

**Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC)**  
**National Union-Management Consultation Committee (NUMCC)**  
**June 9, 2014 Minutes**

**Present:**

	<b>Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC)</b>
Andrea Lyon	Deputy Minister
Tim Sargent	Associate Deputy Minister
Pierre Corriveau	ADM Corporate Management Branch
Tina Namiesniowski	ADM Programs Branch
Greg Meredith	ADM Strategic Policy Branch
Jane Taylor	A/ADM Communication and Consultations Branch
Gilles Saindon	Associate ADM Science and Technology Branch
Louise Sénéchal	General Counsel and Deputy Executive Director, Legal Services
Michel Lessard	CIO Information Systems Branch
Frédéric Seppey	Director General, Trade Agreement and Negotiation, Market and Industry Services Branch
Caroline Dunn	Director General, Human Resources Directorate, CMB
Ceci O'Flaherty	Director, Labour Relations, HR Directorate, CMB
Nathalie Jacques	A/Principal Consultant, Labour Relations, HR Directorate, CMB
Debbie Winker	A/Corporate Secretary

	<b>Agriculture Union (PSAC)</b>
Fabian Murphy	First National Executive Vice President
Glenn Miller	Second National Executive Vice President, PSAC
Milton Dyck	Fourth National Executive Vice President

	<b>Professional Institute of the Public Service Canada (PIPSC)</b>
Catherine Keir	Vice President, AAFC National Consultation Team
Dale Woloshin	Steward, Union-Management Consultation Team, PIPSC

	<b>Canadian Association of Professional Employees (CAPE)</b>
Yves Rochon	Labour Relations Officer, AAFC – NCR (Local 507)

	<b>Association of Canadian Financial Officers (ACFO)</b>
Danielle Viel (Lafleur)	Labour Relations Advisor, ACFO

**Regrets:**

Siddika Mithani	ADM Science and Technology Branch
Fred Gorrell	A/ADM Market and Industry Services Branch
Michael Whittaker	Chief Audit and Evaluation
Jean François Prigent	Employment Relations Officer, PIPSC
Paul Cameron	Assistant Business Manager, IBEW
Salma Jaroudi	President, AAFC – NCR (Local 507)
Bob Kingston	President, Agriculture Union

**Agenda Item****Summary and Action****Accountability****1. Opening remarks****A. Lyon**

A. Lyon introduced herself and gave a brief summary of her past work experience including her time with AAFC. She commented on the changes within AAFC since she was with the Department including how AAFC is transforming to remain relevant to producers and helping to put agriculture more prominently on Canada's economic map.

She thanked the Unions for attending the meeting and emphasized how important it is to keep the lines of communication open.

**2. Approval of Minutes****A. Lyon**

December 12, 2013 minutes were approved.

The agenda of the day was presented to the participants.

**No follow up  
required**

F. Murphy indicated that he would also like to have a discussion on the reclassification of EG positions in Quebec, the use of Videoconference for union management meetings and Regional Union management meetings (primarily related to Quebec region).

It was agreed that the additional agenda items would be tabled at the end of the meeting.

**3. AAFC's 2014-2017  
Business Plan**

Summary:

**Science and Technology Branch (STB)**

G. Saindon handed out books on the history of Research Branch from 1986 to 2011 and then talked about key Branch priorities including advancement of modern science and risk based regulatory processes; improve program performance and monitoring to enhance reporting of results to Canadians; and talent and performance management for employees.

Agriculture Union asked if changes to the Branch priorities would have an impact on the type of work performed by employees and the number of employees required to do the work.

G. Saindon replied that the priorities are in line with the work that is currently being carried out in the branch. It doesn't change the expertise or the type of research; it is more to align the work with the objectives.

**Corporate Management Branch (CMB)**

P. Corriveau discussed CMB priorities including footprint realignment based on changes to programs and space requirements; disposal of research facilities and divestiture of Community Pastures; changes to the forecasting process to improve program performance and monitoring



capabilities; implementation of a new Shared Travel Service; people and performance management priorities and maintaining the Equine Drug Control Program.

P. Corriveau also reiterated the branch dedication to support employees in workforce transition and to provide them the necessary support.

Agriculture union asked if there were any other anticipated changes that will have an impact on employees and wanted to ensure that while disposing of properties, there were appropriate assets and equipment available to employees for their research.

P. Corriveau clarified that before making any decision related to disposing of assets, there is analysis done to determine if the equipment is still needed.

#### Market and Industry Services Branch

F. Seppey outlined his Branch's priorities to advance modern, science and risk based regulatory processes; support trade liberalization and market access agenda; ensure a coherent approach to international agenda; develop a 3 year integrated HR plan which reflects a smaller branch with activities that have been refocused.

