



## **STAFFING/RESOURCING FUNCTION**

**June 2011**

**Internal Audit Branch**

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## STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE

We have completed the internal audit of the staffing/resourcing function at the Department of Justice in the National Capital Region, which is the responsibility of two divisions: Client Operations and Senior Management Services, and Corporate Programs. The overall objective of the audit was to provide assurance that the management framework for the Client Operations and Senior Management Services Division and the Corporate Programs Division is effective.

The internal audit was conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Treasury Board Secretariat (TBS) *Policy on Internal Audit* and the Institute of Internal Auditors' *Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing*.<sup>1</sup>

The audit team assessed the management control framework against criteria derived from the Treasury Board Management Accountability Framework (MAF), and Public Service Commission (PSC) and TBS audit guides.

In our professional judgment, sufficient and appropriate audit procedures have been conducted and evidence gathered to support the accuracy of the conclusions reached and contained in this report. The conclusions were based on a comparison of situations, as they existed at the time of the audit, against audit criteria. It should be noted that the conclusions are only applicable for the areas examined.

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<sup>1</sup> The Internal Audit Branch has not undergone an external assessment at least once in the past five years or been subject to ongoing monitoring or to periodic internal assessments of its internal audit activity that would confirm compliance with these standards.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **OVERALL OPINION**

Overall, we found that the practices, procedures, and activities relating to the management framework, the reliability of information systems for decision making and accountability, the staffing/resourcing function, and interfaces with other Justice organizations were adequate, although some areas for improvement were noted. These included the development of objectives, workplans, defining the mandate of the Corporate Programs Division, implementing a process for monitoring staffing timeframe, and developing a strategic resourcing vision.

### **BACKGROUND**

The staffing/resourcing function in the Department of Justice National Capital Region is delivered by two divisions that report to the Director General, Human Resources and Professional Development Directorate (HRPDD): the Client Operations and Senior Management Services Division and the Corporate Programs Division. The former acts as the National Capital Region regional office and provides staffing services to departmental managers. The latter is the national functional authority on all staffing/resourcing matters for the Department.

The overall objective of the audit was to provide assurance that the management framework for the Client Operations and Senior Management Services Division and the Corporate Programs Division is effective. The scope of the audit included staffing/resourcing activities at headquarters. The planning and on-site examination phases of the audit took place from July to October 2010.

### **MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK**

The audit found that strategic direction and functional guidance for the staffing/resourcing function is provided through a number of planning and policy instruments. Human Resources (HR) planning is integrated into the departmental business planning process and HR strategies address identified departmental risks and priorities. As part of the integrated business planning process, departmental managers develop staffing plans in conjunction with their HR plans. We

found that staffing plans are not being used as reference/monitoring instruments when a resourcing action is initiated, nor are they regularly updated.

High-level departmental strategies and priorities are not always translated into concrete objectives and work plans for staff in the two staffing/resourcing divisions. Annual concrete and measurable objectives related to work plans need to be developed so that the contribution of staff to the achievement of overall objectives is clearly stated. Furthermore, once objectives and work plans have been developed, there is a need to strengthen accountability by conducting regular reviews of ongoing activities and formal progress reports.

The roles and responsibilities of the Client Operations and Senior Management Services Division are clear and the current organizational structure supports the staffing/resource function. However, there is a need to clearly define the mandate and core activities of the Corporate Programs Division and to align the organizational structure accordingly.

Corporate Programs management advised that they had recently developed a departmental Staffing Monitoring Framework based on identified risks.

## **INFORMATION SYSTEM**

We identified a need to capture client requirements and expectations with respect to reporting on staffing activities. Client Operations and Senior Management Services Division should provide departmental managers with regular updates on staffing activities.

## **STAFFING/RESOURCING FUNCTION**

During the two years preceding the audit, significant efforts were made to streamline staffing processes and provide managers with additional instruments to facilitate their staffing/resourcing activities. However, the Client Operations and Senior Management Services Division would benefit by further promoting these instruments.

Audit interviews and a 2009 client satisfaction survey returned similar results, namely, that while some departmental managers were satisfied with the staffing/resourcing services provided, many identified a need for improvement. In our opinion, these divergent results were due to different expectations on the part of managers and varying levels of experience of staffing advisors.

Staffing services for regular (non executive) positions are currently provided by three units, each headed by a Client Services Manager. One of the duties of these managers is to develop a strategic resourcing vision in partnership with their clients. With few exceptions, client services

managers do not actively play this role. The majority of departmental managers interviewed wanted more involvement on the part of their Client Services Manager in their HR planning process and in the development of targeted resourcing strategies.

We also found that there is a need to monitor client satisfaction more closely and in a more timely fashion.

## **INTERFACES**

We found that the working relationship between Client Operations and Senior Management Services and other HR disciplines is effective.

*The management responses to the recommendations contained in this report were provided by the Director General, Human Resources and Professional Development Directorate.*

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background

The Department of Justice employs approximately 4,800 employees. Legal services are delivered to departments and agencies on a portfolio basis. The Department of Justice has also established dedicated departmental legal services units (LSUs) co-located with the client departments for which they provide legal services. The Human Resources and Professional Development Directorate (HRPDD) of the Department of Justice is responsible for assisting managers in making resourcing decisions, and providing them with policies and guidelines to facilitate those decisions.

The staffing function in headquarters is divided into two divisions, each headed by a Director who reports to the Director General (DG), HRPDD: Client Operations and Senior Management Services, and Corporate Programs. The Client Operations and Senior Management Services Division operates as a regional office for the National Capital Region and provides staffing services to managers for regular (non-executive) and executive positions. It currently employs approximately 45 staff in four client services units. One unit is dedicated to the staffing of executive and senior complement positions and the other three units each serve a number of portfolios and other corporate organizations for the staffing of regular positions.<sup>2</sup> The division has an operations and maintenance (O&M) budget of \$182,600 for 2010-11.

