

**BC Public Service
Agency**

**2007/08
Annual Service Plan Report**



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Message from the Minister and Accountability Statement

It is my pleasure to present the 2007/08 Service Plan Report for the BC Public Service Agency. The role of the Public Service Agency is to provide leadership in human resource management and services to ministries and to facilitate the achievement of public service excellence in order to realize the government's Five Great Goals.

This year is one where I'm pleased to say we've accomplished a number of exciting things; perhaps most notable is our recognition as one of British Columbia's top employers. Mediacorp's evaluation placed us in the Top Forty best places to work. With approximately 30,000 employees in ministries and agencies throughout British Columbia, this is a triumph indeed.

Our own internal surveys support this, reflecting a significant increase in job satisfaction. The BC Public Service work environment survey for 2008 had the highest response rate yet — 82 per cent. The findings also show an eight point increase in engagement over 2006 findings, a statistically significant achievement.

Through our corporate Human Resources Plan 'Being the Best' and Corporate Employment Brand "Where Ideas Work" we continue to both position the BC Public Service as an employer who values innovation and seeks out new ideas, while continuing to build capacity and increase competitiveness.

This year the Premier recognized more employees than ever before through an expanded Premier's Innovation and Excellence Awards that included events in each of the regions as well as a provincial awards ceremony. At that pinnacle event, attended by almost 600 employees, guests and elected officials, Premier Campbell presented awards in seven categories profiling some exceptional talent.

To support public servants to rise to excellence, this year the Pacific Leaders program was enhanced to provide full coverage for books and tuition up to \$5,000 for undergraduate programs, and up to \$7,500 for graduate programs. The program has provided more than 670 scholarships to employees to date.

We recognize that welcoming new employees is as important as supporting those already in service. That is why we're offering an enhanced 'Welcome to the Public Service' session, combining a half day orientation to government with a memorable Oath of Employment ceremony, highlighting the responsibilities associated with being a public service employee. This corporate Oath and Orientation program will be offered four times a year in all four regions of the province during 2008/09 as part of the Corporate HR strategy's effort to retain new public service employees.

Through the new Aboriginal internship program, 15 Aboriginal youth were welcomed to their new roles in the public service in September 2007, have since shared their skills on a wide variety of projects, and moved on to three months work experience with Aboriginal organizations. We look forward to the next group of interns this Fall.

As Minister responsible, I believe this plan will contribute to a public service of the highest standard. The *2007/08 BC Public Service Agency Annual Service Plan Report* compares the actual results to the expected results identified in the Agency's September 2007 update of the *2006/07 – 2007/08 Service Plan*. I am accountable for those results as reported.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ida Chong". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Honourable Ida Chong, FCGA
Minister of Community Services

June 20, 2008

Table of Contents

Message from the Minister and Accountability Statement	3
Highlights of the Year	7
Purpose of Agency	9
Strategic Context	10
Report on Performance	12
Performance Plan Summary Table	13
Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Performance Results	15
Goal 1: Government is supported by a professional public service that has the knowledge, skills and abilities to achieve current and future objectives	15
Report on Resources	25
Resource Summary Table	25
Annual Service Plan Report Appendices	26
Appendix A: Hyperlinks to Additional Information	26
Appendix B: Ministry Contact Information	27

Highlights of the Year

It is the role of the BC Public Service Agency to provide leadership in human resource management and services to ministries that will facilitate the achievement of public service excellence in order to realize all of the Five Great Goals.

Related accomplishments in 2007/08 include the following:

- **We're In the Top Forty** — For the first time the BC Public Service has been corporately recognized as being one of British Columbia's top employers. According to Mediacorp, the group that organizes this particular top employer list, in addition to being the largest employer in the province we are also one of the best places to work. This evaluation considers factors such as our benefits package, pension program, and support for training and development. Programs such as the Pacific Leaders Program have helped set us apart from other employers. Our unique employee recognition programs including the Premier's Innovation and Excellence Awards also helped us make this list.
- **Corporate Human Resources Plan** — In collaboration with the Deputy Ministers Council, the Agency coordinated the development of our updated Corporate Human Resource Plan "Being the Best". The second edition of this plan reinforces the collective efforts that will be made to continue to build capacity, increase competitiveness, and manage for results, facilitating the transformation from a great organization to the Best.
- **Corporate Employment Brand** — "Where Ideas Work" is the new employment brand of the BC Public Service and is managed by the Agency's Hiring Strategy and Services Branch. This employment brand supports the Corporate Human Resources Plan, that aims to position ourselves as an employer who values innovation and seeks out new ideas.
- **Premier's Innovation and Excellence Awards** — The Fourth Premier's Innovation and Excellence Awards Ceremony and Dinner was held on March 10, 2008, at the Victoria Conference Centre. Almost 600 employees, elected officials, and guests were in attendance and even more at the four regional ceremonies. Recipients in seven categories were recognized, including Innovation, Leadership, Organizational Excellence, Partnership, Service Excellence, Cross-Governmental Integration and the newly introduced Legacy Category. These awards are intended to highlight and reinforce progressive management practices within the BC Public Service and recognize innovation, leadership, and new ideas to improve service delivery. Agency staff led the implementation of these events and ensured that all attendees felt appreciated for their contributions and achievements.
- **Pacific Leaders Program** — Administered by the BC Public Service Agency, the Pacific Leaders program has provided 671 scholarships to employees to date. In 2008, this program was enhanced to provide 100 per cent coverage for books and tuition up to \$5,000 for undergraduate programs, and up to \$7,500 for graduate programs.