#### Strategic Policy Branch:

G. Meredith indicated that his branch priorities include implementation of the Western Livestock Price Insurance Program; advance the reform and modernization of the grain sector including legislative and regulatory changes and supply chain performance; development of a medium-term policy agenda to guide priority setting and generate new policy ideas to take us into the next decade; coordinate and provide policy analysis and development to address issues affecting the supply-managed and red meat sectors.

Agriculture Union asked if the policy or regulatory changes would have an effect on Health and Safety of employees or the Canadian public.

G. Meredith said there will be no impact in the workplace and that the new regulation has nothing to do with Occupational Health and Safety or with the food safety.

#### Programs Branch

T. Namiesniowski indicated that Programs Branch has 6 priorities; implement Business Risk Management programs and begin analysis for mid-term review with provincial and territorial partners; improve program performance and monitoring capabilities to enhance

service to clients and reporting of results to Canadians; ensure excellence through talent and performance management; continue to support employees in workforce transition; divestiture of AAFC Community Pastures and support of AAFC's Corporate commitments and the Government of Canada initiatives.

T. Namiesniowski also added that the Branch is very involved with Blueprint 2020 as she is one of the ADM champions.

Information Systems Branch (ISB):

M. Lessard mentioned that ISB key initiatives are: to introduce IM/IT capabilities and tools in order to enhance programs and service delivery; continue to enhance existing capabilities and services such as Library transformation; secure use of portable devices; and to support the Government standardization, including the implementation of the Email transformation Initiative readiness and of the directive on Recordkeeping.

Communications and Consultations Branch (CCB):

J. Taylor indicated that the integration of the ATIP office to CCB is now completed. Key priorities for the branch continue to focus on the support to the department in the competitiveness agenda; international strategy, trade and market access agenda and science and technology strategic direction. CCB will continue to provide core communications and consultations services to its key stakeholders internally and externally, including farmers, industry and Canadians.

**4. Blueprint 2020  
T. Sargent**

T. Sargent provided an update on Blueprint 2020 activities since last meeting in December 2013 and provided union participants with a CD containing all engagement materials, including raw data and a copy of the final report. This information is also available to all employees on our Intranet website.

Government wide, priority action is being taken in the areas of: Innovative practices and networking; Processes and empowerment; Technology; People management; and Fundamentals of Public Service;

He also emphasized that AAFC chose to move ahead before the report was released and implement a plan to focus on three cross-cutting departmental outcomes headed by three ADM champions. He then invited each champion to provide their respective updates.



### Open Communications and Better Information Flow:

G. Meredith mentioned that approximately 30 participants from across Canada and representing all branches have been divided in 3 subgroups to focus on 3 aspects: Internal Communications, Regional Perspectives and E-tools.

We are exploring ideas for short term deliverables (using Sharepoint and MS Lync more widely; sharing senior management agendas, record of decisions, encouraging dialogue with senior managers, etc.).

Particular attention is being paid to the regions and their specific needs for timely and relevant information, and looking for ways for them to be better engaged.

Longer term, we are exploring ideas to better share information (use of apps, mobile video conferencing, etc.).

This subgroup is working very closely with the collaboration subgroup as many of the ideas overlap.

### Strong collaboration and partnerships:

G. Saindon, replacing S. Mithani said that Collaboration lies at the heart of AAFC's approach to support the sector and Canadians. Our ability to collaborate productively with others (employees, peers, stakeholders, unions, clients, even competitors) is swiftly becoming a fundamental skill for thriving in our increasingly interdependent and diverse environment.

He indicated part of their action plan is to showcase successful examples of collaboration across AAFC, to recognize and celebrate employee's collaboration, to create an inventory of available collaboration tools and a better and more functional employee database.

He also talked about their goal to modernize work plans and approval processes and other ways to enhance their current task tracking system to better support a collaborative environment.

### Results-Oriented Leadership:

T. Namiesniowski summarized that her working group has identified two key outcomes they wanted to focus on: a culture where leadership is desired, expected and demonstrated at every level of the organization; and a culture of continuous improvement where employees are empowered and engaged to streamline and simplify work processes.

While recognizing that AAFC has some strong leadership practices, there will be further work done to move to an outcome where there is an inclusive management culture that is results oriented, committed to streamlined and efficient processes, and built on trust.

We have identified deliverables that could be undertaken in the short-to medium-term that would support leadership development (peer learning, pilot workshops on aspects of leadership) and raise awareness, build capacity around process methodology and pilot some initiatives.

Agriculture union indicated that it was very positive and emphasized the need to maintain good communication with employees who provided feedback in the BP 2020 exercise.