The Corporate Staffing Unit within the Corporate Programs Division can be described as the national functional authority in staffing and resourcing matters. The organization chart for Corporate Programs provided at the time of the audit identified approximately 50 positions; however, a number of these positions were unoccupied, under review, or unfunded. The Corporate Programs Division has an O&M budget of \$767,800 for 2010-11. The division is responsible for a number of functions, in addition to those related to staffing and resourcing (for which 3.5 FTEs had been allocated at the time of the audit). These other disciplines or programs include:

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<sup>2</sup> Included in the 45 resources are also a Classification Unit and Talent Management Unit.

- Human Resources Planning
- Employment Equity and Duty to Accommodate
- Official Languages
- Data Integrity
- HR systems
- Legal Excellence Program
- Recognition
- HR and You development and maintenance

As the national functional authority in staffing and resourcing matters, Corporate Staffing Unit is responsible for developing staffing policies, guidelines, and instruments; monitoring the staffing framework; responding to central agency reporting requirements; implementing the Departmental Appointment Delegation Authority Instrument; and providing expert advice on staffing-related matters to the HR community (nationally) at the Department of Justice.

The overall mandate of both divisions is to ensure that appointments are made in accordance with the *Public Service Employment Act* and *Regulations*, respecting the values of fairness, transparency, access, and representativeness.

The key risk factors identified in developing the audit objectives and work plan included: the ability of the staffing function to respond to the growing demand for staffing services in a timely manner; the ability to provide useful advice and guidance to departmental managers; the level of efficiencies in the organization and in workload management; appropriateness and sufficiency of training provided to managers; the adequacy of information for decision making; compliance with central agency and departmental policies and standards; and lines of communication with other HR sections.

## **1.2 Audit Objectives and Scope**

The overall objective of the audit was to provide assurance that the management framework for the Client Operations and Senior Management Services Division and the Corporate Programs Division is effective.

The scope of the audit focused on the practices, procedures, and activities relating to the management control framework, the reliability of information contained in information systems for decision making and accountability, the implementation of the staffing/resourcing function and interfaces with other Justice organizations.

The audit included activities related to staffing/resourcing at headquarters. The planning and on-site examination phases of the audit took place from July to October 2010. The audit followed the methodology set out in Appendix A.

## 2. OBSERVATIONS – MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

### 2.1 Governance and Strategic Direction

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**Corporate Programs has developed a number of documents that provide strategic direction and priorities for the staffing/resourcing function, and responds to the requirement of oversight bodies.**

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Treasury Board's Management Accountability Framework (MAF) considers internal coherence, corporate discipline, and alignment to outcomes essential for providing effective strategic direction, supporting the Minister and Parliament, and delivering results. The requirements of oversight bodies are reflected in the staffing/resourcing governance process.

The audit team identified a direct link between departmental priorities and HR plans in place. The Department of Justice's Corporate Risk Profile, prepared in 2009 by the Office of Strategic Planning and Performance Management (SPPM), identified a shortfall in legal skills and capacity as one of the major risks facing the Department. The Corporate Risk Profile notes that difficulties with recruitment and retention of staff require targeted HR strategies developed in partnership between departmental managers and staffing practitioners. The Department of Justice's HR Management Plan was first developed by the Corporate Programs Division in 2007 and has since been updated three times (May 2008, October 2008, and June 2009). The latest version expired April 2010. The HR Management Plan identified the unique challenges facing the Department of Justice and proposed a number of strategies that emphasized the development of effective ways of attracting and retaining workers. The audit team noted that work is under way to prepare a new HR Management Plan, which is to be published in the spring of 2011<sup>3</sup>.

In line with the Clerk of the Privy Council's Public Service renewal priorities, the Corporate Programs Division also developed a 2010-11 Renewal Action Plan, which was updated in the fall of 2010. Corporate Programs staff informed the audit team that the 2010-11 Renewal Action

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<sup>3</sup> We were advised that the delay is due to the allocation of scarce resources to the update of the 2009-10 Renewal Action Plan.

Plan will serve as the Department of Justice's interim HR Management Plan. The 2010-11 Renewal Action Plan focuses on the integration of business and human resources planning, thus ensuring a link between the two. It also discusses a number of programs currently in place to address departmental resourcing issues, such as the Legal Excellence Program, which provides articling students with the opportunity to develop the essential knowledge, skills, and experience for practising law.

In addition, the Corporate Programs Division recently published its 2010-13 Employment Equity Plan. The Employment Equity Plan notes that while the Department of Justice exceeds the Public Service's overall employment equity objectives, improved representation in the executive group is required. The audit team found clear linkages to departmental priorities throughout the Employment Equity Plan.

It is the opinion of the audit team that the Corporate Programs Division provides strategic direction and priorities for the staffing/resourcing function and responds to the requirements of oversight bodies.

## **2.2 Planning**

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### **HR planning is integrated into the departmental integrated business planning process.**

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Planning is used by successful organizations to identify initiatives and activities that address issues and contribute to the achievement of stated objectives.

SPPM is responsible for coordinating the departmental integrated business planning process. The Corporate Programs Division plays an active role in this process by providing functional direction and guidance to departmental managers for the development of the HR plans that are included in annual business plans.

In 2007, the Corporate Programs Division published a "Manager's Guide to Developing Human Resources Plans". The guide's stated objective is to align HR strategies with business strategies. The audit team found the document to be practical, as it guides managers through a number of steps and checklists prior to finalizing their HR plans.

The Corporate Programs Division also participates in the Integrated Business Planning Functional Partners Committee where, according to SPPM staff, it plays an active and valuable role.

Up until the completion of the audit, the Corporate Programs Division provided hands-on guidance to departmental managers on the development of HR plans, with some assistance from Client Operations and Senior Management Services Division staff. While the Corporate Programs Division is responsible for functional direction, the responsibility for direct HR planning assistance to departmental managers rests with the Client Operations and Senior Management Services Division. To help increase the involvement of the Client Operations and Senior Management Services Division, Corporate Programs staff will provide coaching to Client Operations and Senior Management Services staff to enable more active participation with clients in the upcoming 2011-12 planning exercise. Corporate Programs will continue playing its role as HR planning functional authority.