- **Corporate Oath and Orientation Program** — In October, the new Oath and Orientation Program developed by the Agency was launched. “Welcome to the Public Service” has two components. The first part of the day provides an overview about the structure, roles and features of government and the public service. The second part is the new formal Oath of Employment ceremony that serves to reinforce the importance of taking the oath and highlights the responsibilities associated with being a public service employee. This program will take place quarterly in all four regions of the province in 2008/09 as part of the Corporate HR Strategy’s commitment to retain new public service employees.
- **Aboriginal Interns Welcomed** — The new Aboriginal internship program welcomed 15 Aboriginal youth to their new roles in the BC Public Service in September 2007. Successful applicants have been placed by the Agency in nine different government ministries for nine months of work experience, to be immediately followed by three months of work experience in Aboriginal organizations.
- **Cold and Flu prevention** — Our cold and flu prevention strategy, managed by the Agency, reinforced personal protective health practices across our workforce. 37% (1,400) of Public Service employees received influenza vaccinations.
- **My Health Matters** — The Agency continues to develop innovative new programs to improve the health of employees in the public service. 2,377 employees were involved in preventive health pilot projects including health risk assessments (1,083 completed) direct nursing risk assessments (581) and 267 employees with increased health risks were involved in health coaching follow-up. A cross-ministry regional health promotion pilot called ‘My Health Matters’ is supporting all employees in Kamloops and Nanaimo with preventive health programming.
- **Quittin Time** — 1,000 employees and their family members enrolled in a quit smoking attempt through Quittin’ Time smoking cessation program. Supported by Ministry of Health and ActNow BC the Agency administers this innovative program links extended health support to comprehensive pre and post quitting professional counselling support.

Purpose of Agency

Our mandate is to provide human resource leadership for the ministries, agencies and the employees working to serve British Columbians. We take pride in serving our customers and clients so they can create a work environment where all public servants can excel.

The BC Public Services Agency is accountable to the Deputy Ministers Council to provide cost effective service on day-to-day transactional activities to our clients and customers in the public service. In addition, we are called upon to play a strategic role in supporting the BC Public Service to realize its vision of becoming a more dynamic and rewarding place to work than ever before — one that is recognized as the employer of choice across the country.

With more than 400 employees, the BC Public Service Agency is one of the largest human resources organizations in British Columbia. We are bound by a singular commitment to make the BC Public Service the best public service employer in Canada. Our Agency employees work in eight cities across the province, in Abbotsford, Burnaby, Kamloops, Nanaimo, Nelson, Prince George, Vancouver and Victoria. Our people have deep knowledge and specialized skills and represent the best human resource professionals in the country.

Strategic Context

Planning Context and Key Strategic Issues

The BC Public Service is the largest corporate workforce in the province, serving over 280 communities across British Columbia. From frontline workers to accountants and architects, researchers and analysts, to information technology professionals and others, there is virtually no area of expertise unrepresented. Public servants provide a wide range of services to British Columbians including health care, public safety, education, and environmental management, to name a few.

The government's strategic plan calls for the achievement of Five Great Goals for a Golden Decade to realize the long-term vision for British Columbia as a prosperous and just province, whose citizens achieve their full potential and have confidence in the future. The BC Public Service is vital to making government's goals a reality. The ongoing provision of these services is challenged by a number of internal and external factors that are helping to change human resource management policies and practices in the BC Public Service.

