

**Senate of Canada
Communications Functional Review**

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Prepared for:
ADVISORY WORKING GROUP ON COMMUNICATIONS
STANDING COMMITTEE ON INTERNAL ECONOMY, BUDGETS AND ADMINISTRATION

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SENATE OF CANADA Communications Functional Review

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The following acronyms are used in this report:

CIBA	Committee on Internal Economy, Budgets and Administration
CPAC	Cable Public Affairs Channel
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
PIM	Parliamentary Information Management Committee
RMS	Report micro sites
SARs	Senate Administrative Rules

Note to readers: The information contained in this report reflects the structure, reporting relationships and functions of the Communications Directorate at the time of writing, December 2014.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Blueprint Public Relations was hired as the result of a competitive bidding process to conduct a communications functional review and to develop a communications plan as a result of that review. This report represents the first part of that two-part process: the review portion of that work. The communications plan was developed in part two of the process and submitted as a separate report.

The Senate of Canada is supported by an administrative branch that includes the Communications Directorate. Since 2010, the Directorate's mandate has been to inform Canadians about the activities and work of the Senate, provide communications and media relations services to committees as well as tools and advice to Senators, provide communications support to the Speaker and to undertake communications activities such as building and maintaining the Senate's web presence, engaging in social media and conducting internal communications.¹

At the time of this review (September – December 2014), the Communications Directorate reported directly to the Clerk of the Senate who either dealt directly with communications issues raised by the Principal Clerk, Communications or brought them to the Steering Committee of the Committee on Internal Economy, Budgets and Administration. The Principal Clerk, Communications had virtually no regular direct contact with CIBA or Steering.

Overall, Senators' perceptions of the Communications Directorate are negative. Based on results of the survey conducted for this review, more than two-thirds of Senators rate the work of the Directorate as poor (46%) or very poor (22%).

The Communications Directorate does not operate on the basis of a directed communications strategy and thus is not guided by agreed-upon goals, key messages or success measures. There is evidence in briefing notes from 2010² that the Directorate felt that creating an overall strategy should be done in cooperation with CIBA but received no indication, at that time, that the committee wished to work on an overall communications strategy. The Directorate works within the parameters of a number of established rules and guidelines. These include the Senate Administrative Rules, which largely affect its media relations work, and the rules, practices and procedures unique to the Senate which have an impact on its committee work.

Over the past five years, the Directorate has recommended the establishment of an advisory group of Senators to assist the Directorate in setting and managing priorities, posting Senators' attendance and policies, reviewing and clarifying the Senate Administrative Rules, and creating a digital and traditional media strategy. It was unclear what happened with recommendations generally, once they were discussed with and / or presented to the Clerk.

Regarding media relations, the Directorate interacts with the media in a non-spokesperson capacity, providing background and answers to questions within the boundaries of a set of policies and directives. During interviews, Senators expressed concern that the Directorate misinterprets the intent of the policies, or that it makes too rigid an interpretation and that little political judgement is brought to their application.

¹ Request for Proposals Communications Assessment and Strategy SEN-008 14-15 p. 26

² Briefing Note to the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure (Steering Committee) of the Standing Committee on Internal Economy, Budgets and Administration, March 2010

The result is that the Senate has adopted a public information model of communication, using news releases and other one-way communication techniques to distribute institutional information.

If requested by the committee chair, communications officers provide communications support to Senate committees. The Directorate reports that few committees appear to consider communications planning at the outset of a study. More typically, officers are asked to write and disseminate media advisories and media releases when a committee report is ready for release.

With its digital presence, the success and efficacy of the Senate portal as a communications tool is linked to that of the main “umbrella” site parl.gc.ca, although the Communications Directorate has no authority over the parl.gc.ca site. There is no formal digital governance process among the directorates of the Senate Administration, and thus no basis from which to align a content plan and key messages, guide web development or ensure efficient use of resources.

Content on the Senate website is managed by the Directorate. The sen.parl.gc.ca site receives an average 37,078 visits (or sessions) per month. In the absence of an overall strategic direction, but acknowledging the importance of connecting with Canadians via social media, the Directorate created a Twitter feed, (@SenateCA). It is managed by the Directorate and all tweets are approved by the Principal Clerk, Communications. As of December 31, 2014, the Senate had approximately 24,000 followers (combined English, French).

Regarding other communications services, the Directorate’s work in stakeholder outreach has diminished in recent years as the Library of Parliament has taken on this role though the Directorate continues to write and design products based on requests from the Clerk and the Speaker. The Directorate was given responsibility for broadcasting in August 2014. The Directorate is also responsible for internal communications. This includes the Intranet which has a governance charter that includes a management process for developing and maintaining the site based on specific objectives.

The Directorate provides limited media relations counsel to individual Senators based on its interpretation of the Senate Administrative Rule related to non-partisanship. Instead, it has developed communications tools and templates and these are provided to Senators and their staff through IntraSen.

As a result of the review, it was concluded that communications at the Senate is broken. The Directorate has responsibility but no authority, while Senators have authority but have not identified a group or person among themselves as being responsible for an overall communications strategy, for the institution and overseeing its implementation. Absent a central communications authority and working under Senate rules ill-designed to support a modern communications function, the voice of the institution is weak. Partisan voices are more predominant than that of the institution, which creates a distorted public perception of the Senate as a whole.

The communications function is not valued at the Senate. For the most part, it is seen as the equivalent of media relations and is not valued as a strategic management function. While Senators value communications generally, it is difficult to conclude that the function itself is a priority given the lack of strategic oversight, its tactical focus based on directives, and the part-time nature of the Communications Directorate’s leadership role over a period of several months, to list just a few examples. The Principal Clerk understood that strategic direction for the communications function was necessary; however, in the

absence of direction, his judgement regarding communications issues reflected his experience as a procedural expert rather than that of a communications expert with media relations experience.

Senators are unfamiliar with the Directorate and do not see the outcome of its work, and thus it does not have their confidence. This is the case despite the fact that staff do their best within the constraints of Senate rules and in the absence of an overarching strategic plan. To work within those rules, the Principal Clerk described the Directorate's role quite clearly to his team but far less clearly to Senators with the result that most do not see the Directorate as providing service that is of value to them. Trying to determine the limits of non-partisan service is an illustrative example, since Senators feel the Principal Clerk could have brought better judgement to those decisions while Senators themselves share a consensus view on some aspects of partisanship and not on others. The result: the Directorate is absent from Senators' daily work, it is not seen as service oriented, Senators do not seek it out for assistance, and over time Senators have become less convinced of the Directorate's necessity.

The Directorate's media relations function is under-developed and too often operates as an Access to Information and Privacy branch rather than as a true media relations service. It is impeded by Senate rules, and undercut by decisions made as a result of complex processes. Support to Committees is uneven, dependent on the scope allowed by each Chair and made difficult by Chamber rules regarding information release. The Senate's digital presence, like all other communications functions, operates without the guidance of an overall plan and success measures. Internal communications is not guided by a strategy and doesn't address the significant cultural gap between Senators and the Directorate.

Based on these conclusions, and the Senate's overall communications goal to be understood by Canadians as an effective and important Parliamentary institution, recommendations cover both structural and operational areas:

1. Create a new Special Committee on Senate Communications responsible for advising the Senate on communications strategy and implementation, reporting to the Senate and staffed by the head of the Communications Directorate.
2. Re-structure the Communications Directorate to reflect the equal importance of communicating broadly with Canadians, and specifically with key stakeholder groups regarding the issues studied by Senate committees.
3. Update Senate Administrative Rules and Senate procedural rules; this includes removing the requirement for written questions from, and written responses to, the media; permitting unpublished information to be provided to the media (with appropriate controls); signing a Memorandum of Understanding between the Speaker's Office and the Press Gallery defining the conditions under which media access to the Senate foyer is permitted; allowing committees to 'back-table'³ reports if they so choose, rather than having to seek permission from the Senate as a whole; and clarifying the latitude within which the Directorate can interpret the rule related to non-partisan activity / counsel.
4. Develop a communications strategy for each Parliamentary session; it should be based on research and establish benchmarks against which to measure progress.

³ Rule 28.1 of the *Rules of the Senate*: Whenever an Act of Parliament, or any resolution or rule of the Senate, requires that a return or report be laid before the Senate, the same may be deposited with the Clerk of the Senate. When so deposited, such return, report or other paper shall be deemed for all purposes to have been presented or laid before the Senate.

5. Become audience-focused; adopt a service approach within the Directorate. This includes reflecting audiences' priority content areas in the website strategy and making content available on platforms most suitable for audiences.
6. Coordinate communications conducted by Committees
7. Build a modern media relations function; this includes updating the media monitoring function, establishing formal spokesperson roles and creating a permanent issues-management function.
8. Establish a digital strategy that includes a broad governance framework for a joint digital strategy among the Senate, House of Commons and the Library of Parliament, a clear governance framework for the management of the Senate website and website and social media strategies.
9. Establish an internal communications strategy to increase client satisfaction (i.e. Senators and their staff more satisfied with the Directorate's services), increase pride among employees working for the Senate, and improve staff recruitment and retention.
10. Provide communications support to the Speaker of the Senate.

Adopting these recommendations requires changes to rules, structure, processes and attitudes. This scope of change represents a significant cultural shift requiring a consistent, steady approach by a person or group with authority, the respect of staff and the confidence of the Chamber.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Senate of Canada is supported by an administrative branch that includes the Communications Directorate. The Directorate has been in place for many years; its mandate since 2010 has been to inform Canadians about the activities and work of the Senate, provide communications and media relations services to committees as well as tools and advice to Senators, provide communications support to the Speaker and to undertake communications activities such as building and maintaining the Senate's web presence, engaging in social media and conducting internal communications.⁴

Over the past few years, the work of the Senate has been under increased scrutiny, and some Senators have expressed concern about the effectiveness of the Senate's communications function. Blueprint Public Relations was hired as the result of a competitive bidding process to conduct a communications functional review and to develop a communications plan as a result of that review. This report represents the first part of that two-part process: the review portion of that work. The communications plan was developed in part two of the process and submitted as a separate report.

2.0 GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

The Senate defined the goal and objectives for the communications functional review and the communications plan in the Request for Proposal:

The goal of the review is to perform a system-wide analysis of current communication practices, both internal and external, to identify strengths and gaps, and to develop specific recommendations and action steps that will support the improvement of internal and external communication processes.

The objectives are to determine the appropriate needs of the Senate; review the current operations of the Communications Directorate; and to present a proposal for renewal and implementation of a communications strategy utilizing the results of the review.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

The following steps were undertaken to conduct the communications functional review.

Client briefing: An initial briefing meeting was held with the Advisory Working Group and subsequent update meetings were held weekly, during Senate sitting weeks.

Document review: Blueprint Public Relations reviewed more than 65 documents provided by the Communications Directorate and others.

Communications materials review and assessment: The Communications Directorate provided samples of current communications tools and they were assessed against a set of agreed upon criteria. The tools assessment report is provided in Appendix A.

⁴ Request for Proposals Communications Assessment and Strategy SEN-008 14-15 p. 26

Digital tools assessment: Several interviews and meetings were conducted, and many background documents were reviewed for this assessment. The team also reviewed the Senate and Parliamentary websites and social media accounts. The digital tools assessment report is provided as Appendix B and the website statistics overview report is provided as Appendix C.

Media relations assessment and interviews: This assessment was based on a materials review, interviews with journalists and meetings with Directorate staff. The findings have been incorporated into this report.

Senator survey: A quantitative survey was utilized to measure various aspects of Senate Communications. It was circulated for response to all sitting Senators. (Details on the survey methodology and the final survey report are provided in Appendix D.)

Individual interviews: Blueprint Public Relations conducted interviews with Senators, Senate officials and political staff, administration employees (both within and outside the Communications Directorate), and outside experts. The lists of interviewees were developed with the Working Group except for the media interview list, which was developed by Blueprint Public Relations independently. (For the list of interviewees and the interview guides, see Appendix E). Interview requests were sent to both internal and external stakeholders.

Group interviews: Blueprint Public Relations met separately with both the Government and Opposition caucuses, as well as government and opposition political staffers.

The information and analysis resulting from each of these steps forms the content of this report, and is the basis upon which conclusions and recommendations have been made.

4.0 SENATE OF CANADA: Its Role and Reputation

The Senate of Canada is an essential part of Canada's parliamentary system, a bicameral system of two houses—the House of Commons and the Senate—and the sovereign, as represented by the Governor General. The Senate's constitutional role is to examine and revise legislation, investigate national issues and represent regional and minority interests in both official languages.

The Senate was created as a result of deliberation by the Fathers of Confederation during the Quebec and Charlottetown Conferences of 1864⁵ where a full six out of 14 days were devoted to discussing the Senate. In fact, Confederation would not have happened if there had not been agreement to create the Senate as a balance to the House of Commons whose membership was based on representation by population. Since then, the Senate has been the voice for Canada's regions and a growing voice for the country's minority groups.

There are 105 Senate seats of which 88 are filled⁶. Appointments to the Senate are made by the Governor General on the recommendation of the Prime Minister. Senators are typically appointed for their meaningful contributions to their communities, as a result of notable business or professional careers and/or through philanthropic or not-for-profit work. Although appointed⁷, Senators are expected to represent the regions in which they live, as they review legislation or work in committee. Some Senators also work on issues which

⁵ <http://www.parl.gc.ca/About/Senate/LegisFocus/legislative-e.htm>

⁶ As of November 2014

⁷ Alberta is the only Canadian province to elect nominees for appointment to the Senate, in a process known as an Alberta Senate nominee election. These elections are non-binding as the appointment of Senators is the jurisdiction of the federal government.

they believe to be of national importance, and advocate for those issues in the Chamber and across the country.

As an appointed rather than an elected body, the Senate's legitimacy is called into question from time to time. Indeed, the Senate was under scrutiny in 2012 and 2013 when a few of its members were caught up in allegations of ineligible travel and housing expense claims. This type of controversy has an impact on Canadians' views of the Senate as a whole despite the positive contributions of individual Senators and the vital role of the Senate in the Parliament of Canada.

Polling over the past few years has measured a shift in the public's opinion of the Senate. In 2009, the Senate contracted Nanos Research to determine Canadians' level of knowledge about the institution and to understand which channels they would likely use to access information about the Senate. "Results showed that people were generally somewhat aware of the Senate of Canada's role and functions, though over a third of Canadians considered their level of understanding about the Senate of Canada insufficient, saying they had very little to no understanding. However, over two thirds of the population expressed a moderate to high level of interest in knowing more about the Senate of Canada."⁸ In comparison to the results of a previous study about Senate awareness in 2007, results suggested that Canadians' level of interest or disinterest had remained relatively consistent. In addition, a majority of respondents believed the Senate provided some value to important public issues: 51 per cent believed the Senate provided 'some value' to important public issues.

Contrast this with views expressed in polls done on behalf of news organizations during and after the events of 2012/2013. An example is a 2013 Leger poll⁹ which found that "Canadians were especially frustrated by alleged Senate abuse of public funds because 'very few among them could explain what senators did on a daily basis, nor what the Senate's role is within the Canadian parliamentary system.'"¹⁰ These kinds of results are echoed by Senators' own views, expressed during the interview process for this report.

There is no question that the reputation of the Senate has suffered enormously. Canadians didn't understand the purpose of the Senate before, now we have been tarnished.

I think more people are aware of the Senate than 10 years ago but the impression is more negative because of the scandals.

It's been a definitely revealing year. Whatever people may have masked before, they now feel they have the license to say whatever they want -- hurtful and hateful sometimes.

The public knows little about the Senate and what it does, how it runs... and in light of the activities of the past two years, any good impression has been lost.

Findings

- The Senate is constitutionally important yet poorly understood and undervalued by Canadians. Indeed, some Canadians view the institution and its members in a negative light.
- Some Senators feel that their individual reputations as accomplished Canadians have become subsumed by the overall reputation of the institution.

⁸ Nanos Survey Report: Senate of Canada 2009, p.2

⁹ Conducted in August 2013 for the Privy Council Office

¹⁰ Beeby, D. Canadian Press, as reported in February 14, 2014 Globe and Mail <http://bit.ly/1zY1tHZ>

5.0 SENATE OF CANADA: Communications Overview

Communications is a management function that explains an organization to its publics and those publics to the organization. Effective communications establishes trust, underpins internal culture, garners support for change, and creates an environment where others advocate for an organization's good reputation. Communications brings the outside in, allowing leaders to understand outside perspectives, and to act on that knowledge in the best interests of both the organization and its publics. Strategic communications counsel at the executive level helps ensure that an organization not only says what it's going to do but actually does it, avoiding a disconnect between values and behaviour, and between intention and execution.

At the Senate, as in many organizations, communications is conducted both formally and informally. Formally, the Communications Directorate is responsible for external and internal Senate communications, which includes support to the Clerk and the Speaker in their roles as representatives of the institution. The Directorate's internal communications role is largely aimed at the institution's administrative (bureaucratic) audience, though the Directorate reports recent attempts to expand this audience to include Senators and their staff. (See Internal Communications, section 8.0.)

