

**GOVERNMENT OF CANADA**

PA 166852

**WORK DESCRIPTION**

TITLE: Director Parliamentary Affairs  
NUMBER: 166852  
GROUP: Policy INCUMBENT: Vacant  
LOCATION: Ottawa/NCR  
CLASS/LEVEL: EX-01 DATE: 4 August 2005  
DEPARTMENT: National Defence

**General Accountability**

The Director Parliamentary Affairs, (D Parl A), is accountable for supporting the Minister, the Deputy Minister and the Chief of the Defence Staff in the exercise of executive authority within a large and diverse department characterized by its overall size, dispersion, duality of staff and culture, civilian and military, and complexity of its programs and their operational components.

The position is expected to design, implement and manage a Parliamentary Briefing System that assesses and monitors the current and pending business in Parliament and determines its impact on the Minister and the Department of National Defence. The Director analyzes the items, and drafts and provides relevant briefing material and notes in a highly charged, often sensitive and urgent environment for the Minister, the DM/CDS, to enhance their participation in Parliamentary Committees and to maximize the preparation of the Minister for Question Period.

The Director Parliamentary Affairs assumes the functional liaison with Parliament, and must consult regularly with the staff of, and when required the Minister, Deputy Minister and Chief of the Defence Staff, concerning mandate and operational issues, and brings to their attention, issues which can directly affect and are of concern to the Department and the Minister.

The position embodies a high degree of knowledge of the policies being pursued by the Department, the activities of each Group principal within the Department, intra and interdepartmental mechanisms that enable the position to facilitate the accountability and decision making of the Minister and the DM/CDS.

This policy sense and political acumen is essential when liaising with senior officials in other government departments, PMO, PCO, TBS and with the Group Principals and other Senior Officials within the Department of National Defence.

## **ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE**

This position is one of three positions reporting to the Assistant Deputy Minister Policy, ADM(Pol), through the DG Policy Coordination at the third level to the Deputy Minister. The others are the Director Cabinet Liaison, (D Cab Ln), and the Director Public Policy, (D Pub Pol).

### **Dedicated Staff**

Reporting to the Director Parliamentary Affairs are two Section Heads (AS-07 and AS-06), four Parliamentary Affairs Officers (AS-05), a Researcher (CR-04), a Secretary (SCY-3), and up to four AS-05's/Policy Interns.

One Section Head focuses on providing specialized briefing material for the Minister in order to prepare the Minister for Parliamentary responsibilities with a particular focus on Question Period. The other Section Head works to ensure that the Minister's Office is aware of Parliamentary proceedings that may affect the defence portfolio and closely monitors the work of Parliamentary committees.

The Parliamentary Affairs Officers are responsible for monitoring Parliamentary agenda items within their respective portfolio. Currently they are structured as follows:

One (1) is responsible for ADM (Materiel) issues including procurement, defence industry and foreign military sales, Vice Chief of Defence Staff issues, and issues pertaining to ADM (Science and Technology) and ADM (Information Management);

One (1) is responsible for ADM (Infrastructure and Environment) issues including housing, ADM (Finance and Corporate Services) issues including the budget, internal audits by the Chief of Review Services and external audits by the Office of the Auditor General;

One (1) is responsible for Canadian Forces operations and intelligence issues, defence policy issues, and issues pertaining to the Chief of the Defence Staff (CDS) including transformation and the CDS annual report;

One (1) is responsible for ADM (Human Resources-Military) and ADM (Human Resources-Civilian) issues including recruitment and retention, and official languages, as well as the Ombudsman, the Judge Advocate General, the Provost Marshal and the Grievance Board;

### **Dedicated Staff (Continued)**

The three (3) Policy Interns are responsible for Parliamentary and Senate committees including the Standing Committee on National Defence and Veterans Affairs (SCNDVA), the Senate Committee on National Security and Defence (SCONSAD), and issues arising from other committees, including the Standing Committee on Public Accounts (SCOPA) and the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade (SCOFAIT), that may affect the Department.

Specifically, the Parliamentary Affairs Officers and Policy Interns assess the importance of issues within their portfolios and those that can impact on the Minister and the Department; research and prepare daily briefing material for the Minister and advise the Minister, Deputy Minister and the Chief of the Defence Staff and other officials on Parliamentary activities.

In addition, they assist the Director in the preparation of the daily Question Period book and special Parliamentary Committee Books for the use of the Minister and other senior departmental officials. They are also responsible for the House of Commons and Senate order paper generated requirements, such as responses to written questions and petitions that must be signed by the Minister.

### **NATURE AND SCOPE**

The nature and scope of this position requires a thorough knowledge of Canada's foreign and defence policies, the Defence Services Program (DSP), and the complexities associated with a program of this magnitude, as well as the myriad of issues which accompany it and the increasing requests for information by Parliamentary Committee research staffs. The Director Parliamentary Affairs provides the depth, continuity and scope to staff assigned to monitor and research these issues and the long-term management and planning of Directorate activities as they relate to Parliament.