Internal Factors

- **Maintaining a healthy balance of exits and entrants** — By 2011, it is projected that exits from the BC Public Service will outnumber entrants. An astounding 42 per cent of public service managers and 31 per cent of unionized employees are expected to retire during the next ten years. If the BC public service is unable to increase its proportion of the growth of the labour force in the future, the size of the public service could shrink significantly, which will have unprecedented implications on how the public service operates and how it delivers services in the future.
- **Renewing the workforce** — Historically, nine out of ten vacancies in the BC Public Service were filled with internal candidates. Given the number of projected retirements in the next few years, this practice is unsustainable. The policy change opening all competitions to the public resulted in 23 per cent external hires in fiscal year 2006/07. This share has increased to 26 per cent in 2007/08. The average age of newly hired staff has decreased from 38.1 years to 36.5 in 2007/08. Currently the proportion of BC public service employees under the age of 30 is smaller than the proportion of the BC labour force that is under the age of 30; there is an opportunity for the BC Public Service to increase our market share in this segment of the labour force.
- **Encouraging mature employees to work longer** — The first of the Baby Boom generation in Canada turned age 60 in 2006. This is leading to an overall aging population and within the BC Public Service in particular. There is an upcoming wave of expected retirements; over the next ten years we will see our annual number of retirements doubling, resulting in one-third of the current public service retiring over ten years. At the same time, the average retirement age has gradually declined over time (ten years ago, the average retirement age from the BC Public Service was 59.1 years; in 2007/08, the average retirement age dropped to 57.9 years).

This, together with the elimination of mandatory retirement at age 65, has huge implications for the BC Public Service in terms of succession planning and knowledge management. As a result, the BC Public Service is developing an action plan to stay in touch with our alumni, to keep high performing retirement eligible employees engaged and working in the BC Public Service, and to attract retired public service employees back to work.

- **Recruitment and retention in the north and remote communities** — There is long standing and systemic problems among all employers in recruiting and retaining staff outside of urban centres. The BC Public Service must compete for and attract staff to remote communities in order to provide high quality services to citizens and clients. The Public Service Agency is working closely with regionally-based staff across a number of ministries to develop concrete actions to bring BC Public Service benefits in isolated communities in line with other public and private sector employers.
- **Projected skills for the future are shifting** — The competencies and skill sets needed from employees in the future will be different than the competencies and skills of our employees of yesterday and today. The BC Public Service will need to be an agile and creative employer to respond to and keep abreast of these changes.

External Factors

- **Competition for talent** — The search for talent has become a global competition. The BC Public Service needs to look locally, nationally and globally for talent and recognize that our large pools are potential sources for other employers.
- By 2015, the demand for workers is projected to increase by 50 per cent in some sectors.
- Based on the demand for skilled resources, candidates can afford to be more selective and will choose organizations that provide an engaging work environment, good career, learning and development opportunities, and competitive salaries and benefits.
- **Demographic shift** — In British Columbia, falling birth rates and a growing/changing economy is leading to increased competition for labour in all sectors of the province. This has been intensified by our aging population that is causing the labour force to shrink; one in four individuals is now over the age of 65.
- **Employment rate** — In 2007, the province's employed population grew faster than its labour force, causing the annual unemployment rate to fall to 4.2 per cent. This drop of 0.6 percentage points from 2006 resulted in the lowest annual unemployment rate in 30 years. By 2009, the annual growth rate of the overall BC population will exceed the growth rate of BC's working age population and continue to outpace it for at least the next twenty years.
- Over the next ten years, B.C. is expected to have one million job openings — 350,000 more openings than people graduating from high school.
- **Awareness of public service career opportunities** — Many eligible employees were previously unaware of career opportunities within the BC Public Service. The "Where Ideas Work" brand has helped to raise our profile and compete successfully for talent against the private sector and other public sector jurisdictions.

Report on Performance

The government's Strategic Plan calls for the achievement of Five Great Goals that are intended to achieve a long term vision for British Columbia — a prosperous and just province, whose citizens achieve their full potential and have confidence in the future. To achieve this there needs to be a strong and nimble public service that strives to be the leader in Canada and recognized internationally for public service excellence.

The drive toward service excellence requires every employee to challenge the status quo, to look for ways to improve performance in the organization and to turn good ideas into action. Improving the way the BC Public Service operates requires a workforce that is engaged, an ability to attract and retain top talent, flexibility to adjust to emerging priorities, an ability to grow and share knowledge freely, and collaboration across various business units. Public servants are more likely to recommend the BC Public Service as a great place to work and be prepared to move beyond the status quo if they feel energized, inspired by their leaders and valued for the contributions that they make.

The following performance summary reports the results of the public service overall.