It is the opinion of the audit team that the Corporate Programs Division’s planning processes are adequate.

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**Staffing plans are not being used as reference/monitoring instruments when a resourcing action is initiated, nor are they regularly updated.**

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As part of the integrated business planning process, departmental managers develop staffing plans in conjunction with their HR plans. The purpose of the staffing plan is to provide a forecast of expected staffing needs based on expected changes such as retirements, departures, new positions, and the resulting planned staffing actions. The staffing plans are developed on an Excel-based template currently administered by the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Branch<sup>4</sup>. The majority of departmental managers interviewed indicated that the template was somewhat inflexible and difficult to use and, as a result, was not always used in the resourcing process.

In order to improve the 2011-12 planning exercise, the CFO Branch made a number of changes to the staffing plan template. The template is now pre-populated with information from the Department of Justice’s Salary Forecasting Tool to create a more direct link between staffing actions and their financial impact. In the audit team’s opinion, this change should strengthen managers’ accountability with regard to staffing actions. It allows the staffing plan to become a monitoring instrument for managers to ensure that staffing actions are in line with the approved salary budget. In addition, more choices were added to the drop-down menus of the staffing plan template to make it more flexible for users. However, the staffing plan is still considered a static and inflexible tool, and improvements such as real-time updates would be beneficial.

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<sup>4</sup> The Department uses a spreadsheet-based shared environment to capture the operational input regarding key resources. This includes worksheets for Finance, HR (i.e. HR Plan and Staffing Plan), KM/IM/IT, and Communications so that planning pertaining to these resources is done concurrently and in an integrated fashion.

We found differences of opinion among departmental managers as to the usefulness of the staffing plans. Staffing plans evolve constantly because of staff attrition and some managers consider that updating the plans is an administrative burden. Managers who use the plans found them useful in that they provide an internal control and a baseline from which to track changes in an ever-evolving environment.

In our view, staffing managers and advisors should promote the use of staffing plans as documents that need to be updated regularly and consulted at the initial step of any resourcing process. It is our understanding that steps have been taken to promote a more proactive use of the staffing plans in the resourcing process.

#### Recommendation and Management Response

1. It is recommended that the Director General, HRPDD encourage the use of the staffing plan as a reference/monitoring instrument at the initial step in the resourcing process. (Low risk)<sup>5</sup>

Agreed. The HR advisors in the Client Operations and Senior Management Services Division were provided with a training session, led by their Client Service managers and assisted by Corporate Staffing, on how to use staffing plans in their discussions with managers. In addition, a roll-up of all the individual portfolio/sector/branch staffing plans in the NCR was developed in May 2011 using SharePoint technology, which allows HR to have a bird's eye view of staffing planned for the current year. This allows HR to play a more strategic role in assisting management with their projected staffing. This tool was presented at a special meeting of the Business Planning Network in June 2011 and served to reiterate the importance and use of the staffing plans. HR Client Service Managers have met on an ongoing basis with portfolios to support the use of staffing plans. To ensure a more comprehensive approach, they will, as part of the annual integrated business planning process, meet with all their respective Portfolio contacts to ensure the establishment of an ongoing process for the use of staffing plans. Completion: December 2011.

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**Annual measurable objectives and related work plans are not consistently developed in the Client Operations and Senior Management Services and Corporate Programs divisions.**

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<sup>5</sup> The Risk Assessment Guidelines for Recommendations are found in Appendix B.

An important element of Treasury Board’s MAF is that expectations are clearly stated and linked to results. High-level departmental plans are expected to translate into concrete and measurable objectives and work plans for staff.

The audit team observed that the annual goal-setting and work-planning process is not well structured in both staffing divisions. Formal objectives for the 2010-11 fiscal year were not in place by the completion of the audit team’s fieldwork in October 2010, more than six months into the year. A delay in the publication of commitments was the reason for the delay in establishing formal objectives.

Although managers indicated that they had discussed objectives and plans with their staff, when asked to provide current objectives and work plan documents, the results varied significantly. Most objectives and work plan documents submitted did not display all expected elements: clear deliverables, timetables, measurable indicators, activities, and a dated and signed document. As a result, the link between objectives and results was more difficult to identify. Furthermore, staff stated that while they are familiar with broad HR priorities, they are unable to clearly see the link between their individual work and the achievement of overall priorities.

#### Recommendation and Management Response

2. It is recommended that the Director General, HRPDD ensure that concrete and measurable annual objectives and related work plans are developed. (Medium risk)

Agreed. Annual concrete and measurable performance objectives and work plans continue to be developed and staff continue to be assessed against these. Completion date: October 2011.

### **2.3 Organizing**

#### **2.3.1 Client Operations and Senior Management Services Division**

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**The roles and responsibilities of the Client Operations and Senior Management Services Division are clear.**

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The Client Operations and Senior Management Services Division provides resourcing services to the National Capital Region and is mainly composed of staffing advisors who are responsible for assisting departmental managers in their staffing activities. Advisors provide managers with

advice on the preparation of selection process advertisements, examination questions, rating guides, and final reports. Through interviews we found that staff working in the division understand their role.

It is the opinion of the audit team that the roles and responsibilities for the Client Operations and Senior Management Services Division are well understood by staff.

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**The Client Operations and Senior Management Services Division’s current organizational structure supports the staffing/resourcing function.**

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The Client Operations and Senior Management Services Division acts as the National Capital Regional Office, delivering staffing services for regular (non-executive) and executive positions. Three client services units provide services for regular positions to portfolios and other management sectors. A Staffing Advisor is specifically assigned to a number of portfolios or other corporate organizations, and as a rule, all communications are channelled through the assigned advisor. A fourth unit within the division is responsible for executive and senior complement staffing. Despite frequent turnover, both staffing advisors and departmental managers indicated that the mandate of the division is clearly understood and that this structure provides some level of stability and allows a rapport to be established between clients and service providers. Departmental managers have confirmed that they interact almost exclusively with their assigned contact within Client Operations and Senior Management Services and that the single contact approach works well.