The Leaders of the Government and of the Opposition in the Senate conduct communications to support their caucus work. In addition, many individual Senators, supported by their political / policy staff (and occasionally the Directorate depending on the nature of the request), undertake communications activities to promote the Senate and/or to raise awareness of issues they support. Indeed, many if not most, Senators act quite independently in this regard.

The combined communications activities of the institution, the Speaker, Leaders' offices and individual Senators contribute to the public's overall understanding and impression of the Senate.

Finding

- There is no central communications authority guiding the many different communications activities being undertaken by groups and individuals within the Senate.

6.0 COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTORATE

To be effective, it is considered best practice to have those responsible for communications as part of the executive team—meaningful participants in making key decisions. Indeed, research has shown that to “be excellent, the [communications] function must be headed by a manager who is involved in the strategic decision making processes of the organization.”¹¹

The objective of the Communications Directorate is to “contribute to public awareness and understanding of the work of Senators, Senate committees and the Senate as an institution.”¹² This section of the review report examines the Directorate’s structure, staff roles, services and processes as they existed at the time of the review, September to December 2014. In mid-January 2015, the Speaker of the Senate announced an interim organizational structure for the Senate Administration that resulted in the creation of a Chief Corporate Services Officer role, responsible for the Communications Directorate (in addition to other administrative directorates). Under this new structure, the Communications Directorate no longer reports directly to the Clerk.

6.1. Reporting Structure

At the time of the functional review, the Communications Directorate was one of 11 divisions within Senate Administration that reported directly to the Clerk of the Senate¹³. Senate Administration’s goal is “to maintain excellence in the services it delivers, constantly seeking to adjust to the changing needs of Senators and Senate staff.”¹⁴

The Directorate fell under the legislative branch of the Administration (the other two branches were Parliamentary Precinct Services and Administrative) and was led by the Principal Clerk, Communications who, as previously noted, reported to the Clerk. As head of Administration, the Clerk was accountable to the Senate through the Standing Committee on Internal Economy, Budgets and Administration (CIBA). He was also chief Table Officer and senior procedural advisor to the Speaker.¹⁵

When the Directorate required guidance on a communications issue, the Principal Clerk, Communications turned to the Clerk who, depending on the issue, dealt with it directly or brought it to the Steering Committee of CIBA or to the full committee for consideration and direction. The Principal Clerk, Communications had virtually no regular direct contact with CIBA or Steering. During the crisis of 2013, he did meet with Steering to address specific issues and questions, but these were tactical rather than strategic discussions. He has presented to the full committee twice since his appointment: once on the renewal of the Senate’s website and a second time on the implementation of the Senate’s Twitter feed.

Finding:

- The head of the Communications Directorate had virtually no contact with the Senators who made the key decisions regarding communications.

6.2. Areas of Responsibility

The Directorate is organized into two areas of responsibility: Media Relations and Communications Services and Public Information. The work of the former covers media relations, support to the Speaker

¹¹ Grunig, L.A., Grunig, J.E. & Dozier, D.M. (2002) *Excellent Public Relations and Effective Organizations: A Study of Communication Management in Three Countries*. p 306. New York: Routledge.

¹² *Senate Communications Directorate, Report on Activities 2013-2014: July 2014* p. 2

¹³ Full title: Clerk of the Senate and Clerk of the Parliaments

¹⁴ Survey Report on Administrative Services to Senators (2012), p. 3

¹⁵ <http://sen.parl.gc.ca/portal/clerk-e.htm> Retrieved Nov. 10/14

(events and media), social media and communications support to committees. Public Information is responsible for the Senate's online presence (portal and IntraSen), publications, social media and internal communications.

Based on the survey conducted for this review (see Appendix D), it is clear that Senators are not familiar with most aspects of the work of the Communications Directorate. With the exception of the media summaries (see Media Relations, section 7.1), fewer than 20 per cent of respondents say they are very familiar with any of the Directorate's areas of responsibility that were probed. At least half of Senators say they are unfamiliar with most areas of the Directorate's work. Fully three-quarters are unfamiliar with communications tools on IntraSen (74 per cent) and strategic communications planning (78 per cent).

The Principal Clerk, Communications, at the time of this review, was aware of the low understanding of the Directorate. In a briefing note from 2010¹⁶, he acknowledged that Senators, Senators' staff and administration personnel did not have a common understanding of the role, responsibilities and functions of the Directorate. Based on the survey, that does not seem to have changed. Senators also spoke about it during the interviews conducted for this review:

I don't know what they do. I sometimes wonder what goes on -- I have never been to their office and I don't know where they are. They have never come to me to offer anything. Lots of other departments have come to me -- finance, IT.

I only learned recently that we even have communications staff in the Senate. I knew we had Blair, and someone else mentioned... that there are 16 people in the Directorate.

The Directorate is faceless to me. I don't feel a personal relationship with the branch at all.

We need meetings with them [to reinforce the] concept of the Senate as a team. We need to know who they are, what they look like. We have to know the players.

The Directorate did not promote its services, to try and build understanding among Senators after the 2010 briefing note because there was a concern that they would be unable to meet any additional demand, there was little to offer individual Senators that would not contravene the Directorate's interpretation of being non-partisan, and the Principal Clerk remained hopeful that a working group would be created through which he could work to develop a mandate, key messages and a renewed service package. He did send a letter to committee chairs and deputy chairs reminding them that they (the chairs) were responsible for communications and indicating that Communications Officers were available to assist. It was only used in 2010.

However, even if Senators were fully aware of the Directorate's areas of responsibility, it is not clear that they would value them, since those areas do not fully align with Senators' priorities as described during the interviews. When asked about the type of communications support they see as valuable to the

¹⁶ Briefing Note to the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure (Steering Committee) of the Standing Committee on Internal Economy, Budgets and Administration, March 2010

institution, most identified media relations (which many equate with committee support) and crisis communications. Some also referenced the importance of social media.

We need timely media relations; it's a long haul job to transform media culture.

*The Directorate should be working with Senators on a fair and equitable basis to put out [media] stories of Senators at work.
No one shows Senators how to engage media and [how to do that] through digital means.*

There is no communications plan or execution plan, no crisis plan [and we need one].

Make us relevant in the mainstream discussion of Canadian life. Raise our profile fairly, give us new tools, make the Senate more visible.

Senators were not prompted as to the communications areas that they valued or did not value; none indicated that they placed importance on internal communications, publications, stakeholder outreach (except as connected to media relations) or support to the Speaker or Clerk. (Note that then Speaker Kinsella was interviewed and his responses included his views of communications support to his office.) This is not to suggest that these areas do not have value, but they are not of value to individual Senators.

Senators' overall perceptions of the Communications Directorate are negative. Based on results of the survey conducted for this review, more than two-thirds of Senators rate the work of the Directorate as poor (46%) or very poor (22%). Perceptions of the Directorate are equally negative in the 12 specific areas tested (including expertise, timeliness, judgement and adding value). Not more than one-quarter of Senators (25%) offer a positive rating in any area. That said, one-quarter to one-half cannot offer any opinion in these areas, reflecting the low familiarity noted earlier.

Findings:

- Senators have a poor overall perception of the Directorate.
- Most Senators are unfamiliar with the Directorate and its work, based on little to no interaction with its staff.
- Senators' priorities do not align with the Directorate's service areas except in the case of media relations (which includes committee and crisis work) and for some Senators, social media.

6.3. Staff Positions

The Principal Clerk, Communications (at the time of this review) was appointed to the role in 2009. In addition to leading communications, he was also a Table Officer with a rotational role in the Chamber; he still has Table Duty one afternoon per week, although not every week. He had also been Acting Usher of the Black Rod several times; during one three-year period over the past five years he was in that role for 23 months while also leading the Directorate. This meant he was in the Communications Directorate offices about half the time. (Part of the almost two-year period he was in both roles coincided with the increased media attention on the Senate in 2013 due to the housing eligibility and expenses issues.) Prior to leading communications, the Principal Clerk led the initiative to broadcast Senate committees in his role as Principal Clerk, Legislative Systems and Broadcasting Directorate.

The Principal Clerk led a team of 15 staff (and one temporary position), which included his administrative assistant. The team is organized into two areas of responsibility. Media Relations and Communications

Services is led by a manager who has four communications officers and a communications coordinator reporting to her. Public Information is led by a chief; two graphic designers, one writer / editor, one information officer and one communications assistant report to her. There are also two broadcast technicians. (They are managed by a broadcasting coordinator whose salary comes from Committees; the remaining five broadcasting services employees are assigned from the House of Commons.) See Appendix F for the Directorate's organizational chart and Appendix G for a summary of roles.

In practice, the Media Relations and Communications Services team requires support from the Public Information team on a regular basis, thus staff work across the two divisions. In the annual activities report it has submitted since 2010, the Directorate details the volume of work undertaken and highlights the methods it has employed to respond to the additional work with the same number of staff and roughly the same annual budget (see Budget.) The increased responsibilities of many Directorate employees are not appreciated by most Senators, given that most are not aware of the Directorate's work (as noted previously), do not value many of its responsibilities and do not see the benefits of the Directorate's activity. This last point is because the criteria against which the Directorate measures its effectiveness are not known to, nor have they been agreed upon by, Senators. (This is discussed in more detail, on page 9.)

Directorate staff come to their work with varying backgrounds, some with communications experience and others with procedural experience. During the interview process, some Senators questioned the communications ability of the staff.

Are the Directorate staff trained to deal with media and to be good communicators with media? That would be helpful to us.

We need experts running communications, not administrators.

There are some pros in the Directorate, and some not.

I have never had a sense of their expertise, and it is important that they have it.

*How many staff does the Communications Directorate have?
The only service I see is the press clippings.*

In contrast to these concerns, Directorate staff have received awards for their work. As examples: the web team was nominated for the Clerk's Award for Innovation in 2012, and the 2012 Speaker's Award was presented to Ceri Au for the launch of the Twitter feed.¹⁷ In 2014, four Senate Communications employees received the Speaker's Award for Excellence, and the Innovation or Suggestion Award.¹⁸ In addition, a 2012 administrative survey of Senators found that they were satisfied with the services tested: daily media coverage summary, NewsDesk and the knowledge, professionalism, responsiveness and courtesy of the Directorate staff. While it should be noted that the intervening scandal put the spotlight on the Directorate, and only five Senators answered the 2012 survey themselves (the remainder were answered by their staff), one can imagine that the Directorate would have been pleased with the results.

¹⁷ Senate Communications Directorate Report on Activities 2012 – 2013, p. 3

¹⁸ Senate Communications Directorate Report on Activities 2013 – 2014, p. 4

Findings:

- The Principal Clerk has filled multiple roles throughout his time as head of the Communications Directorate, including during the 2013 crisis period. Because the role was not backfilled, the Directorate has not always had a full-time lead.
- The Directorate has long indicated that it is short-staffed given its range of responsibilities.
- Most Senators question the value of the Directorate given that they a) are not aware of what it does; b) do not see the output or outcomes of its work; and c) do not assess its effectiveness in the same way the Directorate itself does.
- Senate Administration and the Speaker have publicly acknowledged the abilities of communications staff, though some Senators question their competence.
- The Directorate has received both positive and negative feedback on its work from Senators.

6.4. Work Processes

The Communications Directorate does not operate on the basis of a directed communications strategy and thus is not guided by agreed-upon goals, key messages or success measures established by Senators. The last comprehensive communications strategic plan to guide the work of the Directorate was approved in 2005. There has not been a strategy developed since. There are likely multiple reasons for this though none are entirely clear. For one, the Directorate understood that promoting the Senate's merits could be seen, over this time period, as the institution becoming involved in a political debate. There is evidence in briefing notes from 2010 that the Directorate felt that creating an overall strategy should be done in cooperation with CIBA but received no indication, at that time, that CIBA wished to work on an overall communications strategy.

This stands in contrast to the British House of Lords, where the Director of Public Information develops a strategic communications plan every parliamentary cycle. Based on target audience research conducted once per parliament, the strategy details key audiences and priorities, and permits assessment and measurement.

With a plan, we do not focus on the short term issues but rather on what is important for the long term: key audiences and key priorities.

- Director of Public Information, House of Lords

In the absence of a strategy, the Directorate assigns staff and aligns budgets to address general priorities that were approved by CIBA in 2010, and to support annual corporate priorities defined by the Clerk. In 2010, the Directorate submitted a briefing note to CIBA requesting "a mandate, with guiding principles, objectives and service standards by which to direct its operational activities, assign priorities and gauge the effectiveness of their operations."¹⁹ While CIBA approved the general priorities, as noted previously, there was no further activity around renewing the Directorate's mandate or creating the guiding principles and objectives. The Principal Clerk, Communications indicated that, at the time, he did not feel it appropriate to push any further.

Without an approved communications strategy, and with no agreement from Steering or CIBA about the measures by which effectiveness will be assessed, the Directorate has established its own criteria, which tend to measure processes and outputs, rather than outcome and impact. Examples from the 2013 – 2014 Activities Report include measuring the number and type of media requests and emailed requests from the public, the number of hours spent on media relations activities, publications, and

¹⁹ Briefing Note to the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure (Steering Committee) of the Standing Committee on Internal Economy, Budgets and Administration, March 2010

online projects, the number of Speaker events for which support was provided, and identifying the creation of a Media Qs & As database and the Senate Corporate Calendar. Senators, on the other hand, are (informally) assessing the Directorate's work based on results they expect to see.

*We have failed to communicate what we're doing; some Senators work very hard.
There are so many great policy studies. If Canadians knew about the studies,
they would have a different view of the Senate.
Individual senators get the recognition but the institution does not.*

Media interviews are important for external impact.

*We have not communicated the work that is being done. The level of activity in
the Chamber, in committees is enormous. Nobody is aware unless there is a
crisis.*

While the Directorate's work is organized to address the priorities previously noted, the Directorate staff are also assigned projects by, and take direction from, Committee Chairs, the Clerk and the Speaker. Some of these requests are timed such that they are part of the planning process while others are ad hoc requests for support. During the interview process, a few Senators expressed their views of this:

*They have been given a loose mandate, but there are so many conflicting things
– Speaker, leader of the opposition– then pushed and pulled.
It must be so confusing for them.*

*The Directorate has a general lack of mandate; they are used and abused in
many ways. They've had to expand into this new world of digital and social, [with]
a lot of expectations loaded on to them, and then they've just been left.
They respond to many masters.*

The Directorate works within the parameters of a number of established rules and guidelines. These include the Senate Administrative Rules (SARs), which largely affect its media relations work, and the rules, practices and procedures unique to the Senate which have an impact on its committee work.

The SARs were written as a set of by-laws and approved by the Senate in approximately 2005. The Principal Clerk, Communications has indicated that operating in contradiction of them would be acting in contempt of the Senate.

An example of a SAR that affects the Directorate's procedure for dealing with media is the rule requiring all requests from the public and the media in writing: *A request to the Senate Administration for information about the Senate or Senators shall be in writing unless this requirement is waived. [2004-05-06].*²⁰ The impact of this rule on media relations is detailed in Section 7.0.

Another SAR is related to non-partisanship: *(1) Employees of the Senate shall provide and must be seen to provide their services on a non-partisan but politically sensitive basis. [2004-05-06].*²¹ The issue of how 'non-partisan' should be interpreted is a source of conflict between Senators and the Directorate, and indeed, is not agreed upon among Senators themselves. Without agreed-upon guiding principles or

²⁰ Senate Administrative Rules, Division 2.0 Governance, Chapter 2.06 Access to Information and Privacy, p. 2-16

²¹ Senate Administrative Rules, Division 3.0 Senate Resources, Chapter 3.03 Human Resources, p. 3-8

independent authority, the Directorate interprets the rule to mean that it can provide factual information to individual Senators but no interpretation or counsel. As an example, the Directorate could provide a media list to a Senator but could not provide counsel on the political leanings of the media outlets listed or on how to issue a release.

As a table officer and committee clerk, I understand what it means to interfere in the political dynamics and I know when my interpretation will be seen as non-neutral. ... Part of my approach to this is based on a) being a table officer and providing counsel in private but not in public and b) the fact that the Senate has chosen to give written directions in the form of the Senate Administrative Rules.

- Principal Clerk, Communications

Many Senators and their staffs, however, believe that the Directorate's interpretation is too narrow and that it must consider the 'politically sensitive' aspect of the rule.

[Communications] hides behind the cloak of [non]-partisanship.

Why should they take a risk? It's a cruel environment.

There are no bonuses for being innovative.

- Senator

Communications is run by administrators, not experts who understand the political aspect of our reality.

- Senator

You cannot provide service to a political institution without political instincts.

- Senator

I've never been clear on the Directorate's job when it comes to media relations. I needed ... a media contact but was told 'we don't carry that information'. I understand the partisan factors, but when it's just clear cut information like who plays what role, which journalists report on certain regions, which reporters should I speak to on x issue, how do I do an op-ed -- who covers that?

- Senator's staff person

We likely need to have modest expectations of the Directorate. It can only do so much as a nonpartisan source;

it represents the least interesting parts of what we do.