Performance Plan Summary Table

Goal 1: Government is supported by a professional public service that has the knowledge, skills and abilities to achieve current and future objectives. For greater detail see pages 15 to 17	2007/08 Target	2007/08 Actual
1.1 The recruitment policy, process, and tools in the B.C. provincial government facilitate hiring of highly competent employees. 1.2 The B.C. provincial government is recognized as an attractive employer.		
Per cent of competition audits that confirm individuals were appointed to the public service based on merit.	100%	96% SUBSTANTIALLY ACHIEVED
Goal 2: The public service promotes a safe and healthy workplace that supports the well-being of employees. For greater detail see pages 17 to 19	2007/08 Target	2007/08 Actual
2.1 Safe workplaces. 2.2 Safe and timely returns to work for individuals who are ill or injured. 2.3 Healthy and productive work environments.		
Per cent of employees who say that a safe and healthy workplace exists in my work unit.	75	74 SUBSTANTIALLY ACHIEVED
Goal 3: The public service is a versatile workforce that can adapt to meet changing needs. For greater detail see pages 19 to 21	2007/08 Target	2007/08 Actual
3.1 Refocus our investments in learning to accelerate the development of people for key roles across the public service. 3.2 Provide structured means to share knowledge across the organization. 3.3 Foster continuous learning across the organization.		
Per cent of employees who report their organization supports their work related training, learning and development.	75%	62% NOT ACHIEVED

Goal 4: Public service employees understand their roles, how their work contributes to achieving the goals of government, and are focused on results.	2007/08 Target	2007/08 Actual
For greater detail see pages 21 to 24		
4.1 Employee engagement is measured, addressed and improved. Employee engagement in the public service.	Further Improvement	66 ACHIEVED
4.2 Employees receive a strong orientation to their jobs and the public service. Percentage of employees who understand how their work contributes to achieving Service Plan objectives.	70	66 SUBSTANTIALLY ACHIEVED
4.3 Facilitate performance management best practices. Percentage of employees who have had a formal performance review in the last year.	100%	86% SUBSTANTIALLY ACHIEVED

Goal 5: BC Public Service employees exhibit the highest standards of conduct.	2007/08 Target	2007/08 Actual
For greater detail see pages 24 to 25		
5.1 Ensure all employees fully understand their roles and obligations as public servants. Percentage of employees who understand their responsibilities and obligations as a public servant.	90%	91% ACHIEVED

Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Performance Results

Goal 1: Government is supported by a professional public service that has the knowledge, skills and abilities to achieve current and future objectives

The B.C. Public Service faces a potential labour shortage brought on by an aging population and increasing competition in the marketplace. At the same time the public service is undergoing significant transformation and will need to ensure the right skills are available in the right place at the right time to deliver critical public services. To attract high-quality applicants, the BC Public Service must not just be visible in the labour market but considered an attractive employer. This goal is vital to ensure the continuation of a high-quality public service. It supplements the corporate human resource goal of improving our competitiveness.

Objective 1.1: The recruitment policy, process and tools in the B.C. provincial government facilitate hiring of highly competent employees

Faster decision-making and more effective recruitment is necessary to support and deliver government's business goals.

Strategies

Key strategies for this objective include:

- Facilitate Workforce Planning activities across government and lead the implementation of revised Corporate Human Resource plan;
- Facilitate targeted recruitment campaigns; and
- Provide training and tools to support managers to make sound hiring decisions.

Objective 1.2: The B.C. provincial government is recognized as an attractive employer

Consistent with Goal 2 of the Corporate Human Resources Plan, the BC Public Service will need to continue to improve its competitiveness so that it can vie with the private sector for talented people to meet its workforce needs now and in the future. Establishing a higher profile in the external marketplace through marketing and recruitment efforts form one part of a larger, multi-faceted human resource strategy to address the projected workforce challenges.

Strategies

- Ongoing marketing and branding program to raise the visibility and appeal of government as an employer.
- Increased career advertising to heighten awareness of employment opportunities within the public service.

Performance Results

Performance Measure	2005/06 Actual	2006/07 Actual	2007/08 Target	2007/08 Actual
Per cent of competition audits that confirm individuals were appointed to the public service based on merit.	97.1%	96%	100%	96% ¹ SUBSTANTIALLY ACHIEVED

Data Source: Office of the Merit Commissioner 2006/07 Annual Report — The report is available at www.meritcomm.bc.ca/reports/2006_2007AnnualReport.pdf.

¹ Based on preliminary results for the Office of the Merit Commissioner.