It is the view of the audit team that the Client Operations and Senior Management Services Division’s current organizational structure effectively supports the staffing/resourcing function.

### **2.3.2 Corporate Programs Division**

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**There is a need to clearly define the mandate and core activities of the Corporate Programs Division and to align the organizational structure accordingly.**

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The mandate of an organization is its raison d’être. It sets the tone for the organization’s activities, structure, and resources. When an organization establishes its mission, vision, and values statement, this valuable process sets the cornerstone upon which to build key activities and expected outcomes. The TBS MAF also requires that an organization effectively reflect departmental priorities through its program activities architecture.

From our interviews with Corporate Programs staff and managers, we found that there is confusion about the organization's mandate and certain of its activities, some of which may not be considered typical of a national functional authority for staffing and resourcing. Examples of these atypical activities identified by management and staff include:

- recruitment under the Legal Excellence Program (recruitment of articling students through this program for the National Capital region is also coordinated and managed by this unit, which would usually be part of staffing operations);
- handling complaints under the Public Service Staffing Tribunal (handled in some other government departments by Labour Relations units or in a separate unit within HR).

A clearly defined mandate, including core activities, is essential for ensuring that resources are allocated to the most important functions. Corporate Programs needs to better define its mandate and core activities, assess their relative importance, and determine and secure the resource levels required to deliver services to clients and to fully comply with central agencies' requirements.

Based on staff comments, the current organizational structure has led to confusion and is not effective. There is a need to revisit the manner in which the various activities are allocated and managed and realign the organization with a revised mandate to optimize the use of resources.

The audit team's limited benchmarking exercise with other federal departments found that other organizational models could be considered. Several other government departments are in the process of revisiting their corporate staffing mandates and organizations. In our opinion, the Corporate Programs Division could benefit from consulting with these departments.

### Recommendation and Management Response

3. It is recommended that the Director General, HRPDD define the mandate and core activities of the Corporate Programs Division, align the organizational structure, and secure the appropriate funding. (Medium risk)

Agreed. Some progress in this regard has been made since the audit. The Corporate Programs area has been renamed the HR Policy, Planning and Systems Division to better reflect its mandate. The Director position has been reviewed and updated and came into effect in December 2010. Further refinements will be made throughout the fiscal year. The Director General will ensure that the necessary steps are taken to secure funding for this Division. Completion date: March 31 2012.

## 2.4 Controlling

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### **The Corporate Programs Division needs to implement the recently developed Staffing Monitoring Framework.**

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One of the major elements of the PSC's Staffing Management Accountability Framework is the requirement to monitor results. The Corporate Programs Division is responsible for monitoring and reporting on staffing activities within the Department of Justice. We found that the division had initiated a number of ad hoc monitoring activities such as a 2009 study of long-term acting situations and an ongoing review of staffing advertisements. The results of the 2009 study were forwarded to regional staff and interviews indicated that corrective action is under way. However, the lack of a formal monitoring framework has prevented a structured approach to monitoring.

Corporate Programs management advised that they had recently developed a departmental Staffing Monitoring Framework based on identified risks. The framework was endorsed by the Department of Justice Human Resources Management Committee, and as of the completion of this audit's fieldwork in October 2010, was awaiting approval from the Department of Justice Executive Committee. The implementation of the framework will require that an organizational unit responsible for the monitoring function be created and funded. The audit team supports this initiative.

#### Recommendation and Management Response

4. It is recommended that the Director General, HRPDD take the necessary steps to implement the Staffing Monitoring Framework. (Medium risk)

Agreed. The new Staffing Monitoring Framework has been endorsed by Senior Management. The new framework outlines ongoing monitoring activities (e.g. area of selection), cyclical activities (e.g. appointment file reviews), directed (e.g. acting appointments over 12 months) as well as thematic (e.g. delegation, priority administration, etc.) monitoring activities as well as the frequency of each. Completion date: Implementation of the approved framework has commenced and the completion of the current monitoring cycle and its associated activities is March 2013.

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**The Client Operations and Senior Management Services and the Corporate Programs divisions do not conduct regular formal reviews of ongoing activities.**

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Managers of both divisions monitor ongoing activities through regular bilateral meetings with direct reports and monthly all-staff meetings. From interviews with managers and staff, we found that directors are aware of ongoing activities and emerging issues in their respective areas.

An effective accountability regime requires regular formal progress reports against established objectives and work plans. As previously discussed, objectives and work plans are not developed consistently throughout the two divisions. There is currently no formal and regular progress reporting, with the result that there is no baseline against which to assess progress. In addition, there is no documented history of changes in the approach to delivering work plans and/or any reassessment of priorities that may be agreed to by the parties involved. In the audit team's opinion, accountability needs to be strengthened with more regular performance and progress reporting with respect to established objectives for all staff members.

Recommendation and Management Response

5. It is recommended that the Director General, HRPDD ensure that regular reviews of ongoing activities and formal progress reports are conducted, once objectives and work plans have been developed. (Medium risk)

Agreed. A framework has been developed to ensure progress on work plans is reported and discussed at bi-weekly Chiefs meetings and during regular bi-lateral meetings with the Directors. Completion date: Completed and ongoing.

