

Like previous parliamentary committees, we believe that the federal government must put a priority on getting its own house in order. Our hearings suggest that there is a considerable distance yet to be travelled in this regard, and that the degree of integration of persons with disabilities within the federal government currently ranks as an acute embarrassment, particularly in light of the commitments reviewed in Section 2 of this report. Witnesses from the Treasury Board Advisory Committee on Disabled Persons provided an especially well-informed, if depressing, overview of processes at work within the federal bureaucracy, including the persistence of testing methods, used by the Public Service Commission, which exclude capable people whose disabilities prevent them from taking the tests. More generally, we were told that the federal government is not meeting even its own modest targets for the hiring of people with disabilities. None of our witnesses, including departmental officials, undertook to defend the government's internal record. It is indefensible. Its improvement is clearly an immediate priority.