Discussion of Results

Merit means that appointments will be non-partisan and made on the basis of an assessment of competence and ability to do the job. The *Public Service Act* states that the matters to be considered in determining merit must, having regard to the nature of the duties to be performed, include the applicant's education, skills, knowledge, experience, past work performance and years of continuous service in the public service. The Merit Commissioner monitors the application of the merit principle in the BC Public Service. Random audits examine whether appointments are the result of a merit-based process and that the individuals appointed are competent and qualified to do the job. Merit is also monitored by reviewing appointments on request for employee applicants who believe that the merit principle was not applied to specific appointments for bargaining unit positions.

Results for 2006 were not available when last years service plan report was published. The Merit Commissioners' audit found 96 per cent of appointments were based on the merit principle. This audit represented 8 per cent of all in-scope appointments made in 2006. Of the 308 appointments audited, the Merit Commissioner found only nine cases where merit was not applied in the process. It is important to note that even in the instances where the process was found to be flawed, the audit confirmed that the individual(s) appointed were qualified for the job. No appointments were found to be made based on patronage.

The audit for 2007 will be the largest audit of appointments undertaken by the Office of the Merit Commissioner. A random sample consisting of 10 per cent of the 5,752 appointments made in 2007 is being audited. Results are expected to be released in the summer of 2008. The preliminary audit result of 96 per cent indicates that public service appointments continue to be made based on merit.

Goal 2: The public service promotes a safe and healthy workplace that supports the well-being of employees

Objective 2.1: Safe workplaces

Maintaining a safe workplace promotes the well-being of employees and helps to ensure the uninterrupted provision of provincial programs and services.

Strategies

- Develop an occupational safety strategic plan for the BC Public Service;
- Provide client organizations the direction, knowledge, tools and support necessary to implement and maintain effective safety management programs; and
- Enhance safety reporting.

Objective 2.2: Safe and timely returns to work for individuals who are ill or injured

The Government of British Columbia is committed to providing an efficient and effective public service and recognizes the importance of managing health-related absences to enhance this commitment.

Strategies

- Continuous improvement to the Disability Case Management function so that clients and employees receive the best possible service; and
- Implement enhanced reporting for clients.

Objective 2.3: Healthy and productive work environments

Strategies

- Evaluate needs and develop a health strategy proposal for the public service.
- Develop and implement appropriate workplace programs and tools to help reduce health risks.
- Assess needs and implement regular reporting.

Performance Results

Performance Measure	2005/06 Actual	2006/07 Actual	2007/08 Target	2007/08 Actual
Per cent of employees who say that a safe and healthy workplace exists in my work unit. ¹	62	66	75	74 SUBSTANTIALLY ACHIEVED

Data Source: BC Public Service Work Environment Survey conducted by BC Stats.

¹ The data source for this measure has been expanded to better reflect the outcomes that it is intended to measure. This measure is now based upon the average of the following two questions from the annual Work Environment Survey; "The physical security of my workplace is satisfactory"; and "A healthy atmosphere (e.g. trust, mutual respect) exists in my work unit."

Discussion of Results

The B.C. Government's investment in employee health and safety helps to foster a healthy and engaged workforce. Our benefits package is similar to other large employers and is a key factor in the attraction and retention of qualified employees.

The BC Public Service Agency has developed a fully integrated disability case management model that ensures timely deployment of the resources and expertise needed to help facilitate safe, timely and sustainable returns to work. Services include all aspects of benefit administration from claim administration to case strategies, planning and implementation, medical case management, return to work planning, job training and vocational rehabilitation for ill and injured employees.

In 2007, the number of work days lost due to illness (8.5 days per FTE) for employees appointed under the *Public Service Act* was less than the benchmark for Canadian public sector employers (10.4 per FTE.) This represents \$7.2 million in avoided costs for ministry operations. The BC Public Service illness absence rate is also lower than the benchmark for large (greater than 500 employees) private and public sector employers (9.7 days per FTE — \$4.6 million avoided costs.)

The Agency continues to develop innovative programs to help support employee health. In 2007/08, 1,000 employees and their family members enrolled in a quit smoking attempt through the newly introduced Quittin' Time smoking cessation program. Supported by the Ministry of Health and ActNow BC this program links extended health support to comprehensive pre and post quit professional counselling support.

2,377 employees were involved in preventive health pilot projects including health risk assessments (1,083 completed) direct nursing risk assessments (581). As a result, 267 employees with increased health risks are involved health coaching follow-up. A cross-ministry regional health promotion pilot called 'My Health Matters' is supporting all employees in Kamloops and Nanaimo with preventive health programming.