## **2.5 Leading and Communicating**

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**Management of the Client Operations and Senior Management Services and the Corporate Programs divisions exercise leadership, communicate with staff, and provide functional direction.**

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The PSC provides a number of instruments to help assess leadership. On the PSC Web site, the page entitled "Assessing Leadership and Management Talent" lists the main abilities of good leaders:

- to provide direction

- to delegate
- to face conflict
- to show initiative
- to make decisions
- to communicate with and motivate staff
- to develop effective interpersonal relationships

Based on interviews conducted with managers and staff and a review of some communication instruments and minutes of meetings, the audit team found that leadership is exercised in both the Client Operations and Senior Management Services and the Corporate Programs divisions. Regular bilateral meetings between directors and their direct reports are held every two weeks. In conjunction with monthly staff meetings, these meetings effectively provide direction and keep staff informed of relevant developments. In addition, staff reported that their supervisors have implemented an open-door policy that enables them to discuss emerging issues in a timely manner. Staff also confirmed that they are generally satisfied with communications and the direction provided.

The audit team is of the opinion that management of both divisions exercise leadership, communicate satisfactorily and provide staff with functional direction.

### 3. OBSERVATIONS – INFORMATION SYSTEMS

#### 3.1 Reliability of Information Systems

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**The Corporate Programs Division has established procedures to ensure the reliability and integrity of PeopleSoft HRMS information to support decision making and accountability.**

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Departmental managers require accurate and timely information to help in the decision-making process. The Corporate Programs Division is responsible for issuing regular reports on a variety of subjects and in response to requests from departmental managers. It relies on the PeopleSoft Human Resources Management System (HRMS) to produce these reports. It is essential therefore that the data entered into the system is accurate.

The HRMS is the Department of Justice's version of the PeopleSoft system that is used in many large federal departments. While the system uses a common platform, the application can be customized to fit client requirements. The audit team was informed that departmental managers had complained in the past about the reliability of the data in HRMS and the system's lack of flexibility.

In order to improve data integrity, in 2003 the Corporate Programs Division developed a Data Integrity Monitoring and Auditing Framework that describes the roles and responsibilities of all parties dealing with the HRMS. The framework designated power users for each region to be the main point of contact and provide liaison and training with other regional users.

As a result of the Monitoring and Auditing Framework, the Statistics and Data Integrity Unit within Corporate Programs initiated a number of processes, including running reviews of HRMS data, analyzing the data to establish error rates, and forwarding the results of this analysis to regional power users for corrective action. In addition, the Statistics and Data Integrity Unit holds monthly teleconferences to discuss data integrity issues with power users from each region. The unit keeps agendas and minutes of these teleconferences.

HRMS data quality was not tested as part of this audit. However, interviews with departmental managers and staff indicated that data quality has improved and there is more confidence in the reliability of HRMS data.

The audit team reviewed regular and ad hoc reports and found them to be clear, logical, and professionally presented. This is confirmed by departmental managers who state that they are generally satisfied with the reports. Although the HRMS has some limitations, we found that Corporate Programs staff respond to most information requests to the clients' satisfaction.

The audit team is of the view that the Corporate Programs Division makes appropriate use of the PeopleSoft HRMS to support decision making and accountability.

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**The Client Operations and Senior Management Services Division does not provide departmental managers with regular updates on staffing activities.**

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Departmental managers may at any time have a number of staffing actions under way. Keeping track of the status of these actions can be a significant task. According to departmental managers interviewed, the Client Operations and Senior Management Services Division does not currently provide regular formal reports on staffing activities. Management confirmed that, instead, staffing advisors communicate verbally with clients and provide oral or electronic updates on staffing actions, usually when requested by departmental managers. Only one Portfolio manager has requested and receives regular reports. While some departmental managers interviewed were satisfied with the current informal reporting, others would like to receive regular progress reports on their staffing activities. The audit team concurs with the need to capture client requirements and expectations regarding reporting on staffing activities. In our view, staffing status reports could eventually become part of the services offered to clients.

The audit team was informed that the Client Operations and Senior Management Services Division is currently exploring solutions with HRMS staff to provide departmental managers with regular status reports on staffing activities.

Recommendation and Management Response

6. It is recommended that the Director General, HRPDD ensure that departmental managers are provided with regular updates on staffing activities. (Low risk)

Agreed. HR is working on an excel spreadsheet that will be used in each individual staffing process and will be attached to the electronic screening board report (which is currently in use) which will allow managers to verify the status of their staffing files through RDIMs. Completion date: November 2011.

## **4. OBSERVATIONS – STAFFING/RESOURCING FUNCTION**

### **4.1 Policies and Procedures**

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**Staffing/resourcing policies and procedures are in place and are easily accessible on the “Human Resources and You” site on JUSnet.**

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Clear and accessible policies and procedures are the first step in ensuring consistency of message and application. Corporate Programs has developed an extensive suite of departmental staffing/resourcing policies, procedures, and work instruments, available on the “Human Resources and You” site on JUSnet. In addition, the site also provides access to policies and procedures from central agencies.

Departmental managers interviewed were familiar to varying degrees with the “Human Resources and You” site, which was recently redesigned. Interviewees commented positively on this initiative.

It is the audit team’s opinion that existing policies and procedures are in place and are accessible.

### **4.2 Leading, Communicating, and Training**

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**Staffing practitioners within the Client Operations and Senior Management Services and the Corporate Programs divisions receive appropriate training.**

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One of the PSC performance indicators included in the Departmental Staffing Accountability Report reads as follows: “Mechanisms are in place to ensure that sub-delegated managers comply with their sub-delegated authority.” The Department of Justice has had a Staffing Sub-Delegation Instrument in place since 2005 (it was updated in 2009). Authorities referenced in this instrument are only to be granted to managers in writing by the Deputy Minister once the

mandatory training has been completed. Departmental managers interviewed confirmed that they had received the required training prior to receiving their sub-delegation. They also indicated that while the training did not make them experts, it allowed them to fully exercise their delegation.

In the Client Operations and Senior Management Services Division a document entitled “Learning Plan Aid” captures the mandatory training requirements for staffing advisors working at various levels. In both divisions individual learning plans (ILPs) are developed for all staff at the same time that performance appraisals are prepared. The ILPs reviewed as part of this audit were found to be appropriate. Also, staff interviewed in both divisions stated that they were generally satisfied with the training and development opportunities afforded them.

