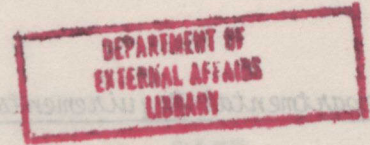


HISTORICAL BACKGROUND



On October 30, 1975, the Federal Government approved policy and programme guidelines to ensure that women are accorded equal access to employment and career opportunities in the Public Service of Canada. In essence, the initiation of a new and more aggressive approach recognized that, despite previous initiatives and legislative prohibitions, the sex of an employee continued to be an important factor in determining career advancement and remuneration in the Public Service.

Departments were assigned a major role in the development of action plans to achieve the Government's objective of ensuring that "within a reasonable period of time, representation of male and female employees within the Public Service approximates the proportion of qualified and interested persons of both sexes available, by Department, by occupational group and level". To ensure consistency across the Public Service in the application of the Cabinet guidelines, departmental action plans are reviewed and approved annually by the Treasury Board.

For 1976-77, Departments were directed to identify short-term objectives and action plans to address the immediate situation and to provide a base for the development of long-term plans covering the period 1977-82.

For the 1977-78 fiscal year, Departments were required to develop their long-term plans and measurable objectives, including numerical targets for the representation and distribution of women throughout occupational groups and levels, as well as specific plans for 1977-78.

For the 1978-79 fiscal year, Departments were required to evaluate progress made toward achieving the objectives of the five-year plan submitted the previous year. Information pertaining to the situation review for 1977-78, objectives and action plans for 1978-79, and adjustments (if applicable) to the five-year plan and targets were to be submitted to the Treasury Board Secretariat.