A cold and flu prevention strategy reinforced personal protective health practices across the workforce and 37 per cent (1400) of the Public Service employees received influenza vaccinations. An evaluation of employee population health risks and health benefit performance was completed for each ministry to support targeting further preventive health interventions.

Goal 3: The public service is a versatile workforce that can adapt to meet changing needs

Public service work is predominantly knowledge work and employees of government are predominantly knowledge workers. Knowledge is different from every other historical means of production. It becomes obsolete rapidly. It cannot be inherited. It must be acquired at the individual level. In a knowledge society, a person's and the organization's ability to acquire and share knowledge is their most important competency. Accordingly, one of the most important investments the government can make is an investment in its employees — its human capital.

Objective 3.1: Refocus our investments in learning to accelerate the development of people for key roles across the public service

Strategies

- Target learning to key and critical roles such as finance and management streams.
- Implement a comprehensive succession management program to prepare employees for new assignments across the organization.
- Target developmental assignments to areas of highest need. This approach is a key component of accelerated leadership development used to broaden skill sets and develop executive competencies.

Objective 3.2: Provide structured means to share knowledge across the organization

Given the volatile nature of knowledge and pending succession challenges faced by the government, the transfer of knowledge for reuse, awareness and training is an essential element of government's desire to build internal capacity and keep pace with social, economic, and technological changes.

Strategies

- Implement initiatives designed to improve the transfer of knowledge and the sharing of best practices, such as “Communities of Practice” — a forum used by staff to learn from the experiences of colleagues.

Objective 3.3: Foster continuous learning across the organization

In competitive and fast moving environments, complacency and rigidity are fatal. Learning promotes perspective and innovation and is a key driver of change. Empirical studies in both public and private sector organizations have shown that learning investments produce substantial economic returns to organizations through reduced costs, increased efficiencies and other direct and indirect benefits that improve the performance and competitiveness of the organization.

Strategies

- Balance the focus of employee learning between formal and informal opportunities to learn job-related skills.

Performance Results

Performance Measure	2005/06 Actual	2006/07 Actual	2007/08 Target	2007/08 Actual
Per cent of employees who report their organization supports their work related training, learning and development.	58%	60%	75%	62% NOT ACHIEVED

Data Source: BC Public Service Work Environment Survey conducted by BC Stats.

Discussion of Results

The partnership approach to the provision of learning opportunities will help government invest in its people and build capacity. The agency will continue to work with ministry staff at all levels from executives to line level staff to ensure that all employees have the opportunity for continuous learning and knowledge sharing. New learning and training opportunities as well as specialized learning and development programs are continuing to be targeted towards critical positions identified by ministries as being “at-risk”. The Agency will continue to work with the Deputy Ministers’ Council to address learning and development issues.

Agency Response

The recent update to the Corporate Human Resources plan included a commitment to “better regional accessibility to key leadership training programs.” In support of this objective, leadership training has been expanded to include offerings in regional centers like Kamloops, Prince George

and Fort St. John. The Agency will continue to work with regional offices to identify and deliver workshops or one-day seminars where they are needed most. In addition, as part of the Agency's efforts to recruit and retain employees in northern and remote communities, more training is being made available in those employees' home communities.

Goal 4: Public service employees understand their roles, how their work contributes to achieving the goals of government, and are focused on results

A public service striving for service excellence and innovation requires a workforce that is engaged, flexible to adjust to emerging priorities and supported to get the right results. Performance management practices vary widely across government and better tools to support ministries in managing performance across the public service are required. This goal is intended to ensure employee understanding of their roles and to focus their contributions to most effectively support the organization's goals and objectives.

Objective 4.1: Employee engagement is measured, addressed and improved

Research shows that organizations with more engaged employees tend to outperform organizations with less engaged employees. In the private sector, highly engaged organizations tend to be more productive and profitable, experience less turnover and absenteeism, and retain more employees. By measuring employee engagement in the BC Public Service and developing specific, targeted strategies to improve annual results, management hopes to strengthen the work environment, consistent with goal three of the Corporate Human Resource Strategy, *Being the Best*. The ultimate aim is to make the BC Public Service a more productive workforce — one that results in better public services.

Strategies

- Implement annual Work Environment Survey, which measures employee engagement and develop strategies to address issues that arise out of the survey results.
- Benchmark employee engagement across Canada.
- Identify best practices and disseminate a toolkit to assist ministries with improving employee satisfaction and commitment.