It is the opinion of the audit team that staff in both divisions and departmental managers with delegated staffing authority receive the appropriate training to exercise their authority.

#### **4.3 Provision of Service**

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#### **The staffing timeframes established in the HR Client Service Standards are not monitored.**

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Manager satisfaction with the quality of overall staffing services was identified in the “2009 Departmental Staffing Accountability Report” as an area needing attention. Client Service Standards were developed for most HR activities including staffing in April 2009. There are two versions of these standards. One is a shorter “placemat” version that provides timeframes for each type of staffing action. It was widely distributed to departmental managers. A second more detailed version, which breaks out more of the steps in the staffing process and allocates days to each step, was published on the “Human Resources and You” site. However, this was not generally publicized or its use promoted. While the longer version of the standards outlines the roles and responsibilities of the parties involved in the staffing process, most departmental managers interviewed stated that they were only familiar with the short version, which emphasizes the overall timeframes.

At the time of the audit the staffing timeframes in the Client Service Standards were not being monitored. However, the Corporate Programs Division was developing a process for monitoring and reporting on performance against the staffing timeframes established in the standards.

### Recommendation and Management Response

7. It is recommended that the Director General, HRPDD ensure that a process for monitoring and reporting on the staffing timeframes established in the HR Client Service Standards is implemented. (Medium risk)

Agreed. The monitoring of staffing timeframes forms part of the aforementioned Staffing Monitoring Framework. Steps have been taken to implement system changes within the Recruitment Module of the departmental HR Management System to allow for this tracking. System changes were implemented January 2011. Reports on timeframes are available for use of HR Directors on an ongoing basis. A yearend report will be provided to the DG, HR and Director of HR Policy and Programs to assess performance overall and inform next steps. Completion date: March 2012.

#### 4.4 Client Satisfaction

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### **The Client Operations and Senior Management Services Division has not sufficiently promoted some recently developed staffing instruments.**

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During audit interviews, Client Operations and Senior Management Services Division staff said that since 2008 an emphasis has been placed on developing user-friendly staffing instruments. In particular, they mentioned the “Fast Track” instrument, which has greatly accelerated the process for less complex staffing actions. The division’s staff also created several other new tools (e.g. banks of questions for competitions and pools of qualified candidates with resumés) that departmental managers can easily access.

Departmental managers interviewed expressed their appreciation for these new staffing instruments, which they acknowledged facilitate and accelerate non-complex staffing actions. They were familiar with “Fast Track”, which they use on a regular basis to fill positions. They were, however, less familiar with other instruments (e.g. pools of qualified candidates, banks of questions). In spite of promotional efforts on the part of HR, primarily via electronic media, there is still some resistance on the part of departmental managers to using certain instruments. In the audit team’s opinion, further promotional efforts, such as the presentations to management committees that were conducted, could better promote these instruments so they become better known and are more extensively used by departmental managers.

### Recommendation and Management Response

8. It is recommended that the Director General, HRPDD ensure that the new staffing instruments are better promoted to increase their use by departmental managers. (Low risk)

Agreed. The Client Operations and Senior Management Services Division sent out a communiqué in the Department's Justinfo and through the Department's WebNews informing the Department of the pool management tool and encouraging managers to take use of the significant number of valid pools that currently exist. In addition to these two vehicles, the Division developed a webpage on the Intranet site with links to the pool management inventory as well as with a link to our contact list. Presentations have been made to a number of management committees within the Department informing them of the innovations in HR in the NCR and the benefits to managers. In addition to this, as part of Dialogue 2010, a video is available on the Justice Intranet explaining the innovations and new tools that HR in the NCR has developed. Completion date: completed.

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### **Departmental managers are divided in their level of satisfaction with staffing services provided by the Client Operations and Senior Management Services Division.**

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As stated previously, client satisfaction is one area identified in the 2009 Departmental Staffing Accountability Report as requiring attention. Clients (departmental managers) interviewed for this audit were asked whether they were satisfied with staffing services. They responded with diverging opinions. We noted that some were satisfied, while others identified a need for improvement regarding the level of service provided. Based on these interviews, the audit team identified two main factors influencing this result:

- different expectations on the part of managers
- the level of experience of the staffing advisor

Departmental managers who identified a need for improvement generally expect much more involvement and support from their staffing advisors. They expect assistance in developing advertisements, questions, and rating guides, and in handling selection process logistics and communicating with candidates. Many stated that they receive minimal guidance from their staffing advisor and must at times navigate the staffing process through trial and error. They further indicated that having delegated staffing authority does not make them experts in

conducting staffing competitions. On the other hand, the Executive and Senior Complement Unit provides a more hands-on approach by proactively sharing assessment and rating tools with their clients. This was demonstrated in the file review conducted by the audit team.

Departmental managers also stated that the extent and quality of staffing services vary depending on the level of expertise of the assigned staffing advisor: less experienced advisors tend to be more procedurally rigid and are less creative in finding helpful solutions. Staffing advisors acknowledged that they do not frequently initiate contact with their clients (departmental managers) and, as a result, the clients consider them reactive rather than proactive. Managers have stated that while one advisor may meet their expectations, another may not. As such, the level of satisfaction with staffing services varies depending on who is assigned to handle a given staffing action.

Interviews indicated that as a result of the above issues, some Department of Justice organizations have developed their own staffing support capability within business management groups to assist managers with services that HR would normally provide (e.g. help with posters and banks of questions). Through this transfer of responsibilities, there is a risk that the role of the Client Operations and Senior Management Services Division will be eroded.

The audit team is of the opinion that the earlier recommendation to revise HR Client Service Standards, to define roles and responsibilities of all parties in the staffing process, and to actively promote these with clients would address the issues noted above and improve client satisfaction.

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**Most client services managers within the Client Operations and Senior Management Services Division are not fulfilling, to the full extent possible, their role of developing a strategic resourcing vision in partnership with clients.**

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The Client Operations and Senior Management Services Division's four client services units are headed by managers who supervise a number of staffing advisors and HR coordinators. The job description for client services managers emphasizes the development of a strategic resourcing vision in partnership with clients. With few exceptions, client services managers do not actively play this role.