- Senator

The problem is when [communications] is institutional what we get is often bland -

- by the time it's filtered through all the approvals, there's nothing left of it. Like

when you have a committee meeting and have good witnesses

it's been watered down because communications

are trying not to let it have a bias so it's non-news.

- Senator

As long as committees are in agreement then they can ... do a press release and if there isn't agreement then Senate communications will not participate because of the risk of being political. Their experiences are likely the reason they feel that way. They can find themselves in the firing line if they are partisan.

- Official

The Directorate's interpretation of the rule also has an impact on how their service ethic is viewed by Senators and their staffs.

*Many of us have given up making our concerns known to the Directorate.
When Senators ask for help or changes,
you are likely going to be denied and so you give up.*
- Senator

*I would like to hear, yes I can help you, I want a real interaction with them.
The response is always no first. I want the response to be yes first,
then figure out how to do it.*
- Senator's staff person

*They gave us the letterhead, but not a media list.
After that we didn't bother with them. I was stunned.*
- Senator's staff person

*How much of [the Directorate's] work actually helps senators? They can't
perform to the fullest of their abilities because it is seen as partisanship.
[Also, they] are not on the same clock as we are.
We need something now because 24 hour news cycle doesn't stop.*
- Senator's staff person

*I asked for an orientation. I was told to wait for another
meeting when more people could be there. [They were] no help.*
- Senator's staff person

Another challenge related to interpreting partisanship is that Senators themselves have different views. Based on the survey conducted for this report, it is clear that there is consensus on some aspects of partisanship and not on others. Almost all Senators felt that the following communications activities should be considered non-partisan and thus are acceptable for the Directorate to undertake:

- Inform Canadians about how the Senate works.
- Help students to learn about the Senate.
- Proactively inform the media about legislative activities occurring in the Senate.
- Proactively inform the media about Committee work in the Senate.
- Promote the Senate as a valuable democratic institution.
- Provide advice and support (such as media contact lists) to individual Senators.

For other types of communications support, however, there is less agreement as to what would be acceptable. Sixty-eight per cent feel that the Directorate should be able to publicize a speech given by an individual Senator while 59 per cent feel that it would be acceptable to publicize a Senator's speech responding to the Speech from the Throne. Speeches given by individual Senators are not necessarily political but responding to the Speech from the Throne is inherently political, which makes it difficult to discern the will of the Senate as to what is considered non-partisan.

Over the past five years, there have been occasions when the Directorate has determined that a different approach is needed to address Senate communications more effectively. The Directorate has recommended the establishment of an advisory group of Senators to assist the Directorate in setting and managing priorities, posting Senators' attendance and policies, reviewing and clarifying the SARs,

creating a digital and traditional media strategy, taking a more proactive media approach, identifying key contact people and making more documents public. It is unclear how these recommendations were processed; no changes had resulted as of this writing.

Findings:

- Without an approved communications strategy, the Directorate does not have a basis upon which to make operational decisions to prioritize its efforts, and therefore turns to the Clerk, and CIBA, for direction.
- It is unclear to the Principal Clerk what happens with formal and informal proposals generally, once they are discussed with and / or presented to the Clerk and / or CIBA, so seeking direction has not been effective.
- Without an approved communications strategy, there are no agreed-upon success measures so the Directorate measures what it can control—process and outputs—rather than impact and outcomes.
- The Communications Directorate takes direction from multiple sources; reporting to more than one authority is challenging.
- The Directorate's activities are proscribed by rules that prevent effective communications.
- The rule regarding non-partisanship allows for political sensitivity when it is applied, however Senators' shared views of what constitutes non-partisan communications applies to some, and not all, examples of activities provided to them.

6.5. Budget

The Communications Directorate has an annual budget of approximately \$1.2M. The bulk of the budget—\$1,000,000—covers staffing costs while approximately \$200,000 is for expenses. Expenses are primarily photography for the Speaker's Office, printing, and contractors to backfill as needed. Over five years, the Directorate's actual expenditures have risen by \$174,000 to cover "yearly economic increases, applicable statutory increases and classification conversion costs"²². Over that same period, the Directorate was given responsibility for internal communications, the website, social media and broadcasting without additional resources.

Senators interviewed have varying views on whether or not the communications budget is too much or insufficient.

I don't blame the staff – they have worked miracles for me – but it's the direction that we in internal have given them. We have never wanted to put in the work and resources -- they have few resources for the work they should be doing.

I don't think we need staff of 15 and a million dollars. Create a smaller directorate and give more communications ability to the two leaders' offices.

A Chair may not want to spend the money and Internal Economy may not want to spend the money, and in the end ... there will be a desire not to be seen as spending money on promoting the Senate, but nothing ever gets better if you don't invest in changing it.

I would be allocating additional funds to each senator's office, and a smaller budget to the Communications Directorate at the highest level.

²² Communications Directorate Overview for the Main Estimates 2015 – 2016, p.9

Finding:

- The Directorate has absorbed several new service areas without additional funds, though because their work doesn't align with Senators' priorities, the appropriateness of their budget allocation is questioned.

7.0 EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

Based on interviews with Senators and a survey²³ conducted for this review, Senators do not hold positive views of the current state of the Senate's external communications. Survey results indicate that external communications are widely considered poor or very poor (78 per cent). Most Senators cannot identify any strengths in external communications at the Senate, but they name many shortcomings. Chief among these is a failure to promote the Senate or Senators. Other significant concerns are poor media relations, poor crisis management, and a strong tendency to be reactive rather than proactive.

Negative views of current communications notwithstanding, there is very strong support for greater transparency at the Senate (91 per cent) and efforts to increase the public profile of the Senate (98 per cent). Ninety-seven percent of Senators believe the Senate should be more proactive with the media.

7.1. Media Relations

"Today... the notion of the media as watchdog, as guardian of the public interest, and as a conduit between governors and the governed remains deeply ingrained."²⁴ The public has a high expectation that governments... in particular will be forthcoming and open, and indeed governments often exhibit a higher degree of commitment to the philosophy and practice of media relations than do many businesses. That they often do so in a unique environment of partisan politics should not obscure the fact that one of the major relationships between media and communicators is at the government level."²⁵

The corporate media relations function at the Senate responds to media requests regarding the administration of the Senate, including public information on policies, protocols and procedures. It also puts reporters in touch with Senators' offices for interviews, and is responsible for most filming requests within the Senate building from members of the Parliamentary Press Gallery and other media organizations.

Objectives and Strategy

Best-practice media relations activity involves a clear, strategic link to an organization's mission and goals. Journalists and media organizations are an essential component of any comprehensive communications strategy where public awareness is an objective as they are a principal conduit to the population at large.

As with institutional communications overall, the Directorate's media relations activities are guided by the SARs and the 2005 communications strategic plan. In the absence of more recent planning, the Directorate has drafted a number of media relations strategies over recent years. While none of these were approved, and in some cases never submitted, they do offer a window into the Directorate's thinking. In the non-submitted "Media Relations Strategy 2013-2015" (January 2013), the Directorate's self-stated goal for media relations was to "facilitate information sharing with the public, respond to media requests in a timely manner, as well as manage and plan for proactive communications with the media." Until a comprehensive media relations strategy is approved, that document states, the Directorate informally opted to concentrate its efforts and govern its resources as follows:

- supporting the Speaker's media relations and communications requirements related to the ceremonial and parliamentary activities incumbent on the office; and
- supporting all media relations and communications services for committees, within the limits of the resources available.

²³ The Communications Functional Review Survey report (2014) is attached as Appendix D.

²⁴ The Role of the Media in Deepening Democracy, Sheila S. Coronel (director, Stabile Center for Investigative Journalism, Columbia University, columnist, The Guardian), New York 2003, p.3.

²⁵ In the News, 2nd edition: The Practice of Media Relations in Canada, William Wray Carney, University of Alberta, Jul 2, 2012

In the absence of an approved strategic plan, the Directorate's view of its media relations mandate differs from what stakeholders expect in terms of outcomes, as evidenced by these sample interview comments:

[Senators] get hot with [us] for being too bureaucratic. But, if the news is specific to one senator, they have to release it themselves to the media. We work for the Speaker and Internal Economy.
–Directorate staff

An underlying principle of government communications is that information should flow freely to the public and media in a non-partisan way. I don't get the sense that applies to the Senate.
–Media representative

I don't understand what they do. What do they spend their time doing? Especially when I don't see what they are doing. It was probably a busy time [for media relations] during the apex of the scandal. They weren't really answering anything though.
–Senator

There is a difference in philosophy in terms of what I need to message to the media and what the Directorate should be messaging. I need that relationship [with reporters], and I don't want the Directorate to meddle in that. But at the same time, they should be able to talk about rule changes and so on, so I don't have to. I can explain the how and why; I need them to explain the what.
–Senate staff/official

Some Senators believe the Directorate should be offering more information to journalists more quickly—particularly anything that they see as already on the record or publically available.

Facts are facts so if we have nothing to hide, what's the problem? Everything I say in Committee or in Chamber is on the record so why can't we be more open about it? [The Directorate] must be freer to answer since everything we say is on record.

Findings:

- Without a strategic media relations plan to guide decision making, priority setting is left in the hands of authorities who may or may not understand media relations well enough to appreciate the impact of their decisions.
- Given that building public awareness is an objective, the Directorate is not maximizing the media to reach a primary and vital audience for the Senate.
- Media relations activities are contingent on resource availability, and subject to changing priorities.

7.1.1. Policies / Rules

The Directorate interacts with the media in a non-spokesperson capacity, providing background and answers to questions within the boundaries of a set of policies and directives.

SARs and Other Formal Directives

The Directorate requires that all questions from the media be submitted in writing. However, Section 3 of the SARs Principles specifies that this requirement can be waived. This occurs on occasion when a media question is for clarification. A verbal reply can be given on minor issues, otherwise a written reply is provided (for anything substantive). Generally speaking, though, exchanges with media are usually by email and are entered into a database and summarized in a daily media review (see page 26).

The SARs dictate that only published information (information that has been disseminated on an authorized basis to the general public) can be provided to the media. Unpublished information can be provided only with the approval of the CIBA Chair. Communications with external audiences not clearly authorized under these guidelines generally requires approval of the Senate Clerk and/or CIBA.

In addition, Senators who are the subject of an Access to Information and Privacy request must be informed. Further to this, SARs (Principle #1) stipulates that “In matters of access to information and privacy, the objectives of the Senate are... (b) to promote open government and public understanding of the work of the Senate and of Senators.”

In essence, it is understood by the Directorate that it will not provide the media with opinions or interpretations of rules / processes that will ultimately be decided by Senators, unless directly invited to do so. During an interview, the Principal Clerk indicated that “*actively offering information not requested or attempting to interpret questions can be perceived as being too subjective and liable to be misinterpreted by the government side or the opposition.*”

From the perspective of the journalists who interact with and cover the Senate, the directives the Directorate relies upon for guidance are not understood. Journalists believe there is some form of roadblock to information. In the extreme, some believe it to be political interference.

Overall my experience with the Senate, and particularly last year, is very frustrating. The quality of information coming to us is lacking. It's hard to pinpoint the cause of the stoppage.

They are very careful about their responses. I think they are afraid that Senators will get upset.

I feel that the answers I get are politicized. There's no other way to explain it—to explain the reason for not getting a full answer to a question.

This whole email business... I guess we have to accept this as reality, but it is rooted in politics. Those people [in the Directorate] are afraid they will say the wrong thing and will receive retribution. There really should be some autonomy there.

I question the neutrality of the Directorate. I wonder whether there is a direct pipeline into the PMO [on media responses]...

I think someone is trying to change the system.

Many of the Senators familiar with the SARs see them as inhibiting effective media relations. During interviews, these Senators expressed concern that the Directorate misinterprets the intent of the rules, or that it makes too rigid an interpretation, and that little political judgement is brought to their application.

Their hands (the Directorate's) are tied, even for a simple real-time process of answering requests from the media. They are handcuffed by the rules.

If I were media, I would find it very frustrating. I know that the media are trying to do their job and the Directorate is overrun by certain rules and parameters. Should we be revisiting what they can and can't share? I would develop disdain [if I were media] out of frustration.

Tell them to just do their job [with the media] and stop relying on the rules. Talk about what the Senate does, how committee structures work—these things are not highly partisan. Talk about the Senate and the good things it does. You don't need a lot of signoff on that, if any at all!

The SARs under which the Directorate operates stand in contrast to the media relations function at the House of Commons.

*The rule that guides me is the need to provide relevant, timely and accurate information to the media. The administration supports this approach.
- Director of Communications, Office of the Speaker of the House of Commons*

Senate / Media Agreement

At the time of this review (September – December 2014), there was a set of guidelines not in place that many felt should have been: an agreement between the Senate and the Parliamentary Press Gallery covering interactions between the Senate and the media, specifically as it related to the Senate foyer and Chamber.

Under the practice at the time, requests from media organizations to videotape, televise or take photographs in either the Senate foyer or the Senate Chamber were approved by the Speaker of the Senate. Requests typically came to the Directorate or to the Office of the Speaker. Those sent to the Directorate were forwarded to the Clerk for review and then to the Speaker for sign-off. Once approved, Senate Protective Services was advised, as were any other relevant areas of the Senate Administration. A Senator who arranged to be interviewed by a television reporter on camera in the foyer of the Senate could not technically grant permission to the journalist to do so.

(Since the end of January 2015, media requests to use the foyer (or any other room in the Senate) are handled directly by the Communications Directorate in consultation with the Usher of the Black Rod.)

Journalists wishing to use the foyer in the House of Commons, by contrast, do not require permission as it is considered accessible to them at all times. The Commons foyer is set up with pool microphones after each Question Period. The layout of the Commons foyer confines journalists to a rectangular black marble floor inlay which runs parallel to the doors entering the Chamber, the east and west walls,

and the stairs leading to the Members' entrance to Centre Block. The 'black line rule', as it has come to be called, specifies that scrums and interviews take place within this area, away from exits, corridors and office entrances.

The House of Commons has a written agreement with the Parliamentary Press Gallery for committee meetings. Any television network wishing to cover a Commons committee works directly with the committee clerk. If there are more than three requests to televise or tape the same committee on the same day, the agreement stipulates that a pool be organized. There is no such written agreement at the Senate (although there are cameras in most Senate committee rooms).

During interviews for this report, journalists often compared their experiences with the Senate to that of the House. While they understand the physical space is different, it is unclear why the processes that work on the House side cannot be replicated at the Senate.

In reference to the physical space, there needs to be a new system in place for access to the Senate foyer so that we can come with a camera. We know it is more complicated with the Senate than with the House of Commons. But the rules are not clear; the rules do not make sense.

We have been told there is an issue with noise. But on the House side, we have over 100 people every day doing scrums and interviews. The House leader's office and Prime Minister's offices are right there, and we have never heard complaints about that.

Journalists commented that not having a written agreement puts a strain on their relationship with Senate guards. They say the guards are in a difficult position as there is no clarity on where journalists can be, even when approval is given for an interview.

We don't have a written MOU with the Senate... This puts the guards in a position where they don't know what to say. House security is great. Every new recruit gets an orientation. We have a great relationship with them. Most Senate constables are good, but some are rude and touch the cameras.

It is often not possible for journalists to predict their need for the Senate foyer. Requests to do stand-ups or interviews, therefore, are often submitted at the last minute, depending on the news of the day. The process in place during this review was lengthy and approvals were often given at the last minute. The Parliamentary Press Gallery and individual news organizations and journalists had long voiced their concerns, and advocated for a written agreement with the Senate.

TV colleagues have difficulty doing stand-ups in the foyer. A system needs to be worked out that is better for interviewing Senators. During the suspensions, [the Senate] didn't want scrums in the foyer, so the Speaker held a press conference in the Chamber which was weird. The Senate Chamber is a place of decorum, and there were reporters all over the chairs. It wasn't appropriate.

A number of Senators interviewed agreed that a more streamlined approach to approvals was necessary.

Surely we can give or not give permission to set up in the main lobby without 10 emails, and surely if they want to interview Senators in the foyer it need not be a camera on the shoulder, and it doesn't have to take two or three days for permission to be granted. Can't someone decide yes or no -- it's not a major decision.

The Directorate also agreed that a written agreement would be a good idea. Indeed, the subject had been raised in a number of meetings between the Principal Clerk and the Chief of the Press Gallery.

*Having ready access to the Senate Chamber and foyer is an issue that always comes up in meetings with the Press Gallery. They have an MOU with the House of Commons that provides protocols for broadcasting, media access, pooling, etc. The fact that the Senate doesn't have this is an outstanding irritant for all of us.
–Directorate staff*

An MOU was drafted by the Gallery in March 1998²⁶ proposing a policy for access to the Senate foyer by journalists. In general, the policy recommendations were that, during working hours, the foyer be opened to journalists when no major installation is required and where access to the Chamber, stairs, etc. is not hampered; and that approval, including for long-term installations (e.g. budget and election days) rest with the CIBA Chair and Vice-Chair.