Objective 4.2: Employees receive a strong orientation to their jobs and the public service

New employee orientation helps to effectively integrate a new employee into the work environment; assists with retention, motivation, and job satisfaction; and enables the individual to become a contributing member of the work team. Orientation contributes to productivity through employee engagement; it promotes clarity from the moment of hiring and helps to establish loyalty.

Strategy

- In support of this objective, the new employee Oath and Orientation program that provides a better overview to the roles and responsibilities of public service employees was introduced.

Objective 4.3: Facilitate performance management best practices

Employee performance management is a process a manager and employee participate in throughout the year. The process and supporting tools encourage an approach that increases success in achieving business goals.

Strategies

- Provide tools to improve how government manages employee performance.
- Align employee performance management processes with government strategic and business planning processes.

Performance Results

Performance Measure	2005/06 Actual	2006/07 Actual	2007/08 Target	2007/08 Actual
Employee engagement in the public service.	58	63	Further improvement	66 ACHIEVED
Percentage of employees who understand how their work contributes to achieving service plan objectives.	61	70	70	66 SUBSTANTIALLY ACHIEVED
Percentage of employees who have had a formal performance review in the last year.	62%	70%	100%	86% SUBSTANTIALLY ACHIEVED

Data Source: BC Public Service Work Environment Survey conducted by BC Stats.

Discussion of Results

Each year the BC Public Service measures employee engagement through the Work Environment Survey. An engaged employee is a person who is fully involved in, and enthusiastic about, his or her work. Ratings for each element of engagement (commitment, organizational satisfaction, and job satisfaction) are averaged based on a 100-point scale.

Keeping in mind that employee engagement is a long-term commitment to people it will take time to affect and sustain cultural change. The Agency is very encouraged by the improvement to the engagement rating in the past year. Incremental improvements to employee engagement are anticipated to continue on an annual basis. The BC Public Service is committed to continually increasing employee engagement.

Agency Response

The target for the second measure, *percentage of employees who understand how their work contributes to achieving Service Plan objectives*, was substantially achieved. Helping employees understand how their work contributes to achieving service plan objectives is important as it promotes teamwork, commitment, job satisfaction, and organizational satisfaction. All provincial ministries and agencies will continue to strive for improvements to this measure during the next fiscal year.

The need for performance reviews is a mandatory requirement within the BC Public Service that has gained greater awareness among government employees. Organizations that have reached 100 per cent of all employees with performance reviews have reported that achieving these targets can take from one to three years to realize. In support of this goal, the Agency has implemented a corporate online e-performance system. This performance management system supports and reinforces a consistent approach to performance management across the BC Public Service and creates a direct connection for each employee to their organization's service plan goals. As this tool becomes widely adopted cross-government future improvement is anticipated.

Goal 5: Public Service employees exhibit the highest standards of conduct

The BC Public Service is held to a high standard due to its responsibility to the citizens of British Columbia. In order to ensure the standard is met, individual public servants must be keenly aware of the expectations of them in terms of their work and conduct on the job.

Objective 5.1: Ensure all employees fully understand their roles and obligations as public servants

Strategies

- Implement an annual program for all employees to ensure their understanding of and commitment to the standards expected of all public servants.

Performance Results

Performance Measure	2006/07 Target	2007/08 Target	2007/08 Actual
Per cent of employees who understand their responsibilities and obligations as a public servant. ¹	New Measure	90% ²	91% ACHIEVED

¹ Future performance in relation to this goal will be measured based on the number of new employees who complete the Oath and Orientation program within the first six months of their employment.

² The target for this measure has been revised.

Discussion of Results

In 2007/08, the BC Public Service Agency embarked on a province-wide Oath and Orientation program in support of this goal. Each new employee is invited to go through a one-day orientation program called “Welcome to the Public Service”. This program formally welcomes new employees and provides an overview of the structure, roles and features of government, the public service and key government priorities. An important component of the day includes an overview of the formal accountabilities associated with being a public service employee and the Oath of Employment ceremony. Partnered with an existing employee or a “buddy”, new employees take the Oath of Employment. It is also an opportunity for existing employees to reaffirm their oath as a member of the BC Public Service.

Nine sessions have now been conducted in Prince George, Kamloops, Vancouver and Victoria — six in 2007/08 and another three in the first two months of 2008/09. In total, approximately 750 new employees have attended the program. Another 640 existing employees¹ have attended as buddies. 91 per cent reported to have attended a session within six months of joining the BC Public Service. Here are other highlights:

- 90 per cent agree or strongly agree that Oath Ceremony was a meaningful part of their orientation to the BC Public Service.
- 89 per cent agree or strongly agree that Oath Ceremony affirmed or strengthen their sense of pride in the BC Public Service.
- 79 per cent reported considerable or extensive increase in their understanding of what is expected of them as a public service employee.