One of the main complaints from departmental managers regarding staffing services was the lack of an overall strategic approach. While all departmental managers knew their assigned Staffing Advisor, few knew their Client Services Manager. Until recently, client services managers have had limited involvement in their clients' HR planning process. One notable exception is the regular participation of one Client Services Manager in her client's management meetings. The

majority of departmental managers interviewed wanted more involvement on the part of their Client Services Manager in their HR planning process and in the development of targeted resourcing strategies. However, client services managers are also faced with a number of challenges in assuming their strategic role. For example, not all clients (departmental managers) are open to using collective processes and other staffing approaches.

In an effort to increase the participation of client services managers in this year's HR planning process, Corporate Programs has initiated simulation sessions. The objective is to familiarize client services managers with the HR planning process and increase their level of comfort in discussing overall strategies with departmental managers.

It is the audit team's opinion that client services managers should be developing a strategic resourcing vision with their clients as required by their job description.

#### Recommendation and Management Response

9. It is recommended that the Director General, HRPDD ensure that client services managers develop a strategic resourcing vision in partnership with clients, as outlined in their job description. (Medium risk)

Agreed. Refer to the management response to recommendation 1. In addition, the Client Service Managers in Staffing, along with the Chief of Classification, meet on a regular basis with the Directors of Business Management of the portfolio/sector, for which they are responsible, to discuss strategic staffing and classification issues. Completion: Ongoing and regular discussions take place. The Client Service Managers will meet with the Directors, Business Management, and in some instances, the portfolio/sector management team to discuss and assist with integrated HR and Business Plans. Completion date: December 2011.

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#### **The current process to assess client satisfaction does not provide timely feedback after major staffing actions.**

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The Corporate Programs Division is responsible for conducting surveys to evaluate client satisfaction with staffing services. The most recent survey was conducted in the fall of 2009 and the results closely reflected those of the audit interviews (i.e. approximately half of the departmental managers responded that they were satisfied and half identified a need for

improvement in staffing services<sup>6</sup>). Corporate Programs management had planned to undertake the survey annually; however, we were told that a lack of resources prevented a survey in 2010.

In our view, national annual surveys do not provide the targeted feedback that allows for timely corrective action following major staffing actions (i.e. those requiring a competitive process). There is a need for more timely feedback after these staffing actions to identify dissatisfied clients and allow for corrective action to be taken for future staffing actions. The Director, Client Operations and Senior Management Services advised that she is consulting with Corporate Programs to potentially develop a short evaluation survey to be used after major staffing actions.

#### Recommendation and Management Response

10. It is recommended that the Director General, HRPDD ensure that a timely feedback mechanism is implemented after major staffing actions (Medium risk)

Agreed. The Client Operations and Senior Management Services Division has purchased a survey licence to conduct online surveys to managers immediately following the completion of each advertised process to solicit their feedback in order to improve service. Completion date: September 30, 2011.

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<sup>6</sup> The electronic 2009 HR Client Service Standards Satisfaction Survey for staffing and classification received 102 responses (25% response rate) and contained five categories rated as follows: Excellent 22%; Very Good 29%; Average 34%; Poor 14%; Very Poor 1%.

## **5. OBSERVATIONS – INTERFACES WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS**

### **5.1 Appropriateness of Interfaces**

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**The relationship between the Client Operations and Senior Management Services Division and other HR disciplines is effective.**

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There are limited interfaces between Client Operations and Senior Management Services Division and most other HR groups such as Compensation, Labour Relations, and Professional Development. During interviews, staff in these other disciplines indicated that situations requiring interfaces with Client Operations and Senior Management Services staff were resolved professionally and without problems.

One HR discipline that does have frequent interaction with Client Operations and Senior Management Services is the Classification group, which also reports to the same Director. This reporting relationship facilitates interface between the two functions as they both participate in monthly staff meetings and receive the same information. Interviews with Classification staff indicated that a close relationship has developed between the two functions. When there is a classification issue connected to a request for staffing action, staffing advisors and classification officers frequently hold combined meetings with the client so that they convey the same message and work in conjunction to better serve the client.

It is the view of the audit team that there is an effective working relationship between Client Operations and Senior Management Services and other departmental HR disciplines.

## **6. RECOMMENDATIONS AND MANAGEMENT RESPONSES**

- 1. It is recommended that the Director General, HRPDD encourage the use of the staffing plan as a reference/monitoring instrument at the initial step in the resourcing process. (Low risk).....8**

Agreed. The HR advisors in the Client Operations and Senior Management Services Division were provided with a training session, led by their Client Service managers and assisted by Corporate Staffing, on how to use staffing plans in their discussions with managers. In addition, a roll-up of all the individual portfolio/sector/branch staffing plans in the NCR was developed in May 2011 using SharePoint technology, which allows HR to have a bird's eye view of staffing planned for the current year. This allows HR to play a more strategic role in assisting management with their projected staffing. This tool was presented at a special meeting of the Business Planning Network in June 2011 and served to reiterate the importance and use of the staffing plans. HR Client Service Managers have met on an ongoing basis with portfolios to support the use of staffing plans. To ensure a more comprehensive approach, they will, as part of the annual integrated business planning process, meet with all their respective Portfolio contacts to ensure the establishment of an ongoing process for the use of staffing plans. Completion: December 2011.

- 2. It is recommended that the Director General, HRPDD ensure that concrete and measurable annual objectives and related work plans are developed. (Medium risk)9**

Agreed. Annual concrete and measurable performance objectives and work plans continue to be developed and staff continue to be assessed against these. Completion date: October 2011

- 3. It is recommended that the Director General, HRPDD define the mandate and core activities of the Corporate Programs Division, align the organizational structure, and secure the appropriate funding. (Medium risk) .....11**

Agreed. Some progress in this regard has been made since the audit. The Corporate Programs area has been renamed the HR Policy, Planning and Systems Division to better reflect its mandate. The Director position has been reviewed and updated and came into effect in December 2010. Further refinements will be made throughout the fiscal year. The Director General will ensure that the necessary steps are taken to secure funding for this Division. Completion date: March 31 2012.