Findings

- While there are policies and directives governing interaction between the Directorate and the media, they are not based on media relations best practices.
- Media are frustrated as they do not understand the reasons behind the Directorate's behaviour and the lack of information provided to them.
- Senators are also frustrated, seemingly due to a lack of understanding of the rules guiding media responses and the manner in which those rules are interpreted.
- The Parliamentary Press Gallery, media organizations, journalists and the Directorate would like to have a written agreement regarding media's use of the Senate foyer.

7.1.2. Roles, Skills

All communications officer and assistant positions in the Directorate include media relations as part of their duties. The current job descriptions were authorized in 2004.

Prior to the Senate controversy in 2013, media relations responsibilities were covered within the job description of a single communications officer position (who had a number of other duties) within the Directorate. At the height of media interest during the scandal, the function evolved into a full-time position and has since seen the addition of a temporary junior communications assistant. Responsibilities of the assistant include clerical tasks, screening of incoming calls, compiling and distributing daily media summary, conducting social media monitoring, maintaining the media and public requests database, and compiling media lists. The media relations function is also responsible for maintaining the media section of the Senate website (the "Info for Media" button is prominent on the homepage). The media relations officer and assistant report to the Manager, Communications, who in

²⁶ Submission to the Standing Committee on Internal Economy, Budgets and Administration, Parliamentary Press Gallery, March 30, 1998

turn reports to the Principal Clerk. During the crisis, the full-time media relations officer handled all media requests, sourcing and distributing all responses to questions received.

Almost unanimously, journalists interviewed said the staff at the Directorate are friendly and polite, and that they don't believe that they are wholly responsible for the media relations issues.

In any dealings I've had with the Senate communications staff, they have been exceedingly courteous, professional, friendly, and interested in helping.

Everyone I've dealt with in the Senate is lovely and is doing the best they can.

These are good people stuck in a bad system.

My beef is not with the people who work [in the Directorate].

However, in terms of skill sets available within the media relations function, there was consensus that those skills don't reflect best practice media relations.

Their impression of what we need and want to report on is not what we need or want.

We will defend the people who work [in the Directorate], but there is without a doubt a lack of skills and expertise in logistics and media relations. Ninety per cent of the time they depend on us to help them out—where camera set-up should be.

There are no official spokespeople for the Senate. Journalists voiced their concerns about this during interviews.

The Senate does not offer institutional spokespeople. This is a group not used to dealing with communications, especially in crisis.

Findings:

- There is one full-time media relations position at the Communications Directorate, as the Senate faces 2015 when significant attention is expected.
- Journalists question the capabilities of the media relations staff currently in place.
- Without designated spokespeople, the Senate does not have a common voice to help inform the public through the media and to reduce the pressure of media requests on Senators and the Speaker.

7.1.3. Culture

The media relations culture at the Directorate is based on its reactive media relations approach (with proactive work limited to some media relations conducted on behalf of committees.) Media relations is either reactive or proactive. 'Reactive' means waiting until the media calls while 'proactive' is when an organization is more assertive and actively seeks out media opportunities.

*"I don't get a lot of outreach from [the Directorate].
I don't think they're structured in that way."*

- Reporter

There is no depth in the Directorate's responses... I think this is due to an institutional culture. No one used to call the Senate and ask questions. They went from zero to intense scrutiny, from irrelevance to high relevance. This was a shock for them... even when the question is straightforward or not sensitive, there is a huge lag—up to three days. And, there is no indication forthcoming of when a response can be expected or the reason for the delay. If you ask a question, you get the sense it is not appreciated.

- Reporter

The changes in technology have had significant impacts on the news cycle. Journalists used to be able to wait until the end of day or next day for a response from communications staff, now we do not have this luxury, especially when it is a basic question such as 'how does the system work'. This is not a political question.

- Reporter

On understanding the needs of the media (which is related to the issue of when information can be released; see Committees, section 7.2.)

We don't get briefings, there is no advance/lead time provided, and the pressure [on us] to issue our stories is enormous. An example is the release of the Senate report on Lac Mégantic. We had to read the report at the same time that it was being presented. This doesn't work for us.

- Reporter

On the issue of relationships:

We must develop more personalized approaches with journalists, with target media and with media influencers (content influencers, e.g. third party spokespeople/subject experts). Stakeholders sell our work. We must work with journalists Canada-wide and in the regions. Regional media are less critical/cynical. It is easier to get media coverage in the regions, penetration is better.

- Senator

On the issue of transparency:

When it is a controversial subject, media calls are not returned. If there is comment, it is obvious that it is simply media lines being repeated.

- Reporter

Senate Communications is pretty much closed. It is very difficult to receive a clear response, and responses are inadequate... They shut down during scandals.

- Reporter

The culture there is one of not answering the media's questions. To me it appears highly politicized. There is no reason not to answer a question based on technical issues. What other reason is there for not answering except political interference?

- Reporter

It's the quality of the response that is the biggest issue. We just want factual information. I understand [those in the Directorate] they can't make qualitative

comments, promote an individual Senator, or give their opinion. But they should be able to share technical or factual information. The core of the frustration is when you don't get a complete answer.
- Reporter

Communications Directorate staff are missing the mentality, the reflex to accommodate journalists. ... Our communications are reactive. They do not say too much because it will be negative. There is a culture of non-participation in communications that is always there, always repeated. They do not talk to journalists [but we] will be in the news anyway. News coverage is continuous.
- Senator

Findings

- The Senate uses a public information model²⁷ of communication between the institution and its stakeholders. It is a one-way system, using news releases and other one-way communication techniques to distribute institutional information.
- This is not a culture where the media are seen as a client. The media relations process is not client-centric, either internally for Senators and their staff or externally for media. The Senate's relationship with media is more adversarial than mutually beneficial.

7.1.4. Processes

There are a number of processes that support specific areas of media relations activity on the part of the Directorate. These are highly directive for the most part, and provide information based on Senate Administrative Rules.

Media requests

As per section 3 of the SARs, when a question or request for information comes from a reporter to the Directorate, it is required in writing. All queries are directed to a single email address which is monitored by the media relations officer. The Directorate has set a target of a 24-hour turn-around time on each request, subject to the complexity of the question, the availability of subject matter experts, and the current workload of the media relations officer. The question is formatted according to a standard template, draft replies are included (where possible), and this is forward to the applicable subject matter expert(s) and copied to the Manager, Media Relations and Communications Services, and the Principal Clerk. Replies are received from the subject matter experts and sometimes Directorate management will ask follow-up questions, make edits, or recommend wider consultation. Once all subject matter experts have approved their respective answers, the Principal Clerk (at the time of this review) reviewed the response against six criteria such as, could there be unintended perceptions based on response wording, etc. He then approved the release of the response or referred it to the Clerk for further consideration (and through the Clerk's office to the CIBA Steering Committee).

Interviews with journalists reveal that they are not familiar with the process just described.

I have no sense of the process. I assume it goes to more senior people than those in [the Directorate]. Maybe they approach the people with the content?

My experience is that media requests land on many eyes. My perception is that it goes all the way up to Speaker's office and back down again.

²⁷ Four Models of Public Relations and the Excellence Theory, James E. Grunig, 1984

It's the length of time that process takes that tells me the Directorate is waiting for someone's eyes to see it.

The media compare the process at the Senate with that of the House of Commons. There is consensus that the House process is superior because responses can be delivered immediately by phone, and the media relations officer seems to have the authority to respond to many media inquiries without consultation or approval.

Heather Bradley will pick up the phone and give you information quickly...she is very open with background, rules, etc. Keep in mind that the House of Commons is an obscenely huge bureaucracy, but they do media relations well.

You don't get the sense that they're vetting for political purposes the information they're giving you; that is not the case with the Senate. There is definitely no 'Heather' on the Senate side.

In comparison to the House, Senate Communications responds to reporters two to three days later. This is a missed opportunity.

On the House of Commons side, we have Heather Bradley. She is good with same-day responses, and will answer the question or advise 'I can't tell you' in the sweetest way. She is comfortable, clear, and has held this position for a number of years.

Timeliness was raised by every journalist interviewed. They see a direct link between timeliness and the Senate's process for responding to media inquiries.

[Directorate staff] will ask what the deadline is, and then respond minutes before the deadline with general, non-specific answers. This is not helpful.

I don't expect an answer in 15 minutes (although this would be ideal). But the Senate is, in effect, writing themselves out of stories.

With [Directorate] staff, it takes an eternity. In my view [their process] is not efficient, and simply adds to the perception that the Senate is not transparent and accountable to Canadians.

To gather the information they need, journalists said they either circumvent the formal process or adapt through other means.

Email written consent [for media set up in the foyer] takes hours for approval, and everything happens at the last minute. So now, I submit a request weekly for permission in the broadest terms, for 5:00 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. each day that week, but even then approval can still take days.

The Leaders' offices are more useful, filling the communications gap by providing answers in a timely way. I get responses faster from opposition and government leaders' offices than the people paid to do this.

If I require a comment I go directly to the Senator's office to get it on time. I will go to the source for an explanation. I am more likely to get an answer when I need a fast turnaround, as in 30 minutes to an hour. I would say that there is an increased reliance on communicating directly with Senators' offices due to the lag time in dealing with [the Directorate].

Like the media, most Senators interviewed were not familiar with the process involved in responding to media inquiries, but indicated that no matter what happens internally, it takes too long to get back to reporters.

If media send a question to Senate communications, it takes three days for a response. This is nonsense.

We need to find a mechanism that is capable of providing a quick response on certain subjects. Media have 10 seconds to report in real-time. We do not respond quickly. It reaffirms in their eyes that this institution is not efficient.

The Directorate answered 1,311 media requests between April 1, 2013 and March 31, 2014, an unprecedented number for the Senate. (Included in this figure are 55 filming requests and 35 interview requests.²⁸)

Media Request Updates

The Media Request Updates is a bilingual report compiled daily and distributed to CIBA including ex-officio members. The media relations officer gathers all questions received throughout the day and adds the responses in both official languages (even where responses are in draft and awaiting approval).

Of the Senators interviewed who are on the recipient list, most did not mention the daily email. Those who did remark on it see it as further confirmation that answers to reporters' queries are insufficient.

I am so appalled by the way the Senate handles media relations. I see the daily media query report, and I can say that if I were a reporter all my warning flags would go up. [I'd think] "They don't believe in the public's right to know anything. It looks like they have something to hide." It all takes too long and sets up warning bells with reporters.

One of the most frustrating aspects is when you look at two media requests [that are similar] and it still takes so long to respond.

Every day, (and I don't know why) I see all the requests from media and there was a question from media about the new sign. They wouldn't answer it – just said it cost less than \$10K.

Daily Media Review

Each weekday, the Directorate prepares the Daily Media Review using a customized application to summarize and categorize media clippings pertaining to the Senate. The media review is compiled by the media relations assistant, who begins the process at 7:00 a.m. EST. It involves summarizing all

²⁸ Senate Communications Directorate Report on Activities 2013-2014, July 2014

articles imported through Newsdesk (service provided by the Library of Parliament using key word filters supplied by the Directorate), categorizing each article (e.g. Senate business, Senate reform, individual Senator, etc.), and providing a brief summary (typically a few lines) and a link to the full article housed on IntraSen. The Directorate receives articles from major national and regional print outlets, national television networks and some political publications such as the Hill Times. Online articles or those covered by broadcast media, social media, and smaller national and regional outlets are not included for budgetary reasons.

The daily media review is distributed to all Senators, political staff, Senate officials, and staff within Senate Administration, via email, by 9:00 a.m. EST. Recipients can view the summary from their Senate (ISD)-assigned and serviced handheld device (Blackberry) or desktop, and can open links to articles on IntraSen while physically within the parliamentary network, however they cannot access the links when they are not within the network, a source of frustration. When the Senate is not in session (and therefore not within the parliamentary network), articles are sent as PDF attachments to the email. According to the results of the survey of Senators, only 26 per cent of Senators are positive about the daily media review.

News releases

The Directorate also issues a large number of news releases each year, (in 2013-2014, Communications Officers and other Directorate staff drafted and issued 77 news releases, including those to announce Chair and Deputy Chair appointments)²⁹. News release topics include committee study announcements, plans for fact finding trips or public hearings outside of Ottawa, report launches, appointment or retirement announcements, special events, statements by Internal Economy, and statements from the Speaker. The Directorate generates releases upon request though occasionally, one will be drafted proactively when it is determined that it is appropriate to an occasion (such as a retirement announcement.) The Directorate has developed templates with letterhead and other guidance documents for use by Senators; they are available on IntraSen (see Internal Communications.) It also develops targeted media lists on request.

The process to create and issue a release includes 20 individual steps (see Appendix H.) The complexity is related to the need to secure multiple approvals. The Directorate is not authorized to issue news releases on its own, nor can it issue releases on behalf of individual Senators or on partisan issues. Releases are typically distributed through the Parliamentary Press Gallery; Canada NewsWire is also used.

News releases issued on behalf of Committees require the approval of both the chair and deputy chair before they can be distributed. Limited follow-up with the media and stakeholders is conducted by the Directorate, based on direction from Steering and the level of interest groups have shown in a study. In addition to Parliamentary Press Gallery distribution, each committee has study-specific media lists that are researched by the Directorate.

The Directorate does not track any data to assess news release distribution against media reporting, nor are releases tracked or referred to in the Daily Media Review.

²⁹ Communications Directorate 2013 - 2104 Activities Report

Weekly Look-Ahead List

This list is an email generated by Directorate staff identifying notable Senate activity in the week ahead, including studies in committee, key witnesses, and Chamber debates.

A number of journalists are not aware that the Weekly Look-Ahead List exists, but raised it as something that would be of value to them.

I recommend that a weekly look ahead report be made available on the website or push this out to interested media/stakeholders.

- Reporter

I'd like to see a weekly look-ahead email identifying upcoming reports and why they are relevant, issued this each Monday morning.

- Reporter

Findings:

- The Directorate is trying to operate in a non-partisan fashion, but the process by which they do that leaves the media with the impression that they are a highly political function.
- The mandate and processes for this function are neither clear nor part of the corporate memory of the institution.
- Media relations approaches and processes are oriented around the provision of as little information as possible (as opposed to the attempt to achieve a win-win outcome).
- IT and Communications do not work as a single system, resulting in uneven access to links and documents via mobile, iPad and desktop.
- Securing government and opposition approvals for news releases and other media materials has a negative impact on their timeliness with the result that news value can be lost.

Crisis Media Relations

Media relations is a key component of crisis communications. There are a several accepted guiding principles for effective crisis communications. These include identifying a point person for the media (and a back-up), having a spokesperson to handle the routine communications, appointing a crisis leader (with a backup), having a crisis communications plan, having tools in place to monitor the news media and social media, and being forthcoming with information.

During the spending / residency issues of 2013, the Directorate created a formal crisis reaction team for the Administration, to coordinate key personnel. When an issue relevant to CIBA arose in the media, the team brought it to their attention, and the appropriate managers (human resources, law clerk, etc.) were advised by email of issues relevant to them or to the Administration. An early morning debrief on the article / issue in question was arranged; its purpose was to determine each issue's relevance and to assess quickly what was known / not known, public / not public. Information that was considered public according to the Senate Administrative Rules (SARs) could be used to draft responses but information that was being requested but not considered public would be presented to the Clerk for consideration, as a draft response. According to the SARs, the Clerk may choose to waive a rule himself in certain instances, or refer the matter to Steering. Following the debrief, the Directorate prepared Qs&As based on what was expected from the media that day. The Principal Clerk, the Manager of Communications and a media relations officer also monitored RSS and Twitter feeds.

According to the Principal Clerk, the Directorate relied on feedback from the Steering Committee of Internal Economy to guide this activity and their responses to the media. He indicated that Steering Committee and CIBA expressed their appreciation for being kept up-to-date on current issues and the Directorate's work. The Clerk also characterized this process as effective.

From February to June 2013, the Principal Clerk created media wrap-up documents, first for the Steering Committee and then for a larger group of Senators. The purpose was to ensure the Directorate's activities and messages were appropriate.

During this period, the media relations officer was not authorized to provide substantive replies to the media but rather could speak with journalists directly to explain the process and to apologize for the length of time required to respond to their questions. When the new Chair of CIBA was appointed, he permitted this sharing of information on process, in part to address media frustration.

In terms of media outreach during the crisis, the media relations officer connected with reporters via email, as directed by Senate rules. Some Senators spoke to the media either in their roles as Senate Leader for Government or Opposition, as chair or deputy chair of CIBA, or as individual Senators.

Directorate staff felt their response to the crisis worked as well as the rules around media relations process would permit.

Our media relations process is not crisis management oriented, but rather oriented around the provision of information. If the expectation [on the part of Senators] was that the crisis team would mitigate the effects of the media [during the crisis], we were not set up to do that.
–Directorate staff

However, others disagree.