National Defence is one of the largest organizations in Canada with a total budget of \$13.3 billion (2004-05 estimates). It currently employs in the range of 20,000 civilian personnel and approximately 60,000 (regular force) and 20,000 (primary reserve force) military personnel, in the provision of modern, combat capable, maritime, land, air and special operations forces and in supporting an infrastructure for which the program components are found in such diverse sectors as health care, education, transportation, communications, warehousing, construction, manufacturing and merchandising.

The global and national environment and the way in which the CF and the DND fulfill their mandate and mission as well as the conduct of their business is changing.



### **Nature and Scope (Continues)**

Legislative authority rests with the Parliament of Canada, consisting of the Queen, represented by the Governor General, the House of Commons and the Senate. Executive government and authority to enact legislation resides in Parliament.

Parliamentary rules enforce, and through reform are increasing the role of Parliament and its committees to inquire and have access to departmental programs and officials, and the number of occasions on which a Minister and his or her officials may be called to account.

Responsible government is based on the individual and collective responsibilities of Ministers. The principle of Ministerial responsibility and accountability to Parliament is fundamental. Ministers must answer to Parliament for their own actions and for those of all officials under their management and direction.

The National Defence Act and other Acts or organizations for which the Minister is responsible, together with the corresponding Budgetary Estimates provide the basic framework of responsibility.

Embodied within the purview of the Director Parliamentary Affairs is a requirement for a comprehensive understanding of the principles and the detailed operations of the Parliamentary System and Cabinet Government in which executive authority is exercised by the Minister who is responsible to Parliament.

Functionally the Director works at one step from the Minister's mandate and issues that are of direct concern to the Department. Consequence of error is high, as the Minister must of necessity rely on the accuracy and quality of the information and advice provided by the Director Parliamentary Affairs.

The appearance of the Minister at Question Period and before committees is an important means of informing Parliament and is crucial to the role of the Director Parliamentary Affairs. The Minister is devoting more time and attention to the Department's main Parliamentary Committees, the Standing Committee on National Defence & Veterans Affairs, (SCONDVA), the Senate Committee on National Security and Defence (SCONSAD), and other Committees that are studying issues that require DND participation. The Minister and officials are appearing before Committees more frequently and are being asked for more information. The role of the Director Parliamentary Affairs is to support the Minister in informing Parliament, implementing legislated mandates, government policies and directions, and managing programs and resources. The Minister, through the advice and information provided by the Director, must ensure that officials respond to the information needs of Parliament.

### **Nature and Scope (Continues)**

In preparation for these appearances the Director Parliamentary Affairs is accountable for the preparation of Briefing Books and Briefing Notes in response to probable questions and must ensure the substantive quality of the material contained within them. This functional interrelationship with Parliament demands that the Director monitor continuously the on-going business both within the House and Senate and assess issues on a daily basis and research and analyze the facts within very tight time constraints and maintain contact with the House Leader's Office.

It is through Question Period, which is covered most closely by the Press and followed by the general public, that the opposition parties can and do vigorously scrutinize the government and the Ministers' and their portfolios. The Question Period is one of Parliament's most important procedural devices for criticizing the Cabinet and for examining the record of the government.

The Oral Question Period can be fraught with issues and carefully phrased questions that are intended to elicit a particular response which can discredit the Department and impact its entire operations. Therefore the issues that are identified researched, amplified and briefed directly to the Minister for the daily Question Period are a critical aspect of the Director's mandate. The Question Period notes on issues must be accurate and reflect consistency with Departmental Offices of Primary Interest, (OPIs), and across all portfolio sectors which may have a collateral interest, and those positions maintained by other Government Departments, (OGDs).

The Director Parliamentary Affairs, through careful consideration of the House of Commons and Senate Order Paper generated requirements, reviews, analyses and pays particularly close attention to the written questions submitted for information: determines their relevance, the area of concern within staff portfolios, and alerts the Minister to potentially embarrassing or damaging aspects, and those that require a written answer.

Underlying this high level of issue management, is the necessity of the Director to frequently function in situations of great sensitivity, intensity and time pressure, where keen judgement, the ability to analyze complicated problems and highly developed writing and communication skills are essential to maintain a surprise free environment with respect to Departmental policy, and the policies, priorities and intentions of the Government. To meet this challenge, the incumbent must at times assume a proactive role in consultations with not only Departmental Group Principals and specific OPIs but also with senior officials from OGDs.

### **Nature and Scope (Continues)**

The constitutional responsibility of Ministers does not limit the obligation of other office holders, or members of the Canadian Forces or the Department, to obey the law. Parliament focuses responsibility for the conduct of government on those of its members who hold Ministerial office and who in the end must personally answer to Parliament for their actions and the actions of subordinates. On behalf of the Minister and the DM the position negotiates aspects requiring the appearances of the Minister and Departmental Officials before Parliamentary Committees and is the primary advisor to senior management on all such matters.

The principle of Ministerial responsibility and its political significance guide Ministers and officials in appearance before committees.

Ministers are ultimately responsible and accountable to Parliament and public servants are accountable to their respective Ministers, rather than to Parliament. Officials therefore assist Ministers by answering questions in committees, but they do so only on the Minister's request.

