreement - Chaired by Alan Nymark, DM of the Environment
  - *Implementing the Social Union Framework Agreement: A Learning and Reference Tool*

### 2001

- Roundtable on the Learning Organization - Chaired by Samy Watson, DM of Agriculture
  - *The Learning Journey: A Guide to Achieving Excellence*
- Roundtable on the Management of Horizontal Initiatives - Chaired by James Lahey, ADM, Human Resources Development Canada
  - *Moving from the Heroic to the Everyday: Lessons Learned from Leading Horizontal Projects*
- Roundtable on Risk Management - Chaired by Ian Shugart, ADM, Health Canada
  - *A Foundation for Developing Risk Management Learning Strategies in the Public Service*

### 2002

- Roundtable on Horizontal Mechanisms - Chaired by James Lahey, Associate Secretary of the Treasury Board
  - *Using Horizontal Tools to Work Across Boundaries: Lessons Learned and Signposts for Success*
- Roundtable on the Innovative Public Service - Chaired by Ruth Dantzer, ADM, Fisheries and Oceans
  - *Organizing for Deliberate Innovation: A Toolkit for Teams*
- Roundtable on Internal Services - Chaired by Serge Rainville, ADM, Leadership Network
  - *Internal Services: Ensuring the Realization of Key Government Policy Directions While Respecting Public Service Values*
- Roundtable on Science and Public Policy - Chaired by Arthur May, retired from the Public Service of Canada
  - *Creating Common Purpose: The Integration of Science and Policy in Canada's Public Service*

- Roundtable on Workplace Well-Being - Chaired by Yazmine Laroche, ADM, Canadian Heritage
  - *A Fine Balance: A Manager's Guide to Workplace Well-Being*
- *Relations Between Parliamentary Agencies and the Public Service: New Perspectives* - Special project designed and developed by Georges Tsai, senior visiting fellow at CCMD

## 2003

- Roundtable on Crisis Management - Chaired by André Gladu, former DM, Canada Economic Development
  - *Crisis and Emergency Management: A Guide for Managers of the Public Service of Canada*
- Roundtable on e-Learning - Chaired by Alain Jolicoeur, DM of Indian and Northern Affairs
  - *Learning@Large: An e-Learning Guide for Managers*
- Roundtable on Official Languages in the Workplace - Chaired by Michael Wernick, ADM, Canadian Heritage
  - *French to Follow? Revitalizing Official Languages in the Workplace*

## 2004

- Roundtable on Managing Canada-US Relations - Chaired by Louis Ranger, DM of Transport
  - *Advancing Canadian Interests in the United States: A Practical Guide for Canadian Public Officials*
  - *Building Cross-Border Links: A Compendium of Canada-US Government Collaboration*





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