[During the crisis] there was no order, no sanity. [The Directorate] felt under siege and they turtled, and just wouldn't talk. So we thought to ourselves, we can do this better. I asked for a phone number for a non-political person. They couldn't provide that information citing 'that information is not published' or 'not publically available. I don't understand that language; it sounds like we can't have it, but no explanation for why.
–Reporter

Actions by the Communications Directorate during the crisis were bad. We were put into the fire. It was badly managed.
–Senator

Findings

- Based on the quality of media coverage, relationships with media and the sense of abandonment by Senators, crisis media relations efforts were not strategic or effective.
- Despite known issues on the near horizon (e.g. Auditor General's report, criminal court cases), a (crisis) media relations plan has not yet been put into place, nor have key learnings modified media relations processes. The Communications Directorate feels that this is due, in part, to the decision to wait until the results of the Communications Functional Review.

Media Coverage Measurement

One common thread throughout much of media relations measurement is the idea of showing value back to the organization.³⁰

Media coverage of the Senate can be broadly divided into two main areas: Senate work and administration. Generally speaking, committee work—meetings, witnesses, reports, etc.—is promoted to the media proactively through news releases (as mentioned earlier), Twitter or news conferences. Reporting is generally fact-based and neutral in tone, except during the crisis, when the majority of coverage was negative.

Media reports on the administration of the Senate reviewed for this report tend to be negative in tone (as assessed by Blueprint Public Relations) despite the Directorate's media analysis which identifies most of this coverage as neutral or positive. (It should be noted that the Directorate assesses the tone of print media coverage only.) For example, in 2013 there were 23,796 print media stories about the Senate. Of those, 23,719 were judged to be neutral in tone, 41 negative and 35 positive³¹. Tone is determined subjectively by a Directorate staff person who assesses fact-based coverage as neutral, for example news about a bill being passed by the Senate. The staff person judges coverage as positive or negative based on their interpretation of how the Senate is characterized.

Media coverage is measured in terms of number of hits (one hit is one story appearing in one newspaper, for example; if the same story appears in other papers, those are counted as additional hits), media type (broadcast, print, etc.), and tone (subjective qualification of the tenor of the story—positive, neutral or negative). Media coverage statistics are segmented by category (individual Senators, party politics, Senate business, Senate committees, Senate reform, letters to the editor, former Senator, and 'other'). From this information, two reports are generated: Media Coverage Statistics by Category, and Committee Media Coverage Statistics (number of hits categorized by committee). From October 16, 2013 to September 16, 2014, individual Senators garnered the most hits, at 34,678 (the next closest is party politics at 7,937 hits).

The Directorate maintains a Media Qs&As database, implemented in early 2013. Every media inquiry is entered into the database, and it tracks the response and approvals process. Responses are entered in both official languages. The database serves as a reference point, and helps ensure consistency of messaging.

Findings

- Media relations activity is measured in terms of outputs (e.g. number of hits) as opposed to impact (comprehensive review of quality of coverage), or cost (e.g. number of hours required for a particular campaign versus the volume and quality of coverage generated.) This form of measurement is not considered a media relations best practice as it cannot tie back to media relations goals and strategy, nor can it be used to adapt activity based on results.

7.2. Committee support

³⁰ The Academic Inquiry of Media Relations as both a Tactical and Strategic Function of Public Relations, Institute for Public Relations, Dustin W. Supa, September 17, 2014

³¹ Senate Communications Media Coverage Statistics 1/1/2013 - 12/31/2013; printed on 2015-01-06

The work done by Senate committees is generally viewed—by Senators, media and experts—as substantive and of great value.

I tell lawyers how often Senate committees are mentioned in Supreme Court of Canada judgments. They look at speeches including those in the Senate. We have more time, [and can do] more intensive questioning.
- Senator

When compared to the House of Commons, Senate committees are more in-depth, more experienced, involve more Deputy Ministers, and ask the pointed questions. Senate Committees tackle “orphan” issues, issues that don’t belong to federal departments and are not on the radar of various departments. They are ahead of the curve.
- journalist

Canadians should know about the studies we do and the fact that we’re not partisan so there is a more balanced view. Witnesses want to come to our hearings ... they find the discussion elevated.
- Senator

The Senate can do a detailed drill down on critical issues of national importance. The level of detail needed to produce consensus and substantive results wouldn’t have happened in the House.
- expert

The witnesses who present and participate in committees must be well prepared. Our questions are more profound, more pointed, we are better prepared... we have a higher focus on content, not speech-making.
- Senator

7.2.1. Roles and responsibilities

The Senate had 16 Standing Committees, three Special Committees and three Joint Committees at time of writing.³² Of those, approximately 14 to 17 are active at any one time; communications officers are responsible for supporting three to four committees each, which generally represents a mix of active and less active committees³³. They may also be assigned additional committees on an ad hoc basis. This is based on a consulting model where communications support is assigned from a central directorate. The key is that committees must request the support. The Principal Clerk sees it as an efficient model and effective if it is used properly.

According to the Committees Directorate, the committee chair, deputy chair or the steering committee “generally direct the communications officers on the following matters:

- the development of communications plans;
- providing guidance on communications services required;
- giving instructions to the communications officer when media advisories and news releases should be prepared; and
- reviewing and approving news releases.”³⁴

³² <http://www.parl.gc.ca/SenCommitteeBusiness/default.aspx?parl=35&ses=1&Language=E>, December 2, 2014

³³ Communications Directorate: Directorate Executive Overview for the Main Estimates 2015-2016 page 4

³⁴ Practical Guide for Senate Committee Chairs and Deputy Chairs, November 2014 page 6

A handbook produced by the Senate also offers a summary of the communications officer's role³⁵:
Communications officers provide neutral and non-partisan communications advice, products, and services to Senate committees at the request and under the direction of the steering committee. The communications officer works closely with the analyst, who ensures all communications materials are factually correct, and with the clerk, who ensures all communications materials and strategies are procedurally correct.

Communications planning is conducted with direction from the steering committee. Approvals for committee products, such as news releases, are based on the principle of consensus between the chair and deputy chair. Therefore, nothing can be distributed without the dual consent of both of the chair and the deputy chair on behalf of the committee.

Unless otherwise directed, the communications officer produces and disseminates tweets in advance of every committee meeting. Notice of Meeting information is automatically distributed to media lists using lists generated by the Communications Directorate.

Depending on whether the committee is travelling to hold public hearings or conduct fact finding visits, holding public hearings in Ottawa on high profile issues, or tabling a report on a study it has been conducting, the communications officer provides a range of services such as developing media advisories and news releases, coordinating media interviews or related outreach opportunities, developing appropriate digital communications products such as report microsites/digital press kits (RMS/DPK) when reports are tabled, and even candid photography for the purposes of the @SenateCA institutional Twitter feed.

7.2.2. Work process

As noted in the handbook, officers work with the committee clerk and an analyst. There is no formal relationship among them, instead their working relationship is based on convention and / or personalities. Because analysts are considered the content experts for committees, communications officers cannot release any material (media release, op-ed piece, infographic), without an analyst having reviewed the content. Communications officers have indicated that some analysts will not provide this assistance either because it is not a formal part of their job description or because they do not have the time. Analysts *do* review news releases though turn-around time varies. Officers report some difficult exchanges with analysts regarding requests for assistance.

When developing materials to support the report's release, officers turn to the executive summary for the report's main points, which is often written in a more straightforward and less technical manner than the main document. However, not all committees ask their analyst to write an executive summary and the communications officer cannot request one since the summary is considered part of the report and not a communications tool. This can result in extensive back and forth with the analyst to understand the recommendations and to assess their newsworthiness.

At one time, communications officers attended all committee meetings (there could be up to four sitting at any one time, in multiple time slots) with the idea that they would become knowledgeable about the subject matter and be able to create communications materials, and source media interest, more effectively. This changed in 2010, when the Directorate determined that officers could decide for themselves, and in

³⁵ IBID, page 16

consultation with Steering, which meetings to attend based on the potential for media interest and their own workload; they could also attend as requested by the Chair or Steering. The decision was based in part on anecdotal feedback from some Senators who questioned the purpose of communications officers sitting in committee meetings with 'nothing to do'. Given this, and the Directorate's general workload, it was felt that the officers could use their time more efficiently.

Finally, communications officers may travel with committees. They would organize interviews and photo opportunities and develop social media content. Travelling with a committee also provides an opportunity for the officer to build relationships with regional media, and to discuss issues more fully with senators and other committee staff.

7.2.3. Media relations

The Directorate reports that few committees appear to consider communications planning at the outset of a study. If there is planning, it is done informally and often without inviting the communications officer to participate. More typically, officers are asked to write and disseminate media advisories and media releases when a committee report is ready for release. Depending on the working relationship with the Committee, the officer may have several weeks or several days' notice of the committee's intent to table the report. The Directorate reports that this is often the first time a communications officer is asked to meet with Steering.

In developing the media materials, officers report challenges in securing timely approvals. Some Senators prefer to be contacted through their staff, or may simply not reply to emailed requests for approval. This can lead to delays in translation and distribution. If approvals come late on Fridays, officers are reluctant to issue media releases at that time as it could signal that the Senate Committee has something to hide; typically, issuing the release is moved to the following week.

There are other challenges with the timing of when reports are tabled, that have an impact on media coverage. These were noted in a 2008 briefing note written by the Directorate: "Reports from Senate committees are normally tabled in the Senate Chamber as the second item in the Daily Routine of Business. In practice, this means that most committee reports are tabled at approximately 2:30 p.m. in the afternoon on a Tuesday, or 2:00 p.m. on a Wednesday or Thursday, according to Rule 23.6 in the Rules of the Senate."³⁶

When a report is tabled on a Thursday, committee spokespersons may not be available for media interviews as they are often travelling home on those afternoons. In addition, most committees will schedule a press conference in the National Press Theatre for 3:45 p.m., the earliest time the theatre is available on days when the House of Commons is sitting. This timing does not typically work for traditional media who have determined which stories to pursue in the morning, and who will file throughout the day. According to the Directorate, officers encourage use of the National Press Theatre since simultaneous interpretation is available, and there is seating for Senators as opposed to using a podium.

All committee reports must be tabled in the Chamber before being made public; therefore, it is a breach of parliamentary privilege to provide embargoed copies to journalists. This also makes it difficult for a reporter to read and understand the report sufficiently to report on it, within deadline.

³⁶ K. Schwinghammer briefing note 2008

The challenge is that the Directorate is unable to provide information unless it's about something that has already occurred. If the Senate were to say Senator so and so will rise and speak to this issue and then he/she can't, that's a problem for the Directorate. But they could say, such and such a bill will be debated today.

- Senator's staff person

Most reports are tabled in June and December, just prior to Parliamentary breaks; if a report is tabled just before a constituency break week, the spokesperson (always a Senator) may not be available to media the following week. There are exceptions to this; some committees have tabled reports in the summer and received media coverage as there are fewer competing Parliamentary stories. They do this by employing Rule 28.1 of the *Rules of the Senate* which states:

Whenever an Act of Parliament, or any resolution or rule of the Senate, requires that a return or report be laid before the Senate, the same may be deposited with the Clerk of the Senate. When so deposited, such return, report or other paper shall be deemed for all purposes to have been presented or laid before the Senate.

The Senate must give a Senate committee permission to use the rule and if that is done, Senators have been given notice that a report will be back-tabled.³⁷ The downside is that staff may not be available in the summer.

Finally, there is no overall coordination of report tabling with the result that more than one Senate report can be tabled in a week, thus making it difficult to secure media interest given the sheer volume. Many media outlets will assign a single reporter; covering more than one report is not possible with those resources. A few Senators noted this:

Report releases need to be planned; Communications Directorate support is needed and we need buy-in from Senators.

While communications finds it challenging to support some committees, many Senators are frustrated by the *lack* of communications support for committees, and expressed this during the interviews:

I have no idea who the communications person on our committee is. They don't even attend when the minister attends our committee even though the media will scrum the minister outside the room. There is no one to manage the media.

Someone from communications attended some of the [committee] meetings, but didn't make their presence or purpose apparent, and provided no value.

In our ... committee, we released a report at 3:00 p.m. and we had a Senate communications officer attached who went home at 4:30 p.m. and didn't tell anyone. Another time we had a communications officer sit through prolonged hearings and at the end we needed a press release and the communications officer asked my staff to write the release.

³⁷ Informing Canadians about the Substantial Work of Senate Committees, draft briefing note, October 9, 2008

We had a press conference...but nothing after that. There should have been media, and [communications should have been] more proactive. We don't have people with media connections who have built up relationships [with the media.]

Only a few Senators feel positively or are neutral:

[Communications should] move more towards committee work. There is a real opportunity for them there. People appreciate them. [Our] committee communications person travelled with us. Just needed to train them a bit — real basic stuff.

It's easy to criticize the Directorate, but ... two opposing positions, how do you communicate that fairly? Communications person assigned to a committee is trying to balance both sides, which makes [content] boring. They don't dare to use their creative energy. That is a major problem.

Communications people can only do what they are asked to do. I am not sure that they are fulfilling it very well but it's not one sided. Senators have to take responsibility too.

A few interviewees identified individual communications officers, rather than the Directorate, in their comments:

With committee work, we have been fortunate. [Name] has been there since I got here. She does a good job about getting information out on our reports, and all communications around it; she has done an excellent job.
- Senator

Regarding committee support, I really like my communications person. If everyone could be like her, it would solve a lot of our problems. She is fantastic, she was in at the beginning, mapped out a plan with me, we get together often to discuss, but I hear that not everyone is like that and that others are not as proactive.
- Senator's staff person

As noted, many Senators are unfamiliar with the communications officer assigned to their committees. According to the Directorate, this is due in part to the fact that communications officers may work solely with the Steering Committees, and in the absence of Steering meetings, through email, which may end up being email exchanges with a Senator's staff person. As noted earlier, communications officers attend fewer committee meetings than they did prior to 2010. The Directorate also noted the demise of the "working meal"; these took place at least once, and often twice, weekly but are no longer in place. They provided a less formal opportunity for communications officers to connect with committee members and to build a relationship with them.

As a result of Senators' views on communications support for committees, some use part of their budget to hire external communications consultants. Senators interviewed felt the expense was worthwhile.

We 'get it done right' [coverage for committee reports] by paying for experienced consultants.

[Our] committee hired our own PR people; it worked well. We put it in as part of budget request to hire outside communications people.

Communications officers report occasions when outside consultants produced materials for a committee but no approvals were provided and the materials were never released.

Findings:

- Committee chairs have the authority to identify their communications needs and to direct communications staff, which results in those staff generally providing tactical support.
- Some Senators report high satisfaction with the service provided by the communications officer assigned to their committee.
- There is no central authority prioritizing the communications support to committees or planning the report releases to maximize media coverage and stakeholder support.
- Senate rules regarding the timing of information release do not align with media relations best practices or the news cycle.

7.3. Digital Presence

The Senate's digital presence was reviewed in context of the overall communications function. Specifically, the Senate's digital channels were assessed according to criteria related to audiences, objectives, governance and the technology being used. The channels reviewed included the Senate website (as well as its sub-sites), the Committee website, Senators' websites, ParlVu, digital tools such as e-books and infographics, applications such as PARLinfo and LEGISinfo, the Twitter feed and the internal website IntraSen. The parl.gc.ca website was also reviewed as it functions as the main gateway for all Canadians to Parliament, including the Senate. Members of the Communications Directorate as well as staff from the Information Systems Directorate were interviewed to help gather the necessary information. See Appendix B for the full assessment report; a summary is provided here.

7.3.1. Governance

An important component of managing one's digital presence and digital communications is a clear governance process. As described in the White House Digital Governance Strategy, for example, "a well-developed governance structure at each agency is essential to satisfy the public's expectation and right to the best possible level of service [...] The ultimate goals of governance are to empower and accelerate an agency's ability to make informed digital services decisions and to help an agency achieve [its] goals."³⁸

The Parliamentary Information Management framework is a governance initiative of the Clerks of the Senate and House of Commons, and the Parliamentary Librarian who worked together to improve how information is presented online. The Information Services Directorate and the Communications Directorate are both represented on the Parliamentary Information Management Committee (PIM), which provides guidance around how information management is shared by the House of Commons, Library of Parliament and Senate. Guidance is based on the PIM Vision, which was developed in 2004. The PIM vision does not, however, address a joint digital communications or content management strategy for the three bodies and within the Senate itself. There is no formal digital governance process among the

³⁸ Supporting Implementation of Digital Services Governance Structures in the Federal Government August 23, 2012 <http://www.whitehouse.gov/digitalgov/digital-services-governance-recommendations#definitions>

directorates of the Senate Administration, and thus no basis from which to align a content plan and key messages, guide web development or ensure efficient use of resources (both technical and human).

The PIM committee's work has resulted in the redesign of the parl.gc.ca website home page with a common global navigation tool bar that remains in place throughout the entire site, even on the Senate portal, and an overhaul of how bills and the progress of bills are presented to visitors through LEGISInfo. LEGISInfo is an online tool providing electronic access to a wide range of information on current bills. These initiatives were undertaken and launched in April 2011³⁹.

A subsequent detailed audit and user research conducted in November and December of 2011 for the House of Commons⁴⁰ revealed that "the different visual design approaches and navigation structure employed across the House of Commons and the Senate websites in almost every section causes significant usability issues. Users need to have a much more seamless experience as they move through the Parliament of Canada website."