The BC Public Service Agency will continue expand this program across the province as a way to reinforce to employees, both new and existing, the importance of exhibiting the highest standards of conduct.

¹ Some employees have found this to be an extremely rewarding experience and have signed up to be a buddy for more than one session.

Report on Resources

Resource Summary Table

Core Business Areas	Estimated ¹	Other Authorizations	Total Estimated	Actual	Variance
Operating Expenses (\$000)					
Business Transformation	9	0	9	718	709
Client Services	4,866	0	4,866	2,493	(2,373)
Talent Management	1,749	0	1,749	4,312	2,563
Employee Relations.....	260	0	260	500	240
Compensation, Benefits and Policy	4,275	14,826	19,101	16,330	(2,771)
Executive and Support Services.....	1,074	0	1,074	2,706	1,632
Total	12,233	14,826	27,059	27,059	0
Full-time Equivalents (FTEs)					
Business Transformation	10	0	10	25	15
Client Services	187	0	187	271	84
Talent Management	18	0	18	51	33
Employee Relations.....	35	0	35	28	(7)
Compensation, Benefits and Policy	108	0	108	0	(108)
Executive and Support Services.....	5	0	5	14	9
Total	363	0	363	389	26
Ministry Capital Expenditures (Consolidated Revenue Fund) (\$000)					
Business Transformation	1,299	0	1,299	1	(1,298)
Client Services	0	0	0	110	110
Talent Management	0	0	0	11	11
Employee Relations.....	0	0	0	22	22
Compensation, Benefits and Policy	0	0	0	0	0
Executive and Support Services.....	270	0	270	201	(69)
Sub-total	1,569	0	1,569	345	(1,224)
Adjustment of Prior Year's Accrual	0	0	0	(146)	(146)
Total	1,569	0	1,569	199	(1,370)

¹ Contingencies accessed to fund LTD program.

Annual Service Plan Report Appendices

Appendix A: Hyperlinks to Additional Information

For more information about job opportunities in the BC Public Service please visit:
www.employment.gov.bc.ca/

For more information about the Pacific Leaders program please visit:
www.pacificleaders.gov.bc.ca/

For more information about Quittin'Time our newly introduced smoking cessation program for employees of the BC Public Service, their spouses and dependents please visit:
www.quittintime.gov.bc.ca/

For more information about Being the Best: the Corporate Human Resources Plan for the BC Public Service please visit: www.employment.gov.bc.ca/documents/HRPlan_2008.pdf

For more information about the Office on the Merit Commissioner please visit:
www.meritcomm.bc.ca/

For Agency locations and contact information please visit:
www.bcbudget.gov.bc.ca/2008/sp/bcpsa/default.html#6

Appendix B: Ministry Contact Information

For more information please visit our website:

www.bcpublicserviceagency.gov.bc.ca/

Head Office: Victoria

810 Blanshard Street
V8W 2H2
PO Box 9404 Stn Prov Govt
V8W 9V1
Phone: 250 387-0518

Vancouver Island Region — Client Services

Nanaimo
Suite 503
345 Wallace Street
V9R 5B6
Phone: 250 741-5472
Fax: 250 741-5475

Victoria
Third Floor
940 Blanshard Street
PO Box 9481
V8W 2H3
Phone: 250 356-1500
Fax: 250 387-0886

Northern Region — Client Services

Prince George
Fifth Floor
500 - 1011 – 4th Avenue
V2L 3H9
Switchboard Phone: 250 565-4242
Fax: 250 565-4180
Hiring Services Unit Phone: 250 565-4180
Fax: 250 565-4376

South Coast Region — Client Services

Abbotsford

220 - 2881 Garden Street

V2T 4X1

Phone: 604 557-1700

Fax: 604 504-4113

Burnaby

Suite 204

204 - 4940 Canada Way

V5G 5K6

Phone: 604 660-3900

Fax: 604 660-3994

Vancouver

Eighth Floor

865 Hornby Street

V6Z 2G3

Phone: 604 660-0828

Fax: 604 660-0457

Southern Interior Region — Client Services

Kamloops

167 Lorne Street

V2C 1V9

Phone: 250 371-4330

Fax: 250 377-4472

Nelson

Second Floor

310 Ward Street

V1L 5S4

Phone: 250 354-6161

Fax: 250 354-6224