A. Lyon indicated she is very impressed by the ideas and engagement so far and she is really pleased with how much progress has been made.

**5. Community Pasture  
Program Divestiture  
T. Namiesnowski**

T. Namiesniowski indicated that the divestiture of the Community Pastures is proceeding on schedule in co-operation with the provinces of Saskatchewan and Manitoba.

**No follow up  
required**

The province of Manitoba requested to adjust the divestiture schedule in the province by accelerating divestiture by two years. AAFC agreed to this request. The decision was discussed at the CPP Workforce Adjustment Committee (as per the terms of reference) and union questions were answered.

She also reiterated Management's commitment to keep working with unions via WFA Committee.

The Agriculture Union acknowledged that the process went very well but expressed their concerns about employees having to cover the work normally done by other employees and if that will result in acting pay.

T. Namiesniowski indicated that the process is done transparently and they work closely with HR to ensure they are doing the right thing and that employees in an acting position will be remunerated accordingly.

**6. Implementation of the  
Directive on  
Performance  
Management  
C. Dunn**

Following the implementation of the new Directive, AAFC has taken a pro-active approach to insure the implementation would be done smoothly and that everyone would understand their role. Regular briefings have been provided to employees, managers and unions (HRUCC) and non-employee members of HRUCC were invited to attend the training sessions if they were interested.

**No follow up  
required**



Tools and Questions and Answers are posted on the AgriSource Performance Management pages.

Agriculture Union indicated that some employees feel that this is a new disciplinary tool.

They also indicated that employees taking leave as per their collective agreement might be penalized and gave the example of employees taking leave for union business.

A. Lyon specified that Managing Performance is not something new for AAFC as it's been done for years. She further added that this is a positive thing as it will ensure that everyone is fully aware of what is expected. The Performance Management Directive focuses on all aspects of performance from recognition of employees who exceed expectations to developing plans to help employees who are having less success meeting their objectives.

The Agriculture Union indicated that it contravenes the collective agreement if an employee's pay increment was withheld for not meeting objectives.

It was also noted that participation in joint programs, Health and Safety for example should be recognized in the Performance Agreement and this person should not be penalized as it is a corporate obligation.

The CAPE union indicated that they share the same concerns.

**7. Public Service  
Employees Survey  
(PSES)  
C. Dunn**

C. Dunn indicated that following the 2011 PSES, AAFC has provided regular updates on the progress against the departmental action plan.

**No follow up  
required**

She mentioned that a new Survey will open on August 25, 2014 and will run until September 26, 2014 and that while the response rate for the 2011 survey was 71.2%, the target for this new survey is 75%.

She emphasised the importance of this survey and highlighted the fact that the process administered electronically by Statistics Canada is confidential and all data is protected under the Statistic Act. She also specified that paper copies will be available as well as alternative formats if required.

Results will be available in March 2015.

**8. Issues submitted by Unions**

F. Murphy indicated that they have been receiving questions from employees in the EG category in Quebec. Employees have indicated that there are no more reclassifications due to job evolution from the EG-4 to EG-5. All appointments to EG-5 positions will be done through a competitive process (established pool).

F. Murphy was asked to send information to C. O'Flaherty about the situation.

**PSAC –  
F. Murphy**

F. Murphy also raised that the Employer is using Videoconferencing (VC) systems more and more for meetings. He indicated that he often receives negative feedback about all the problems it creates.

He feels that employees are not well trained and that guidelines should be develop on how to use the technology and on appropriate behaviour.

A. Lyon indicated that generally speaking technology is useful but we'll look at this issue and get back to him in the future.

M. Dyck indicated that the use of VC, especially for training sometimes make the situation difficult.

Suggestion was made: that the trainer be in a separate room, that a sign be added for privacy.

M. Lessard will consider the suggestion and see what can be done. J. Taylor will also look to see if anything has been developed on Tips and Tricks for videoconferencing.

**ADM-ISB  
A/ADM-CCB**

F. Murphy also raised the issues occurring in the Quebec Region for Regional UMC and the fact that Management participates through VC which is, in their opinion not as effective as meeting face to face.

G. Saindon will follow up on this situation.

Before ending the meeting, P. Corriveau acknowledged Agriculture Union, G. Miller's contribution to NUMCC as it was his last one and wanted to take the opportunity to wish him all the best for his retirement.



**Next meeting**

Next meeting date will be confirmed and scheduled.

**ADM CMB**

- ☐ Discussion required
- ☒ I concur
- ☐ I do not concur
- ☐ I concur with changes:

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Andrea Lyon  
NOV 10 2014

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