Specific recommendations from the study included working on a more unified look and feel, and navigation structure, for the entire Parliament of Canada website. This would start with a "significant review of the entire Parliament of Canada's information architecture to identify opportunities to reduce duplication and overlap while grouping more relevant content together [...] Moving away from a siloed organization-centric approach will have a significant impact on the user experience."

It appears that some of the recommendations in this report were executed, namely simplifying top level pages or landing pages, on parl.gc.ca, and creating quick links to sought after information with more descriptive text. However, the bigger underlying issues, such as the inconsistent navigation and structure, as well as the duplication of information between the House of Commons and Senate web sites, are still present. For example, under parl.gc.ca's "How Government Works", there is a section called "The Senate Today" that leads to an entirely different micro-site apart from the Senate portal⁴¹.

Although the majority of visitors have no problem finding the Senate portal—40% of traffic to sen.parl.gc.ca originates directly from a search and 37% use the portal URL itself—it is important to be aware of the issues just noted and of the role of parl.gc.ca in the digital strategy of the Senate. There is a significant amount of back and forth navigation between the parl.gc.ca and the Senate portal; for example, all Committee content is under the parl.gc.ca domain, outside of the Senate portal.

Findings:

- The success and the efficacy of the Senate portal as a communications tool is linked to that of the main "umbrella" site parl.gc.ca, given the amount of back and forth navigation between the Parliament of Canada main site and the Senate portal, specifically as it relates to information about Senators and committee content. The Communications Directorate has no authority over the parl.gc.ca site.
- The Parliamentary Information Management Committee provides guidance around how information management is shared by the House of Commons, Library of Parliament and Senate. However, there does not appear to be an overarching digital or editorial content strategy among the House of Commons, Library of Parliament and Senate.

³⁹ Senate Portal Renewal Initiative, Vision and Scope, May 12, 2011

⁴⁰ *Parliament of Canada Web Site Review. Quantitative and Qualitative Research Findings Presentation*, March 2012, Phase 5

⁴¹ <http://www.parl.gc.ca/AboutHowParlWorks.aspx?Language=E>

7.3.2. Senate web portal and websites

*“Consistency is one of the most powerful usability principles: when things always behave the same, users don’t have to worry about what will happen. The more users’ expectations prove right, the more they will feel in control of the system and the more they will like it. And the more the system breaks users’ expectations, the more they will feel insecure.”*⁴²

Organizations and government bodies now have more control over their message than ever before with the proliferation of “owned media” such as websites, blogs and social platforms, thereby increasing their ability to reach the public and other stakeholders directly. In June 2010, the Communications Directorate took ownership of the sen.parl.gc.ca web address. A May 2011 report, *Senate Portal Renewal Initiative. Vision and Scope*, specifies that the Senate web site is valuable “web real estate that could be harnessed as a communications vehicle for promoting the work of the Senate and be used as a stepping stone for forging informed relationships between citizens and Senators”.

The document outlines several initiatives under “scope of work” for the Senate portal revamp including: the development and implementation of a comprehensive governance framework; the development of editorial, publishing and technical guidelines for the entire site; ensuring a common look and feel throughout the site and articulating a clear vision for the long term development of the portal. The governance framework including the development of a “shared, overarching long term strategic vision”, does not seem to have been fully realized, due to the lack of an approved strategic direction.

The document specifies that one of the goals of the “renewal initiative” was to “create a flexible web interface for easy updates and scalability of content”. However, several ad hoc “micro websites”, some with their own web content management systems, have been developed over time. Although the Directorate reviews the graphics for new web initiatives, these sites each have their own layout and navigation structure. These ‘micro’ websites include those for: the Speaker of the Senate, individual Senators, the Senate page program, HR’s Working at the Senate, Committees overall and Committee reports, and the Senate Ethics Officer. Some of them appear under the Senate global navigation bar, some are totally separate sites and some are under the Parliament of Canada header only. The Directorate has developed the committee report micro sites (RMS) and they manage the photos / graphics on the Committee home page.

The content on the Senate website is managed by the Directorate. Some content is posted directly by Directorate staff (graphic designers) such as ‘micro site’ reports but more technical work is managed by Information Systems Directorate staff. For example, news releases are produced in Word by the Directorate and sent to all Senate staff. Information Systems staff converts the documents to HTML, posts them on the website and creates the pointer for the RSS feed. Special projects such as micro websites for studies, reports or e-books (requiring resources from both the Directorate and Information Systems) are largely done ad hoc and not prioritized against an overarching road map or action plan.

Google Analytics have been implemented on most pages and data is reviewed by staff, in particular the lead on digital engagement. However, statistics are not widely disseminated or discussed to guide editorial decisions. As mentioned in the previous section, there does not seem to be a formal process among the directorates of the Senate from which to align a content plan and key messages, guide web development or ensure efficient use of resources (both technical and human). This is also the case for Senators’ individual websites. There is no shared vision or agreed upon standards for a common look

⁴² Top 10 mistakes in Web design. Nielsen Norman Group, a leading voice in user experience <http://www.nngroup.com/articles/top-10-mistakes-web-design/>

and feel to facilitate search and navigation for the general public. Information Systems Directorate developed a common template with a content management system for the Senators' websites with five layout choices. However, according to Information Systems staff, only about 50 Senators use the template while others have engaged outside agencies to develop standalone sites, some with separate content management systems. If Senators choose to build their own site, Information Systems will not maintain it; however, it will provide server space to host the site. Adding to the lack of consistency is the fact that the Senators' bios are found on all three main sites (House of Commons, Senate and Library of Parliament), all in slightly different layouts. The lack of consistency among Senators' websites likely impacts the audience's ability to navigate the Senate website and find information about Senators. (Note that as of early 2015, PIM is leading a project to unify the biographical information for Senators and Members of Parliament.)

Findings:

- There is no formal process in place among the Senate Directorates guiding web development or digital content; most initiatives and special projects are being done ad hoc.
- The number of 'mini websites' and the lack of consistency among Senators' websites have resulted in a fragmented and somewhat confusing online presence.
- Without a digital strategy and agreed upon goals, it is difficult to measure the impact of the Senate's digital channels and tools.

7.3.3. Website Statistics

Key findings from a high level review of Google Analytics data for the sen.parl.gc.ca web site are presented here; they complement the findings of the digital tools assessment (see Appendix B.) In the absence of an overarching web or digital strategy, as noted previously, the statistics cannot be evaluated against stated objectives or desired outcomes. Also, certain pages of potentially high interest to Senate audiences such as the Committee website, are not part of this analysis as they reside under the parl.gc.ca domain. The following analysis is functional—insights are gleaned from the stats alone rather than based on outcome and impact. See Appendix C for the full report.

Visits

The sen.parl.gc.ca site receives an average 37,078 visits (or sessions) per month⁴³. To determine if this number of visits is high or low, the Directorate would need to enable benchmarking reports in Google Analytics, which would permit comparisons with other government sites that also share their data. The benchmarking reports allow anonymous data sharing and comparison with other 'like' organizations. Google removes all identifiable information about the domain (URL), combines the data for comparable industries and reports the aggregate results in the benchmarking reports section of Analytics.

More than 60 per cent of the visitors to parl.gc.ca (62.7 per cent) are first time users (unique users) and 37.3 per cent are returning. A high number of new visitors a month suggests that the Senate is successful at generating visits to the site and/or that there is a high level of interest from Canadians searching for information on the Senate. However, the lower number of return visits indicates that once users visit the site, they don't feel a need to return or they were unsatisfied with their visit.

⁴³ This includes visits to the site from staff and Senators; the internal domain name / IP address has not been removed from Google Analytics.

Of the total visits to the site within the last year, 16 per cent were on mobile devices. Of mobile visitors, 44 per cent were accessing with an iPad, and 26 per cent via iPhone. It is expected this number will continue to grow as more and more Canadians consume content via mobile devices.

Time on Site

On average, visitors are spending 2.24 minutes on the site and visiting 2.4 web pages. This statistic would be encouraging; however, after removing the extreme maximums and minimums found in the “average time spent” metric and reviewing the “engagement statistics”, one can see that more than half the visitors to the site are staying approximately 10 seconds. This could indicate that visitors are not finding what they are looking for or that the links are not delivering what was expected. However, only a more thorough usability study, combined with stakeholder analysis, would uncover the true nature of the low engagement.

Content and Source of Traffic

An analysis of the top ten pages viewed over the span of a year indicates that visitors are largely coming to sen.parl.gc.ca looking for information about specific Senators or to access parliamentary information such as debates and journals. A small percentage were looking for student employment. *It is important to note that the committee website(s), housed under the parl.gc.ca domain, are not included in these statistics as we did not have access to those analytics under the sen.gc.ca Google Analytics account.

The top source of traffic to sen.parl.gc.ca (40 per cent of visits) originated from key word search with Google being the search engine of choice. The second source, at 37 per cent, was direct visits to the site likely from repeat visitors who have bookmarked the address. Twenty-two percent came through referrals / links from other sites. The main referring sites were parl.gc.ca and from within the Senate portal itself. Two per cent (2%) came as a result of a post via social media (indicating there is room to grow the engagement with this channel) and one per cent came via direct email marketing (likely the daily news summary).

A further analysis of these channels was done against their associated “bounce rates”. (A bounce rate is the percentage of visitors who leave the website after viewing just one page. Bounce rates, along with traffic source, is a general indicator of the efficacy of that channel in pointing visitors to useful or engaging content.) It appears that referrals from another site such as parl.gc.ca and direct links via email have the lowest bounce rates meaning that they are the best at delivering content of value and/ or content that was expected. Conversely, social media (one can assume this is Twitter as it is the only channel used by the Senate) has the highest bounce rate. This is not necessarily uncommon for Twitter, as many visitors will have been attracted by a particular piece of content but will leave as soon as they’ve read it; however, it points to an opportunity to engage further.

Of time spent on the site by channel, the shortest time was also attributed to social media. All other channels performed significantly better at engaging site visitors, especially email. One can assume the daily news report sent via email plays a significant role in this number.

Findings:

- Citizens are searching for information about the Senate via search engines, namely Google. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the Senate website URL is high ranking in search results and effective at pointing users to Senate content.

- Top pages viewed over the span of a year indicate an interest in Senate activities. However, more than half of visitors only stay 10 seconds. The lack of consistency among Senators' websites and within the Senate website itself could have an impact on time spent on site.
- Without an agreed upon website strategy and goals, evaluation is based on output (gleaning insights from the statistics alone; number of visits, number of pages viewed) rather than on outcome and impact.

7.3.4. Social

Increasingly, connected Canadians are turning to social media channels for up-to-the minute news updates. "Social networks are becoming a significant source of news for Canadians. Two-fifths of social networking users said they receive news from people they follow on services like Facebook, while a fifth get news from news organizations and individual journalists they follow. Users said they valued social media because it helped them keep up with events and exposed them to a wider range of news and information."⁴⁴

In the absence of an overall strategic direction, but acknowledging the importance of connecting with Canadians via social media, the Directorate created a Twitter feed, (@SenateCA). It is managed by the Directorate and all tweets are approved by the Principal Clerk, Communications. It is intended to connect the Senate with Canadians and to demonstrate how Senators are engaged in the nation's business. As of December 31, 2014, the Senate had approximately 24,000 followers combined (approximately 94 per cent of those follow the English account and 6 per cent follow the French account.) The Library of Parliament has approximately 553 followers in both languages, while the House of Commons does not have a Twitter account. The UK House of Lords (@UKHouseofLords) has 72,000 followers.

Specific committee hashtags are used to tweet about meetings, witnesses, links to webcast details, etc. The committee hashtags are also posted in tandem with @SenateCA during committee hearings allowing Canadians who are watching CPAC to engage in conversation about the subject matter. The '#' symbol, called a hashtag, is used to mark keywords or track topics via Twitter. It is an easy way to categorize and search for messages. For example, a CPAC viewer who sees a committee hashtag on the screen during the proceedings can easily tweet his/ her comments in relation to this specific topic and engage in conversation with other Canadians.

According to Directorate staff, active "listening" or monitoring of Twitter conversations via committee hashtags or key words is done on an ad hoc basis, based on whether communications staff are available, the perceived news value of the topic and the level of social engagement of the witnesses appearing before a committee. The Directorate is able to respond to tweets to provide factual information but cannot respond to opinions because of Senate Administrative Rules.

According to the Directorate, a limited number of Senators regularly leverage (or retweet) Directorate Twitter content relating to committees since each Senator's office is using Twitter for different strategic reasons and the level of comfort with the medium varies greatly. (Of note: Senators' Twitter accounts are not necessarily operated by the individual Senators, but rather by their staff.)

In May 2014, an informal survey by the Directorate revealed that 27 Senators (or their staff) were using Twitter as a channel to communicate with constituents. Many more use Twitter for monitoring purposes but not for outward communications.

⁴⁴ Fletcher, F., Hermida, A., Korell, D., Logan, D (2012). *Share, like, recommend: Decoding the social media news consumer*. Journalism Studies. http://www.academia.edu/1481366/Share_Like_Recommend_Decoding_the_Social_Media_News_Consumer

The @SenateCA posts generating the most interest and “clicks” are those specifically about committee hearings or content. See Figure 1 as an example. Each committee has a published hashtag that is listed on the Committee website and displayed on CPAC during the committee hearings thus allowing (and indeed, encouraging) Canadians to tweet their comments about the content in question. Those hashtags are used by the Directorate to tweet about meetings and witnesses, and to link to webcast details, etc. A high level review of public tweets using the hashtags #SenateCA, #SenCA, #senateofcanada or variations thereof, indicate that most of the conversation happening on Twitter is about specific bills, often citing committee hearings, using links to CPAC footage or news footage. Senate Reform and hot button topics such as spending are often referenced as well. A more quantitative analysis of social media conversations across multiple social platforms would require more robust analytical tools.

Figure 1: Example of the most popular links from twitter postings from September 7 to 13, 2014.

Most Popular Links			
Rank	Date	Post	Clicks
1	Sep 9, 2014	http://ow.ly/Bf632 http://www.parl.gc.ca/sencommitteebusiness/page... 5 Things Canadians Should Know About Senate Committees http://ow.ly/Bf632 #SenCA #cdnpoli	21 clicks
2	Sep 5, 2014	http://ow.ly/B5wB7 http://www.parl.gc.ca/Content/SEN/Committee/412... All briefs received by #LCJC on #C36 will be posted once they have been translated http://ow.ly/B5wB7 #SenCA #cdnpoli	13 clicks
3	Sep 8, 2014	http://ow.ly/B5y6f http://sen-parlvu.sen.ca/guide.asp?view=2&targe... Follow #LCJC meetings on pre-study of #C36 via ParlVu webcast http://ow.ly/B5y6f or on @CPAC_TV #SenCA #cdnpoli	11 clicks

Finally, it is important to note that some information systems constraints have an impact on communications. For example, iPads aren't networked to the Senate network so posting to the Twitter account while travelling with a committee is difficult. Visuals are becoming more and more valued in social media channels but the Senate is not able to have a Flickr account, for example, because there is no space on the Senate's servers to archive photos. Designers in the Directorate work on Macs (as most graphic designers do) but the rest of the Directorate staff is on PC so accessing systems is not always easy.

Findings

- Twitter is being used but in the absence of a strategy, its potential for engaging Canadians is not being fully exploited.
- A general review of the social analytics monthly reports (via Hootsuite) indicate that the @SenateCA posts generating the most interest and “clicks” are those about committee hearings / content.
- A high level qualitative review of public tweets using the hashtags #SenateCA, #SenCA, #senateofcanada or variations thereof, indicate that most Senate conversation on Twitter is about specific bills, often citing committee hashtags, using links to CPAC footage or news footage.
- The website statistics show that visits coming from the Twitter account have the highest “bounce rate” at 80%, pointing to an opportunity to engage further.

7.4. Stakeholder outreach / publications

The Communications Directorate's work in stakeholder outreach has diminished in recent years as the Library of Parliament has taken on this role. The Library handles public information for the House of Commons, and coordinates much of Parliament's public and educational outreach via the Visitors' Centre, the Teachers Institute and the Forum for Young Canadians. The Directorate contributes to the Library of Parliament's outreach materials as requested, and ensures that previously developed printed materials are current. Examples of materials produced and maintained by the Directorate can be found in the full traditional tools assessment report in Appendix A. While no materials have yet been duplicated by the Senate or the Library of Parliament, there is little to no coordination between the two organizations to alert each other to the external materials being produced.

The Directorate continues to have a role in writing and designing outreach products based on requests from the Clerk and the Speaker. These products could be special event programs and signage, printed gifts for distribution to guests, etc. The Directorate's work can vary from writing, design and production to just design. Indeed, most publication work now is design (and print coordination when needed). The graphic designers also produce covers for committee reports, when asked (in addition to their work designing digital media kits.)

The Directorate responds to general information requests that come through the Senate's 1-800 inquiry number, by email or via regular mail (there were 302 emailed inquiries in 2013 – 2014.)⁴⁵ These requests are typically related to seeking contact information, information kits, the progress of bills, or requests that views on certain issues be conveyed to Senators. Both the Senate and the Library of Parliament offer toll free numbers to the public for general inquiries.