**4. It is recommended that the Director General, HRPDD take the necessary steps to implement the Staffing Monitoring Framework. (Medium risk).....12**

Agreed. The new Staffing Monitoring Framework has been endorsed by Senior Management. The new framework outlines ongoing monitoring activities (e.g. area of selection), cyclical activities (e.g. appointment file reviews), directed (e.g. acting appointments over 12 months) as well as thematic (e.g. delegation, priority administration, etc.) monitoring activities as well as the frequency of each. Completion date: Implementation of the approved framework has commenced and the completion of the current monitoring cycle and its associated activities is March 2013.

**5. It is recommended that the Director General, HRPDD ensure that regular reviews of ongoing activities and formal progress reports are conducted, once objectives and work plans have been developed. (Medium risk).....13**

Agreed. A framework has been developed to ensure progress on work plans is reported and discussed at bi-weekly Chiefs meetings and during regular bi-lateral meetings with the Directors. Completion date: Completed and ongoing.

**6. It is recommended that the Director General, HRPDD ensure that departmental managers are provided with regular updates on staffing activities. (Low risk) .....17**

Agreed. HR is working on an excel spreadsheet that will be used in each individual staffing process and will be attached to the electronic screening board report (which is currently in use) which will allow managers to verify the status of their staffing files through RDIMs. Completion date: November 2011.

**7. It is recommended that the Director General, HRPDD ensure that a process for monitoring and reporting on the staffing timeframes established in the HR Client Service Standards is implemented. (Medium risk).....21**

Agreed. The monitoring of staffing timeframes forms part of the aforementioned Staffing Monitoring Framework. Steps have been taken to implement system changes within the Recruitment Module of the departmental HR Management System to allow for this tracking. System changes were implemented January 2011. Reports on timeframes are available for use of HR Directors on an ongoing basis. A yearend report will be provided to the DG, HR and Director of HR Policy and Programs to assess performance overall and inform next steps. Completion date: March 2012.

- 8. It is recommended that the Director General, HRPDD ensure that the new staffing instruments are better promoted to increase their use by departmental managers. (Low risk).....22**

Agreed. The Client Operations and Senior Management Services Division sent out a communiqué in the Department’s Justinfo and through the Department’s WebNews informing the Department of the pool management tool and encouraging managers to take use of the significant number of valid pools that currently exist. In addition to these two vehicles, the Division developed a webpage on the Intranet site with links to the pool management inventory as well as with a link to our contact list. Presentations have been made to a number of management committees within the Department informing them of the innovations in HR in the NCR and the benefits to managers. In addition to this, as part of Dialogue 2010, a video is available on the Justice Intranet explaining the innovations and new tools that HR in the NCR has developed. Completion date: completed.

- 9. It is recommended that the Director General, HRPDD ensure that client services managers develop a strategic resourcing vision in partnership with clients, as outlined in their job description. (Medium risk).....24**

Agreed. Refer to the management response to recommendation 1. In addition, the Client Service Managers in Staffing, along with the Chief of Classification, meet on a regular basis with the Directors of Business Management of the portfolio/sector, for which they are responsible, to discuss strategic staffing and classification issues. Completion: Ongoing and regular discussions take place. The Client Service Managers will meet with the Directors, Business Management, and in some instances, the portfolio/sector management team to discuss and assist with integrated HR and Business Plans. Completion date: December 2011.

**10. It is recommended that the Director General, HRPDD ensure that a timely feedback mechanism is implemented after major staffing actions. (Medium risk) .....25**

Agreed. The Client Operations and Senior Management Services Division has purchased a survey licence to conduct online surveys to managers immediately following the completion of each advertised process to solicit their feedback in order to improve service. Completion date: September 30, 2011.

## APPENDIX A – AUDIT METHODOLOGY

The criteria for the audit were based on:

- Treasury Board’s Management Accountability Framework;
- other guidance from the TBS on auditing management frameworks;
- guidance from the PSC on auditing the staffing function.

Information to support the findings of this audit was obtained through the following methods:

- interviews with staffing practitioners from Corporate Programs and Client Operations and Senior Management Services divisions;
- interviews with senior departmental managers with staffing sub-delegation;
- a review of the following documentation for the two divisions:
  - *Departmental Risk Profile* and departmental plans (e.g. HR, employment equity, classification renewal, staffing);
  - objectives and work plans;
  - policies, procedures, and other work instruments;
  - agendas and minutes of management meetings;
  - reports, analyses, and tables reporting on departmental staffing activities;
- bulletins, directives, and other instructions;
- a high-level benchmarking exercise with two federal departments.

## APPENDIX B – RISK ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES FOR AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

Examples of criteria used for assessing the risk level of audit recommendations are outlined below:

Assessment	Criteria
High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Controls</b> are not in place or are inadequate.</li> <li>• <b>Compliance</b> with legislation and regulations is inadequate.</li> <li>• Important <b>issues</b> are identified that impact the achievement of program/operational objectives.</li> </ul>
Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Controls</b> are in place but are not being sufficiently complied with.</li> <li>• <b>Compliance</b> with central agency/departmental policies and established procedures is inadequate.</li> <li>• <b>Issues</b> are identified that impact the efficiency and effectiveness of operations.</li> </ul>
Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Controls</b> are in place but the level of compliance varies.</li> <li>• <b>Compliance</b> with central agency/departmental policies and established procedures varies.</li> <li>• <b>Opportunities</b> are identified that could enhance operations.</li> </ul>

It should be noted that, in applying the above criteria to a recommendation, Internal Audit Branch takes into consideration the nature, scope, and significance of the audit finding(s), the impact of the recommendation on the organization, and the auditors' professional judgment.