

DCD Retreat

Taking Pride in the Team

Following the recent results of the Public Service survey, and after consultations with staff, André S. Simard, Director General of the Executive Services Bureau (DCD), developed an action plan that continues to build the DCD team and their sense of the valuable support they provide to the work of the Department. The plan identifies actions to respond to the concerns raised by his staff in three areas: the encouragement and validation of their contributions, support for training at all levels, and improvements to communication within the Bureau, the Department and with Parliament, a key client.

The first step was an all-bureau meeting to discuss the survey and encourage ideas for improvement. A draft "solution paper" was then sent to all staff for further input. Step two brought everyone together at a two-day retreat organized by DCD and CFSI. The retreat was held at the Parliament buildings in February.

The staff of DCD continually face the stress of deadlines, and must pass these on to their colleagues in the Department because

of the many time-sensitive requirements of their work in providing essential services to the ministers, secretaries of state and deputy ministers as well as administering the Access to Information and Privacy Acts. Among other responsibilities, DCD prepares Questions and Answers for Parliament by 11 a.m. on a daily basis (more than 2,000 Qs and As during one year), processes memos to Cabinet, writes more than 20,000 letters a year for ministerial signature, and must respond to approximately 500 access to information and privacy requests annually within very tight legislated timeframes.

"We want our employees to be recognized and encouraged for their performance and initiative," said Mr. Simard. "Often, in the rush of deadlines, they are not aware that their work is appreciated," he said.

During the retreat DCD employees discussed issues and exchanged ideas relating to their work. They also had the opportunity to exchange views with two key clients: Ministerial Executive Assistants Patricia Neri (MINA) and Francis LeBlanc (MINT). The Director General of CFSI, Adriaan De Hoog, was part of a panel discussion on human resources with Robert Desjardins (HRP) and Len Mader (HPDX).

The two-day retreat was an overall success in team building, establishing more personal and direct relationships between participants, and refining an action plan to resolve current problems faced by DCD staff. It also provided an opportunity to discuss new ideas to improve on work delivery while focusing on innovations for the future. Various initiatives are being planned in the months to come to implement the results of this exercise leading up to the coming retreat scheduled for next fall.

CFSI is ready to support other bureaux responding to results of the Public Service survey in order to meet the needs of employees throughout the Department.



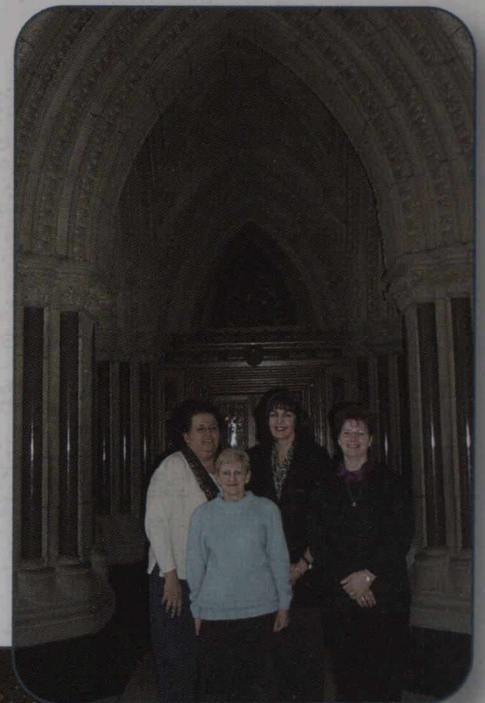
Cabinet & Parliamentary Affairs Division, DCL; back row: Linda Lavergne, Julie Yan, Inès Le Minter, Erica Good, and George Jacoby; in the middle: Anne Tanguay; front row: Maria Gagné, Yacine Frowd, Roxanne Dubé (director), and Gayle Clost.



Correspondence Division, DCC; back row: Paul Anderson, Dianne Coates, Hélène Chouinard, and Rick Caverly; front row: Anne Goodman, Heather Tzakis, Arlene Leclair, and Janice Hayes (director).



Access to Information & Privacy Protection Division, DCP; back row: Francine Archambault, Barbara Richardson, (director), and Diane Pelletier; front: Madeleine Hiseler.



Executive Services Bureau, DCD; in the back: Yvonne Frank; in front: Marjorie Ravignat, André Simard (Director General), and Colette Caron.