

could serve as the link to cabinet of a high-level committee that is composed of representatives, perhaps deputy ministers, of other central agencies and significant departments. This could ensure that all government agencies take action, as required.

Standing Committee on Human Rights and the Status of Disabled Persons,
A Consensus for Action, June 1990, pp. 18-19

Although a Deputy Ministers' Committee on Issues Concerning Persons with Disabilities was struck in response to our suggestion, it has only held two meetings in the past eighteen months. According to Georges Proulx, Assistant Under Secretary of State, bilateral dealings between deputy ministers have been more appropriate and effective. Now, we have learned that the co-ordination function has passed to a Committee of Assistant Deputy Ministers who, in very many instances, have delegated it to junior departmental officials.

Obviously, the message from this Standing Committee has either been ignored or has been garbled in the transmission. Bilateral meetings are fine for dealing with bilateral issues. They are, however, inappropriate as a means of ensuring the effective co-ordination of a National Strategy involving ten government departments. Furthermore, a co-ordinating committee, where the alternate to the substitute to the alternate of the deputy minister attends the meetings, is not what we had in mind.