7.5. Supporting Speaker / Clerk

The Directorate is the communications resource for the Speaker's Office. In that role, Communications Officers provide logistics and organizational support for events such as national holidays and visits from foreign dignitaries; there were 30 such events in 2013-2014. The Directorate produces print materials such as programs, brochures and posters for events such as the Speech from the Throne, Remembrance Day and others; there were six internal events requiring writing and design support in 2013 – 2014. Directorate staff also manage media requests for the Speaker and coordinate photography, some of which is repurposed as social media content. Some of the services provided to the Speaker are planned; others are ad hoc requests.

Directorate staff provide graphic design and photo support to the Clerk. They also produce publications when requested. In 2014, the team finalized production of *Parliamentary Treasures: A glimpse inside the Archives of the Senate of Canada*, the Senate's first e-book, a project that was done at the request of the Clerk. The Directorate also identifies risks and provides issues management support, and communications plans to the Clerk and to the Steering Committee of Internal Economy, in the form of briefing notes and reports.

7.6. Broadcasting

The Directorate was given responsibility for broadcasting in August 2014. Through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), the House of Commons provides the directors and other behind the scenes talent, and the Directorate supplies information on how best to cover Senate committees. There is also an MOU with the Cable Public Affairs Channel (CPAC) relating to the hours and conditions of broadcast

⁴⁵ Senate Communications Directorate, Report on Activities July 2014 p.10

and rebroadcast. Up to three committees can be broadcast at a time and since four committees can sit at any one time, the decision on which committees will meet in broadcast rooms is made by the Principal Clerk based on criteria established with the two Whips. Priority tends to go to those committees featuring high profile witnesses, topics of great public interest, those conducting special studies, or to those who have not had frequent coverage in the past (e.g. it's their 'turn'). There is no communications plan to promote the committee broadcasts.

CPAC has recently developed a mobile app that allows viewers to live stream Senate committees on computers and mobile devices. There is an opportunity for the Directorate to provide editorial content for the 'dual screen' feature on the app.

A working group of Senators was reviewing the merits of broadcasting from the Chamber; that responsibility has recently moved to the Advisory Working Group overseeing this review. Many Senators interviewed are in favour of allowing television cameras in the Chamber.

[Broadcasting] is important to our accountability and transparency. It won't be a bestselling show but Canadians deserve the opportunity to watch if they choose.

Broadcasting from the chamber is key; perhaps not gavel to gavel but there has to be coverage.

Currently Senate proceedings can be followed on an audio channel. Audio! When everyone has a camera in their pockets. It is ridiculous. You cannot be in media in 2014 with just audio. Even print journalists bring cameras to record video clips for websites/blogs. Televising the Senate is necessary. It will force a re-organization of the debate. It will demonstrate the Senate's value.

TV in the Senate would be a positive step though with the caveat of making a few procedural changes.

Broadcasting from the Chamber is inevitable. [It's a] necessary evil. It compounds the perception that we are a private club, non-transparent and not accountable, if we don't broadcast.

I'm a strong believer in televising the senate, even if it was live streaming. [There is] procedural stuff to consider.

[If we were] televised, there is potential for becoming a more partisan place but I don't think the House has become more partisan as a result of more TV; it's the same as it always was. The quality of debate in the Senate might rise ... overall it would be beneficial.

Others are conflicted about the possibility.

I have reservations about televising the Chamber. I would like us to use the web and be searchable but I am nervous about televising because [it] means editing and who will edit our proceedings? Fifteen years from now no one will watch TV, it will all stream through the web and be archived and searchable.

I am torn about TV in the Chamber. I know the arguments against it but you can't stop progress. It seems anachronistic [not to have it] but I also understand the arguments against, [that] ... by design ... we have limited power [and] we function well when we use our powers lightly ... but if we start broadcasting we may grandstand and showboat.

I am not in favour of cameras in the Chamber as it will not serve us well. It will damage us because we have duty rosters that say that half of us are in the Chamber at a time so that's not a good camera shot.

I have mixed feelings about TV in the Chamber because, [while] it could contribute to transparency and we do televise committees, in the Chamber ... the leader is the only one rising to speak [in Question Period] and he is ... very scripted. It's not an accurate reflection of the Senate's good work.

Findings

- The Library of Parliament and the Directorate do similar work in terms of public outreach although the Library has largely taken on the lead role.
- The Directorate provides primarily tactical communications services to the Speaker and the Clerk.
- Most service provided to the Speaker's office is unplanned, provided on an ad hoc basis.
- The Directorate role regarding broadcasting is recent, and is largely one of oversight.

8.0 INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

As a result of a survey conducted in 2012 with Senate Administration employees⁴⁶, the Clerk determined that a focus on internal communications was required. This responsibility was given to the Communication's Directorate to be undertaken by current personnel and within the current budget. Internal communications includes the use of digital tools such as the intranet and traditional tools such as newsletters. Audiences for internal include Senators and their staffs though most activity, to this point, has been aimed at Administration staff.

8.1. Digital

IntraSen is the Intranet used by Senate Administration, Senators and their staffs. In 2008, a governance charter was created for it, which included a management process for developing and maintaining the site based on specific objectives. The governance framework does not appear to have been fully adopted yet, though the site has a consistent template and navigation framework with a balance of centralized and decentralized content management.

Because the Executive Committee and the Working Committee proposed in the charter are not meeting regularly, certain aspects of the IntraSen are evolving, as a result of changing needs, in a manner inconsistent with the approved template. Examples:

- i. The Directorate has recently updated the template for its own section of IntraSen adding more photography, a Twitter feed and graphic imagery, creating a more engaging presence. According to the Directorate, it is hoping that this will become the new standard for the home pages of other directorates but it is unclear how this will be communicated and made available to them.
- ii. A new Office Management Resource Portal (OMRP), an initiative led by Human Resources and Finance and maintained by Information Systems Directorate, is in development to help meet the specific needs of Senators' staff. Consultations were conducted with approximately 150 staff members to identify the types of service such a portal could provide with information on: hiring staff, managing Senators' attendance, securing IT and office support, submitting expenses etc. At the time of this digital assessment (October 2014), the new portal had not yet been launched but the home page graphic pointed to an entirely different navigation and design from the approved framework.

The survey conducted for this review showed that 58 per cent of Senators are not familiar with IntraSen (or are not sure they've heard of it.)

8.2. Communications tools

As noted earlier in the report, the Directorate provides limited media relations counsel to individual Senators based on its interpretation of the SAR related to non-partisanship. Instead, it has developed communications tools and templates on how to write a communications plan, a media release, etc. and these are provided to Senators and their staff through IntraSen. The Directorate does not track statistics on their usage. However, based on the survey only 18 per cent of Senators are familiar or somewhat familiar with the tools. This was reinforced during the interviews.

I don't use the templates on IntraSen; well, maybe once for formatting.
- Senator's staff person

⁴⁶ The Senate Administration Employee Engagement Survey 2012; September 5, 2012

*I haven't had time yet to look at the communications materials on IntraSen
but I would like to see them.*
- Senator

The Directorate has noted that IntraSen's content is organized alphabetically by Directorate, and not by function which may make it difficult to use.

The Directorate provides communications support (i.e. planning, writing or counsel) for a range of internal initiatives (14 in 2013- 2014) including the Senate Diversity Committee, the e-recruitment website, the compensation web application, the International Women's Day video, the Senate Corporate Calendar and the Senate Page Program strategy. The Directorate also produces The 4th Reading, an internal newsletter, aimed largely at Administration staff though there has been a recent effort to target Senators and their staff as well.

In fall 2014, the Directorate organized an Open House at the request of the Clerk. The group had approximately four months' notice (less than was allotted the previous two times the Directorate was responsible). The event was designed "to improve knowledge of the Administration's structure, plans and services among participants; strengthen links between senators, senators' staff, and employees; [resulting in] employees who are better informed, which will help them do their work more effectively; and improve morale among employees."⁴⁷ The timing of the event fell during the hours that Senators sit in the Chamber. The Directorate was not able to evaluate its success as the objectives were determined after event planning had begun, and they were not measurable.

8.3. Culture

Throughout the interviews for this report, participants made several references to a) the perceived culture of the Directorate and b) the siloed culture between Senate Administration and Senators generally.

Some interviewees reflected on the culture they perceive at the Directorate, in the context of trying to understand its approach to communications activities.

[Communications must] stop being frightened of their own shadow and be more proactive. They develop a media strategy for a report but it is so passive. They should be out there selling the work of the Senate.
- Senator

The Communications Directorate has a certain degree of fear about this—too much fear of many things. There must be a much greater climate of openness and trust.
- Senator

If the Directorate gave the same level of service to every Senator, we wouldn't have this problem because we would all be getting the same service and expertise. But they are afraid, [though] I don't think they have anything to be afraid of.
- Senator's staff person

⁴⁷ Open House 2014: Post-mortem, Kate McCarthy, Communications, event coordinator

Others noted the siloed nature in which the Senators and the Directorate work, and identified the need for the groups to work together.

There is a cultural divide between the Administration, and senators and their staffs ... we need to get away from 'us and them' but it has been allowed to grow.
- Senator

Communications must be a partnership between Senators and the Directorate as opposed to putting it only on the shoulders of the communications people. Senators have a responsibility to get our messages out as well.
- Senator

We have this bureaucratic infrastructure to support the senators but I don't feel that support. Political is up here and admin is down there and I am not sure the administration knows what the Senate is all about.
- Senator

There is a Berlin Wall between political staff and the bureaucracy; no interaction except between chair and clerks.
- Senator

There is an impression that it's 'we and them' and never the two shall meet. It should be the complete opposite because we're all here to support the Senate.
- Senator's staff person

I believe we need some sort of structural change that collapses the silo and rebuilds with service to Senators in mind.
- Senator

Findings:

- Internal communications is not guided by a strategic plan.
- IntraSen is guided by a strong governance charter but it is not being managed by an active oversight committee.
- Some internal activities lack clear target audiences and measures.
- Some Senators recognize the importance of their own role in helping communications be effective.
- Cultural factors influence the Directorate's ability to be effective.

9.0 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

For ease of reading, the findings identified in each section of the report have been gathered here.

Communications overall

- The Senate is constitutionally important yet poorly understood and undervalued by Canadians. Indeed, some Canadians view the institution and its members in a negative light.
- Some Senators feel that their individual reputations as accomplished Canadians have become subsumed by the overall reputation of the institution.
- There is no central communications authority guiding the many different communications activities being undertaken by groups and individuals within the Senate.

Directorate

- Senators have a poor overall perception of the Directorate.
- Most Senators are unfamiliar with the Directorate and its work, based on little to no interaction with its staff.
- Senators' priorities do not align with the Directorate's service areas except in the case of media relations (which includes committee and crisis work) and for some Senators, social media.
- The Principal Clerk has filled multiple roles throughout his time as head of the Communications Directorate including during the 2013 crisis period. Because the role was not backfilled, the Directorate has not always had a full-time lead.
- The Directorate has long indicated that it is short-staffed given its range of responsibilities.
- Senate Administration and the Speaker have publicly acknowledged the abilities of communications staff, though some Senators question their competence.
- The Directorate has received both positive and negative feedback on its work from Senators.
- Most Senators question the value of the Directorate given that they a) are not aware of what it does; b) do not see the output or outcomes of its work; and c) do not assess its effectiveness in the same way the Directorate itself does.
- Without an approved communications strategy, the Directorate does not have a basis upon which to make operational decisions to prioritize its efforts, and therefore turns to the Clerk, and CIBA, for direction.
- It is unclear to the Principal Clerk what happens with formal and informal proposals generally, once they are discussed with and / or presented to the Clerk and / or CIBA, so seeking direction has not been effective.
- Without an approved communications strategy, there are no agreed-upon success measures so the Directorate measures what it can control—process and outputs—rather than impact and outcomes.
- The Communications Directorate takes direction from multiple sources; reporting to more than one authority is challenging.
- The Directorate's activities are proscribed by rules that prevent effective communications.
- The rule regarding non-partisanship allows for political sensitivity when it is applied, however Senators' shared views of what constitutes non-partisan communications applies to some, and not all, examples of activities provided to them.
- The Directorate has absorbed several new service areas without additional funds, though because their work doesn't align with Senators' priorities, the appropriateness of their budget allocation is questioned.

External: media relations

- Without a strategic media relations plan to guide decision making, priority setting is left in the hands of authorities who may or may not understand media relations well enough to appreciate the impact of their decisions.

- Given that building public awareness is an objective, the Directorate is not maximizing the media to reach a primary and vital audience for the Senate.
- Media relations activities are contingent on resource availability, and subject to changing priorities.
- While there are policies and directives governing interaction between the Directorate and the media, they are not based on media relations best practices.
- Media are frustrated as they do not understand the reasons behind the Directorate's behaviour and the lack of information provided to them.
- Senators are also frustrated, seemingly due to a lack of understanding of the rules guiding media responses and the manner in which those rules are interpreted.
- The Parliamentary Press Gallery, media organizations, journalists and the Directorate would like to have a written agreement regarding media's use of the Senate foyer.
- There is one full-time media relations position at the Communications Directorate, as the Senate faces 2015 when significant attention is expected.
- Journalists question the capabilities of the media relations staff currently in place.
- Without designated spokespeople, the Senate does not have a common voice to help inform the public through the media and to reduce the pressure of media requests on Senators and the Speaker.
- The Senate uses a public information model⁴⁸ of communication between the institution and its stakeholders. It is a one-way system, using news releases and other one-way communication techniques to distribute institutional information.
- This is not a culture where the media are seen as a client. The media relations process is not client-centric, either internally for Senators and their staff, or externally for media. The Senate's relationship with the media is more adversarial than mutually beneficial.
- The Directorate is trying to operate in a non-partisan fashion, but the process by which they do that leaves the media with the impression that they are a highly political function.
- The mandate and processes for this function are neither clear nor part of the corporate memory of the institution.
- Media relations approaches and processes are oriented around the provision of as little information as possible (as opposed to the attempt to achieve a win-win outcome).
- IT and Communications do not work as a single system, resulting in uneven access to links and documents via mobile, iPad and desktop.
- Securing government and opposition approvals for news releases and other media materials has a negative impact on their timeliness with the result that news value can be lost.
- Media relations activity is measured in terms of outputs (e.g. number of hits) as opposed to impact (comprehensive review of quality of coverage), or cost (e.g. number of hours required for a particular campaign versus the volume and quality of coverage generated.) This form of measurement is not considered a media relations best practice as it cannot tie back to media relations goals and strategy, nor can it be used to adapt activity based on results.

External: crisis communications

- Crisis media relations efforts were not strategic or effective, based on quality of media coverage, relationships with media and the sense of abandonment by many Senators.
- Despite known issues on the near horizon (e.g. Auditor General's report, criminal court cases), a (crisis) media relations plan has not yet been put into place, nor have key learnings modified media relations processes. The

⁴⁸ Four Models of Public Relations and the Excellence Theory, James E. Grunig, 1984

Communications Directorate feels that this is due, in part, to the decision to wait until the results of the Communications Functional Review.

External: committee support

- Committee chairs have the authority to identify their communications needs and to direct communications staff, which results in those staff generally providing tactical support.
- Some Senators report high satisfaction with the service provided by the communications officer assigned to their committee.
- There is no central authority prioritizing the communications support to committees or planning the report releases to maximize media coverage and stakeholder support.
- Senate rules regarding the timing of information release do not align with media relations best practices or the news cycle.

External: digital support

- The success and the efficacy of the Senate portal as a communications tool is intrinsically linked to that of the main “umbrella” site parl.gc.ca, given the significant amount of back and forth navigation between the Parliament of Canada main site and the Senate portal, specifically as it relates to Senators’ information and Committee content. The Communications Directorate has no authority over the parl.gc.ca site.
- The Parliamentary Information Management Committee provides guidance around how information management is shared by the House of Commons, Library of Parliament and Senate.
- However, there does not appear to be an overarching digital content strategy guiding how online content is managed among the House of Commons, Library of Parliament and Senate.
- There is no formal digital governance process in place among the Senate Directorates guiding web development or digital content; most initiatives and special projects are being done ad hoc.
- Without a digital strategy and agreed upon goals, it is not possible to measure the success of the Senate’s digital channels and tools.
- The number of ‘mini websites’ as well as the lack of consistency among Senators’ websites has resulted in a fragmented and somewhat confusing online presence.
- Citizens are searching for information about the Senate via search engines, namely Google. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the Senate website URL is high ranking in search results and effective at pointing users to Senate content.
- Top pages viewed over the span of a year indicate an interest in Senate activities. However, more than half of visitors only stay 10 seconds. The lack of consistency among Senators’ websites and within the Senate website itself could have an impact on time spent on site.
- Without an agreed upon website strategy and goals, evaluation is based on output (gleaning insights from the statistics alone; # of visits, # of pages viewed) rather than on outcome and impact.
- Twitter, as a social media tool, is being used but in the absence of a strategy, its potential for engaging Canadians is not being fully exploited.
- A general review of the social analytics monthly reports (via Hootsuite) indicate that the @SenateCA posts generating the most interest and “clicks” are those about committee hearings / content.
- A high level qualitative review of public tweets using the hashtags #SenateCA, #SenCA, #senateofcanada or variations thereof, indicate that most Senate conversation on Twitter is about specific bills, often citing committee hashtags, using links to CPAC footage or news footage.
- The website statistics show that visits coming from the Twitter account have the highest “bounce rate” at 80%, pointing to an opportunity to engage further.

