

**Union-Management Consultation Committee Meeting  
Ecosystems and Oceans Science Sector (EOSS)  
Fisheries and Oceans Canada**

**November 1, 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm**  
13W131 Boardroom, 200 Kent Street, Ottawa

**Record of Decision**

Participants:

Kevin Stringer, ADM EOSS	Thomas Landry, PIPSC
Savi Narayanan, DG CHS	Erland MacIsaac, PIPSC
Patrice Simon for D. Gillis, DG ESD	Luc Paquette, UEW
Wayne Moore, DG, SRS	Sylvain de Margerie, Director, ISDM
Glen Condran, Director, SRS	Julia Goodman, Director, IMB
Barry McCallum, RDS (NL)	Joanne Boyd, DFO HR (OCCOE)
Alain Vezina, RDS (Maritimes)	Luc Ouellette, DFO LR
Laura Richards, RDS (Pacific)	

Note Taker: Ronald Thériault, EOSS

Regrets:

A. Plourde, RDS (Québec)  
G. Chouinard, RDS (Gulf)  
M. Wheatley, RDS (C&A)  
T. Panas, UEW  
J. McMillan, PIPSC

**1. Welcome/Opening Remarks**

The new Assistant Deputy Minister, Mr. Kevin Stringer, called the meeting to order at 2:10 and he welcomed everyone. The Assistant Deputy Minister indicated that he was pleased to have this meeting with the unions early in his tenure with the Sector. He shared his professional background with the participants as well as identifying his commitments: to be a professional manager of resources, a champion for the sector, to listen and to learn and to be as open and transparent as possible.

The Assistant Deputy Minister explained he has already met many employees and that he regularly asks two questions: What are the short term irritants? And what can be done in the next five years? Employees have shared some concerns for short term: Information Management/Information Technology issue, tools to do the job, importance to keep the research and analysis capacity, the time it takes to complete a staffing action, and travel-related issues. For the longer term: developing a common understanding of the Science and Hydrography roles within the department, and further developing the ecosystems approach to management.

## **2. Review Agenda**

The agenda was accepted with one addition proposed by Thomas Landry from the Professional Institute of the Public Service of Canada: new Treasury Board Secretariat Event Guidelines. This subject will be covered under Item 6: Canadian Conference & Foreign Travel System.

## **3. October 19, 2011 Record of Decision (ROD); and Action Items List**

Record of Decision was accepted.

The Action Items List was reviewed. Two items were discussed:

### ***3a. EG06 Update***

The Director General of the Canadian Hydrographic Service indicated that the Directorate is still developing a streamlined national approach to Canadian Hydrographic Service mandate delivery. The Director General of the Canadian Hydrographic Service shared that it is premature for the Sector to establish a skill-set for the EG06 as we still have to see what the new organizational structure and key products and services will look like. Next step is to go into details to identify the skills required for the next five years. This discussion should continue over the next six months.

The Union of Environment Workers underlined the main concern of career progression related to the educational requirements of the ENSUR classification. The Union of Environment Workers underlined that last year, the departmental intention was to not “cut down” EG06 positions and asked if the Sector could make that same commitment today.

The Director General of the Canadian Hydrographic Service explained that there is no systematic intent to reduce EG06 positions. Going forward, positions and classifications will be based on operational business requirements.

***This item remains on the Action Items List***

### ***3b. Classification Updates***

The Director of Strategic Business Management Branch, Glen Condran, reported on the status of classification workload:

- The National Model Working Group has created main documents (Terms of Reference, Prioritization Criteria & Process);
- A shared national ZDrive was created (members of the National Model Working Group and Regional Directors of Science have access);
- 32 prioritization classification requests were submitted to the Organization and Classification Centre of Expertise and the majority of them is now classified or

will be classified soon (in addition to all other regional requests using sub-delegation authority). Many of these requests have been linked to a National Model Work Description.

- The National Model Work Descriptions for the RES occupational group were released last week by the Assistant Deputy Minister.
- 21 firearms variants were identified by the regions as necessary to reflect the Public Service Labour Relations Board decision on firearms (Carter). Variants were created and are now in the final process to be classified by the Organization and Classification Centre of Expertise.
- Starting last summer, all regions participated in an exercise to identify all regional positions not linked to a model. Each region provided and presented their report at a special National Model Working Group's conference-call that took place in October. Based on this discussion, the Working Group will recommend that the creation of the following National Model Work Descriptions be prioritized by the Ecosystems and Oceans Science Sector:

CR, AS and REM01. Other sector priorities: EL04 – EL05 and possibly EG06

- An annual Organization and Classification Centre of Expertise report for the Science Sector presented to the Assistant Deputy Minister early this Fall showed that the Sector has 79,90% of its positions linked to a model. 80% is the Treasury Board Secretariat objective for departments.

The Director General, Strategic Regulatory Science shared that our Sector model to manage classification priorities was recognized by the Organization and Classification Centre of Expertise as a best practices model for the department.

