



## Human Resources Management Modernization

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## Public Service Modernization Act

The labour-management relationship in the public service will benefit significantly from more dialogue, and less confrontation, between the parties. The measures being taken to address this issue are to improve labour-management consultation at the departmental level and enable co-development of workplace improvements.

### Why all these changes?

The Advisory Committee on Labour Management Relations in the Federal Public Service, chaired by John Fryer was mandated in the Fall of 1999 by the Secretary of the Treasury Board to undertake a thorough review of union, management and collective bargaining relationships between the federal government and public service unions.

In its first report (2000), the Fryer Committee indicated the need for a more constructive labour-management relationship in order to build a public service capable of meeting the challenges of the future. One of the key recommendations of its second report (2001) was for the *Public Service Staff Relations Act* to be amended to provide for consultation and co-development of policies at the service-wide, departmental and workplace levels. Co-development was described as the joint identification of problems and the analysis and development of solutions by labour and management.

The *Public Service Labour Relations Act* and the amendments to the *Financial Administration Act* came into force on April 1, 2005. These two pieces of legislation were part of a larger process which began on November 7, 2003, with the implementation of the *Public Service Modernization Act*.

The *Public Service Modernization Act* (PSMA) is the most significant reform of federal human resources management in more than 35 years. It has four main objectives:

- creating a more flexible framework, with adequate protections, to manage and support employees and to attract **the best people, when and where they are needed**;
- fostering more **collaborative** labour-management relations to ensure a healthy and productive workplace;
- providing employees at all levels with better adapted and better integrated **learning and training opportunities**; and
- clarifying the **roles** and reinforce the **accountability** of the various human

resources management stakeholders.

### ***Public Service Labour Relations Act***

The PSLRA will require each deputy head, in consultation with bargaining agents, to establish a labour-management committee for their organization, which will give unions and management the opportunity to discuss workplace issues of joint interest.

The PSLRA provides for better dialogue, joint problem solving, mutually agreed-upon solutions and more effective collective bargaining.

As all departments are required to establish informal conflict management systems, the ability of managers and employees to resolve workplace disputes informally will be improved. The *Act* enables managers, bargaining agents and human resource advisors to work together to cultivate a climate of trust and co-operation.

### ***Financial Administration Act***

The FAA gives **deputy heads direct authorities** for human resources management. They were previously delegated these authorities by the Treasury Board.

Deputy heads now have direct authority for the following:

- learning and development for their staff;
- provision of awards;
- establishment of disciplinary standards; and,
- termination or demotion measures, where appropriate.

When exercising these authorities, deputy heads are guided by Treasury Board guidelines and the *Values and Ethics Code for the public service*.