Matters of policy and political sensitivity are reserved for Ministers, principally because political accountability on the part of officials would undermine the authority and responsibility of their Ministers and would inevitably draw officials into controversy, thereby destroying their neutrality and permanent utility to the system. Officials' answers are limited to explanations rather than to defenses of policies or debate on alternative policies.

To this end the Director Parliamentary Affairs must ensure that the Minister, the Deputy Minister and the Chief of the Defence Staff possess differing perspectives on issues and are aware of political, social and economic implications in order to maximize their time and access to salient *facts* and associated information to formulate decisions.

The Department presents a diverse, ever changing, and complex environment complicated by the duality of the Civilian and Military complements. The magnitude, complexity and variety of activities result in a constant flow of issues which are reviewed, synthesized, edited and revised contextually, as well as assessed and prioritized by the Director ensuring that urgent and sensitive matters and those of a major policy concern are properly documented for the information of the Minister.

The Director liaises with the Minister's Chief of Staff and Legislative Assistant and the DM/CDS' Executive Assistants on a regular basis to preserve a constant flow of information and to ensure that the Minister and the DM/CDS are apprised of proposed changes to policy, objectives and priorities as well as ensuring awareness of sensitive and controversial issues.



### **Nature and Scope (Continues)**

The Minister's consultations reach beyond the Department and include other government departments, academic institutions, private sector businesses, industry associations and other levels of government. The Director Parliamentary Affairs must develop and maintain a consultation network to obtain useful input for the development of an effective Parliamentary Briefing System.

As an officer within the Policy Group the position is vested with the requisite comprehensive understanding of the principles and detailed operation of the parliamentary system and cabinet government and the appreciation of the exercise of Ministerial authority and that delegated to the role of the Deputy.

### **DIMENSIONS**

Staff: *direct responsibility* 9 plus 4 Policy Interns  
SWE Budget: \$645 K  
O&M Budget: \$46 K

### **SPECIFIC ACCOUNTABILITIES**

1. Provides advice and guidance to the Minister, Deputy Minister and the Chief of the Defence Staff directly, through the development, implementation and management of a Parliamentary Briefing System designed to provide salient information on a variety of issues intrinsic to appearance before parliament.
2. Inherently the position embodies and embraces the following functions:
  - Representing the Department in meetings and discussions; providing interface with the PMO, PCO, House Leader's Staff, TBS, other Departments;
  - Providing impetus for and ensures effective issue management;
  - Ensures an approved Departmental position through the initiation and drafting of relevant briefing material;
  - Forming networks and necessary alliances to access and exchange information;
  - Assessing proposed legislation, regulations and policies;
  - Conducting and directing through subordinates specific analyses;
  - Providing advice and guidance on proposed program initiatives;
  - Researching issues and projects;
  - Managing and coordinating and formulating Parliamentary Briefing System and Notes and responses to inquiries.

### **Specific Accountabilities (Continues)**

3. Ensures the development, preparation and quality of Briefing Notes provided to the Minister for Question Period. Establishes pertinent background information and makes recommendations as to appropriate Ministerial response.
4. Responsible for and provides the focus for all aspects concerning the interrelationship of the Department and Parliament.
5. Accountable directly to the Minister, DM/CDS and Group Principals for substantive and strategic matters related to appearances before Parliamentary Committees.
6. Maintains effective working relations with senior officials of other government departments on collateral issues and the staffs of the Minister, the Deputy Minister and CDS so that they are informed as to strategic perspectives and informed with respect to current and emerging trends in federal and departmental policy development.
7. Manages issues by maintaining a thorough understanding of the policies being pursued by the Government and an appreciation of the social, cultural, economic and political environment in which they are formulated.
8. Ensures effective Ministerial responsibility by assuming a proactive role in consultation with peers and other officials to remain knowledgeable of the objectives and priorities of other government departments and the Government as a whole in order to establish and maintain a surprise free environment and facilitate the decision making process.
9. Exercises judgement and demonstrates a high degree of analytical skill in providing effective interpretation and options for solution of complex problems; utilizes significant writing and communications particularly when issues require detailed recommended courses of action and strategies.
10. Coordinates with Parliamentary Committee staffs the scheduling of meetings, the agenda for each meeting, the level of participation and assures appropriate follow-up to specific aspects emanating from these discussions.
11. Provides leadership in the evolvement of the Assistant Deputy Minister, Policy and the Director General Policy Coordination's mandate by, ensuring development of mutually supportive working relationships throughout both the civilian and military communities.



**Specific Accountabilities (Continues)**

12. Represents the Department in interdepartmental meetings on issues related to parliamentary Ministerial responsibilities and with the PCO and other senior departmental officials and managers and central agency officials to assist in resolving functional and procedural problems.
13. Conveys an appropriate image of the Department's operations and associated ethics programs to the military members and civilian staff, the media and the general public.

**SIGNATURES**

**INCUMBENT'S NAME:** Vacant

**TITLE:** Director Parliamentary affairs

**SIGNATURE:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**IMMEDIATE SUPERVISOR'S NAME:** Mr. Mark Mayhew

**TITLE:** Director General Policy Coordination

**SIGNATURE:** Mark Mayhew **DATE:** 8 AUG 05