The Professional Institute of the Public Service of Canada asked if there are still some pending classification grievances. The Labour Relations representative indicated there were, and that the Sector considers this when identifying classification priority.

*This item is a standing item on the Action Items List.*

#### **4. Strategic Review & Strategic & Operational Review**

##### **4a. General Update**

Three Ecosystems and Oceans Sector Strategic and Operational Review measures were discussed: the Biodiversity facilities, Experimental Lakes, and Research on the biological effects of Contaminants. Discussions with employees are in process and management agrees to share information with the Unions once available. These exercises are not completed and management indicated implementation will be over the next months.

##### **4b. Libraries (this item was presented before the discussion on IMIT consolidation)**

The Professional Institute of the Public Service of Canada raised concerns regarding the impacts of the reorganization of libraries on scientists' research particularly for francophone scientist access in Quebec and Gulf regions to current knowledge and data.

Julia Goodman underlined that the decision is to consolidate the libraries activities at two sites (one West and one East) plus the Canadian Coast Guard College. She explained the guiding principle (i.e. all materials required to support the Department of Fisheries and Oceans mandate will be maintained) and the approach to be undertaken with different collections and mediums (papers, maps, data, digital materials etc.). Some material in paper format which duplicates the Department of Fisheries and Oceans' access to the full-text digital version will be accepted by universities libraries. The objective is to keep all materials required to support the Department's mandate, much of which is unique scientific material. Next step is to analyze the current material and to decide what will stay and what will be offered to other libraries or discarded as a duplicate or irrelevant to the Department's mandate. The Professional Institute of the Public Service of Canada underlined the importance for the scientists to have access to the library tools in both official languages. An update will be given at the next meeting.

#### ***4c. Computer Systems (CS) Employees***

As a result of a Strategic Review initiative, responsibility for key elements of Information Management and Information Technology will be consolidated within the Information Management and Technology Services organization of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans. Some CS staff will move from the Science Sector to the Information Management and Technology Services Sector. The positions remaining in the Science Sector will be reviewed. Service Level Agreements (SLA) will be done between the Ecosystems and Oceans Sector and the Information Management and Technology Services to make sure the appropriate service level is maintained for our Sector.

***This item will be brought forward to the next Union-Management Consultation Committee meeting.***

#### ***4d. Impact of Budget Reduction on research funding***

Union members wished to discuss the impacts of resource reductions on research.

Patrice Simon explained the Sector approaches being implemented to manage funding in the future; including the identification of priorities with clients and the establishment of processes and call letters to align available funding with highest priority initiatives. He elaborated that there is a requirement in these processes to respond to longer term priorities.

The Professional Institute of the Public Service of Canada underlined that it seems that budget strategies seem to be in place, yet there is concern about longer term monitoring activities, and that recruitment and retention is not a focus.

Management highlighted the challenges associated with the need to be responsive to priorities and clients, while dealing with a significant amount of resourcing which is directed and will sunset.

There was recognition that more time should be made available to discuss specific items at the Union-Management Consultation Committee as opposed to many items being on the agenda.

### **5. Employee Development**

A competency framework for biologists called the BI Competency Framework was developed in collaboration between the Ecosystems and Oceans Sector and the Ecosystems and Fisheries Management (EFM) Sector. A consultation process with the biologists from all regions, the Professional Institute of the Public Service of Canada and intermediate and senior managers took place between December 2010 and January 2012. The Framework has been reviewed and approved by the National Science Directors Committee, the EFM management, as well as the Assistant Deputy Ministers of both sectors. The Deputy Minister has approved the framework (early November 2012). The BI Competency Framework will be formally launched later this fall/winter and a message will probably appear in *In the Loop*.

### **6. Canadian Conference and Foreign Travel System & the new Treasury Board Secretariat Guidelines**

Discussion on the new Treasury Board Secretariat directive regarding events. Events with departmental costs over \$5k are to be approved by the Deputy Minister, and those with costs over \$25k are to be approved by the Minister. The Professional Institute of Public Service of Canada underlined that the directive will give more bureaucratic work to the scientists. Management said that the Treasury Board Secretariat has its own due diligence objectives when establishing the new directive as this is a government priority to control the deficit. There was discussion at the intersectoral level on how to administer this new system, but sectors are awaiting for guidance from the Chief Financial Officer Sector, that is awaiting guidance from the Treasury Board Secretariat.

Unions raised a concern that scientists could decide not to attend important functions given the administrative burden required to obtain approval, and that conferences are necessary to develop and maintain scientific expertise within the department as well as for career progression needs. Management agrees that all will be done to streamline/align the new directive with our internal system.

### **7. Next meeting and Adjournment**

Next meeting will take place prior to National Union-Management Consultation Committee. It will be tentatively scheduled at the end of March 2013.

The Assistant Deputy Minister highlighted that he wishes to use the Union-Management Consultation Committee as a forum to allow for deeper discussion on substantive issues. Accordingly he proposed that more time be allowed for discussions on specific issues during the Sector Union-Management Consultation Committee; with less of a focus on information sharing.

The meeting adjourned at 16:00.