External: Stakeholder outreach / publications

- The Library of Parliament and the Directorate do similar work in terms of public outreach although the Library has largely taken on the lead role.

External: Support to the Speaker / Clerk

- The Directorate provides primarily tactical communications services to the Speaker and the Clerk.
- Most service provided to the Speaker's office is unplanned, provided on an ad hoc basis.

External: Broadcasting

- The Directorate role regarding broadcasting is recent, and is largely one of oversight.

Internal

- Internal communications is not guided by a strategic plan.
- IntraSen is guided by a strong governance charter but it is not being managed by an active oversight committee.
- Some internal activities lack clear target audiences and measures.
- Some Senators recognize the importance of their own role in helping communications be effective.
- Cultural factors influence the Directorate's ability to be effective.

10.0 CONCLUSIONS

Communications at the Senate is broken. The Directorate has responsibility but no authority, while Senators have authority but have not identified a group or person among themselves as being responsible for an overall communications strategy, for the institution and overseeing its implementation. Absent a central communications authority and working under Senate rules ill-designed to support a modern communications function, the voice of the institution is weak. Partisan voices are more predominant than that of the institution, which creates a distorted public perception of the Senate as a whole.

The communications function is not valued at the Senate. For the most part, it is seen as the equivalent of media relations and is not valued as a strategic management function. While Senators value communications generally, it is difficult to conclude that the function itself is a priority given the lack of strategic oversight, its tactical focus based on directives, and the part-time nature of the leadership role over a period of several months, to list just a few examples. The Principal Clerk (at the time of the review) understood that strategic direction for the communications function was necessary; however, his judgement regarding communications issues reflected his experience as a procedural expert rather than that of a communications expert with media relations experience.

Senators are unfamiliar with the Directorate and do not see the outcome of its work, and thus it does not have their confidence. This is the case despite the fact that staff do their best within the constraints of Senate rules and in the absence of an overarching strategic plan. To work within those rules, the Principal Clerk has described the Directorate's role quite clearly to his team but far less clearly to Senators with the result that most do not see the Directorate as providing service that is of value to them. Trying to determine the limits of non-partisan service is an illustrative example, since Senators feel the Principal Clerk could have brought better judgment to those decisions although Senators themselves do not have a consensus view on the limits of non-partisan activity. The result: the Directorate is absent from Senators' daily work, it is not seen as service oriented, Senators do not seek it out for assistance, and over time Senators have become less convinced of the Directorate's necessity.

The Directorate's media relations function is under-developed and too often operates as an Access to Information and Privacy branch rather than as a true media relations service. It is impeded by Senate rules, and undercut by decisions made as a result of complex processes. Support to Committees is uneven, dependent on the scope allowed by each Chair and made difficult by Chamber rules regarding information release. The Senate's digital presence, like all other communications functions, operates without the guidance of an overall plan and success measures. Internal communications is tactical and doesn't address the significant cultural gap between Senators and the Directorate.

Addressing these issues will require changes to rules, structure, processes and attitudes. The scope of change required represents a significant cultural shift requiring a consistent, steady approach by a person or group with authority, the respect of staff and the confidence of the Chamber.

11.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The overall **communications goal**⁴⁹ for the Senate is to be understood by Canadians as an effective and important Parliamentary institution. Given this goal, as articulated by the Advisory Working Group, and the conclusions drawn from the communications functional review findings, the following activities are recommended.

STRUCTURAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation #1 Create a new Special Committee on Senate Communications

The proposed new Special Committee on Senate Communications would be responsible for advising the Senate on communications strategy and implementation, and would be staffed by the head of the Communications Directorate. The committee would report to the Senate. This structure establishes a strong link between the Directorate and the Senators who have the power and authority to inform its work.

The head of the Directorate would participate in each meeting of the Special Committee on Senate Communications to provide strategic and operational communications counsel. Participating in the meetings also ensures that the head of the Directorate is fully up-to-date on any issues facing the Senate.

Recommendation #2 Re-structure the Communications Directorate to reflect Senate goals and priorities

Based on input from the Senate Advisory Working Group on Communications, the Senate's communications priorities are to improve Canadians' understanding of the Senate, support committee work, and provide communications support to individual Senators. Given these priorities, it is recommended that the Communications Directorate be structured to reflect the equal importance of communicating broadly with Canadians, and specifically with key stakeholder groups regarding the issues studied by Senate committees. The Directorate should also provide communications support to the Speaker and to individual Senators (recognizing that the Leaders' Offices also support individual Senators; see Recommendation #5.)

Communicating broadly means investing in media relations, social media, and digital while communicating about issues more deeply means investing in support to committees. There should be communications support

⁴⁹ The communications goal will be addressed in more detail in the communications planning phase of this initiative.

to individual Senators and that support should respect the Senate Administrative Rule on non-partisanship⁵⁰ although Directorate staff should interpret that rule more broadly, under the guidance of the Special Committee on Senate Communications (see Recommendation #1). As an example, those Senators who need media lists should also receive counsel on regional media. Senators and their staffs should be approached proactively to determine if they would benefit from help crafting a media strategy or writing a media release using the tools available on IntraSen. Communications staff should also provide some of this counsel in person, becoming more visible to Senators and their staffs. (This is detailed further in Recommendation #5.)

Recommendation #3 Update Senate Administrative Rules and Senate procedural rules to support a modern communications function

There are Senate rules in place that impede effective communications. It is recommended that the Senate Standing Committee on Rules, Procedures and the Rights of Parliament examine the rules to change those that have a negative impact on the Senate's ability to connect with external audiences. The communications functional review has identified the need for the following changes:

- a. Remove requirement for written questions from, and written responses to, the media;
- b. Permit unpublished information to be provided to the media, based on the judgment of the media relations expert working on each file (with support from the head of the Directorate and with appropriate controls) rather than requiring the approval of the Speaker;
- c. Sign a Memorandum of Understanding between the Speaker's Office and the Press Gallery defining the conditions under which media access to the Senate foyer is permitted without prior approval;
- d. Alter Rule 28.1 to allow committees to 'back-table'⁵¹ reports if they so choose, rather than having to seek permission from the Senate as a whole. This may include tabling reports earlier in the day before a sitting and not just during non-sitting weeks; and
- e. Define partisan vs non-partisan activities so the Directorate can be confident about the latitude it has to interpret the rule. (*Employees of the Senate shall provide and must be seen to provide their services on a non-partisan but politically sensitive basis. [2004-05-06]*)

OPERATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation #4 Develop a communications strategy for each Parliamentary session

It is important that Senate communications efforts be guided by a comprehensive communications strategy. It is recommended that the strategy developed in 2015 as part of the communications functional review be updated each Parliamentary session (that is, the session following a Speech from the Throne.) It is also recommended that the Senate invest in audience research as a basis for the strategy, which would allow for a more refined approach to prioritizing audiences. The House of Lords, for example, has prioritized five audience segments as a focus for their communications efforts. The audiences were segmented based on their level of interest in, and interaction with, government, and the extent to which they wanted to learn more about the House of Lords. Such target audience research would allow the Senate to stay up-to-date on the digital channels effective in reaching priority audiences, and it would be key to establishing public opinion benchmarks against which to measure progress. The Senate should have measureable objectives by audience, for example, and adjust its plans and activities based on progress against those measures. A communications strategy that has been approved by the proposed new Special Committee on Senate Communications would have credibility and importance, and thus could be used by the head of the Communications Directorate to prioritize special project requests. Those that don't fit within the strategy could

⁵⁰ *Employees of the Senate shall provide and must be seen to provide their services on a non-partisan but politically sensitive basis. [2004-05-06]*

⁵¹ Rule 28.1 of the *Rules of the Senate*: Whenever an Act of Parliament, or any resolution or rule of the Senate, requires that a return or report be laid before the Senate, the same may be deposited with the Clerk of the Senate. When so deposited, such return, report or other paper shall be deemed for all purposes to have been presented or laid before the Senate.

still be undertaken but there would be a formal acknowledgement of the need to shift resources away from a planned activity, to an unplanned activity.

Stakeholder outreach should be included in the overall communications strategy as an element of media relations and digital communications; however, it is recommended that responsibility for publications be transferred to the Library of Parliament (with their negotiated agreement).

The communications strategy will direct the internal development of an operational plan, ensuring that the appropriate skills, competencies and experience are present in the Directorate through training, hiring and procurement practices, and that best practice tools and templates are also in place.

Recommendation #5 Become audience-focused; adopt a service approach

By focusing on what its audiences need, the Communications Directorate can develop a service approach to its work. This means putting audiences at the core of its efforts; this would be reflected in the communications strategy and thus in the Directorate's work plans. For example, the Directorate should identify audiences' high priority content as part of its website strategy (see Recommendation #8) and make this content readily available on platforms most suitable for that audience, including social media platforms. Content development would also be supported through a clear editorial calendar based on communications goals. Being audience-focused would also mean transitioning from an organization-centric website (as evidenced by the number of micro sites on sen.gc.ca) to an audience-centric website that is structured based on how audiences navigate through it.

Adopting a service approach extends to internal audiences such as Senators themselves. Their requests for support should be prioritized based on the communications strategy. Indeed, it is recommended that communications staff (in particular the head of the Directorate) increase their contact with Senators, and be more visible and accessible. There should also be an orientation to the Communications Directorate offered as part of the on-boarding process for new Senators. To provide the regional media relations support that some Senators require, it is recommended that the Leaders' Offices request additional resources. Finally, the Directorate should continue its work to increase the level of self-service that Senators and their staffs can undertake through IntraSen. This will require proactive promotion to Senators' staffs. The new Office Management Resource Portal, for example, should be assessed to ensure it is providing the required service and support to Senators.

Recommendation #6 Coordinate communications conducted by Committees

Given the importance of the Senate's committee work, it is recommended that each Committee be required to include a communications plan and budget as part of their budget request to CIBA, and that the decision on whether or not to undertake communications should rest with CIBA, rather than with individual committee chairs. Committee chairs and deputy chairs should be expected to promote their committee's work and to speak with media about it, with only extenuating exceptions. Spokespeople should be offered a briefing re: media perspectives, coaching and assistance with responses to difficult questions. In addition, it is recommended that the Communications Directorate be permitted to work proactively with each committee to develop and implement a communications strategy, and that committees use these in-house resources unless they are unavailable. These recommendations will require changes to current Senate rules that require committee chairs to invite communications support (rather than it being provided proactively.)

Further, it is recommended that the list of committee reports and studies to be released each session forms part of a planning process, so that reports are not issued at one time but rather are scheduled over several weeks.

By integrating communications support from the beginning of the study process and linking it to the Senate's overall communications plan, there should be a more cohesive approach to committee communications. This would include an agreed-upon approach between the Directorate and committee clerks in managing digital content, and would involve developing enforceable standards for committee reports regarding distribution, channels, format and management of the report content. Finally, working relationships with clerks and analysts should be clarified given the importance of a collaborative approach to promoting committee work.

Finally, Recommendation #3 is linked to committee communications; it recommends allowing committees to 'back-table' reports if they so choose, rather than having to seek permission from the Senate as a whole.

Recommendation #7 Build a modern media relations function

Media relations efforts, when effective, can build and maintain an open line to the public to enhance the public's knowledge and understanding of the Senate, build credibility with the public, and extend the reach / increase the frequency of Senate messages. The Senate's media relations function must be transformed into one that follows best practice guidelines and is service-oriented, recognizing both Senators and the media as clients. The overall approach recommended is two-fold: 1) strive for a win-win outcome to each encounter, both for the Senate and the reporter; and 2) be open and transparent in both level of service and information provided. The following media relations recommendations flow from this approach.

- a. It is recommended that the Senate Administrative Rules that impede effective media relations be revised or eliminated; see Recommendation #3.
- b. A **media relations strategy should be developed for each Parliamentary session** (to correspond with the overall communications plan).
- c. It is recommended that **media relations impact be measured** on a regular and consistent basis, that it be based on pre-defined goals, and that results serve to adjust media relations strategy and/or tactics. This is linked to Recommendation #4 and its emphasis on assessment.
- d. It is recommended that individual **Senators be encouraged to use the Quorum media monitoring service** provided by the Library of Parliament, and other methods to gather news coverage specific to their region, issues of interest and committee work. Media relations officers should continue to gather coverage each morning, but rather than create a daily summary, the Directorate should provide members of the new Special Committee on Senate Communications with an overall analysis of coverage based on identified issues, an assessment of how the stories might advance that day, and a heads-up on issues that could arise. This analysis should be provided to Committee members no later than 8 a.m. daily and again, later in the day as warranted.
- e. It is recommended that **formal spokesperson roles be established**. The Speaker should be the institution's primary spokesperson on non-partisan affairs (e.g. making official statements and conducting media interviews during a crisis). A day-to-day spokesperson (e.g. a staff person within the Speaker's Office) should be put in place and authorized to speak freely to the media on issues of administration, public information, etc. In addition, a stable of qualified Senate administrative employees should be identified to serve as content experts for the media, providing technical briefings, information on rules and procedures, and information on background. Spokespeople should be offered coaching and assistance with answers to difficult questions. A briefing on media relations should also be provided to every new Senator as part of his/her orientation.
- f. It is recommended that Senate **media relations officers be available to the media on a 24-hour basis** (through on-call duties). News reporting does not operate on a 9-to-5 schedule, and so it is recommended that Senate media relations officers be available to the media on a 24-hour basis (through an on-call rotation.)

- g. Journalists should be confident that the Senate understands their needs and will provide fast service and immediate access to content (prepared in advance and readily available), around the clock. This is particularly necessary during crisis periods, when demand for information is at its highest. It is recommended that a **permanent issues management capability be put in place** (that will permit speedy crisis response as needed.). An issues management team should include the head of the Directorate, the Speaker or his representative (as official spokesperson for the institution), the day-to-day Senate spokesperson, the chair and vice-chair of the new Special Committee, and a content expert (which can change depending on the issue). This group would be ready to become a crisis management team as needed, and would be responsible for an overall crisis strategy, quick turn-around on responses, fast-tracking news releases and official statements, and advising internal stakeholders on progress. The crisis response team would meet several times a day (at least once in person) during the most turbulent days of any crisis period.

Recommendation #8 Establish a digital strategy

There are several aspects to this recommendation:

- a. It is recommended that the Directorate lead the establishment of a clear **governance framework for the management of the Senate website**. Creating the framework should involve representatives from all directorates within the Senate. It would establish standards for content, layout and design as well as a cohesive approach to content management, maintenance and tools. The framework should assign clear roles and responsibilities, and approval processes. It is also recommended that the Senate consider implementing a central content management system that would also permit decentralized posting of approved content. The governance framework should take into consideration work being done by outside partners such as the Cable Public Affairs Channel (CPAC), which has recently developed a mobile app that allows viewers to live stream Senate committees on computers and mobile devices. The Communications Directorate (and the Information Services Directorate) should also be part of a broader digital content governance framework among the House of Commons, Library of Parliament and the Senate; see point b.
- b. It is recommended that the Senate work with the House of Commons and the Library of Parliament toward a broader **governance framework for a joint digital strategy**. The current Parliamentary Information Management (PIM) Vision, drafted in 2004, does not address a digital communications or content strategy among the three institutions. Digital content should also be addressed in the mandate of PIM or through the creation of a sub-committee for that purpose. The PIM vision should be updated and reviewed with a two- to three-year road map for shared information management resources like ParlVu, LegisInfo, PRISM, IRIS etc. as well as a shared digital content strategy. The vision should consider trends such as growing access to content via mobile devices and it should take a cohesive approach to responsive design. Finally, the three institutions should consider a complete review of the parl.gc.ca structure with the goal of creating a common, unified navigation structure, layout and design between parl.gc.ca and sen.parl.gc.ca to improve the overall user experience of the Parliament of Canada web site.
- c. It is recommended that the Communications Directorate **develop a website strategy and conduct a review of sen.parl.gc.ca**. This would involve defining website audiences (as part of the overall communications strategy described in Recommendation #4) and aligning website objectives with communications goals. The Senate portal should be reviewed in light of the website strategy. The Directorate should consider a complete or phased redesign to create a consistent structure and navigation throughout the site which would see several of the microsites absorbed into the common structure. A single standardized template for Senators' websites is recommended. The Directorate should develop a shared vision and agreed-upon standard for a common look and feel to facilitate search and navigation for the general public. The Directorate should adopt a single, central content management system and a

decentralized approach to posting content between the Directorates where it makes sense. Consider search engine optimization best practices in the creation of all digital content.

- d. It is recommended that the Directorate **develop a social media strategy**. This strategy would link with the overall communications strategy and should be integrated into each area of Senate communications including committee communications. It is recommended that the Directorate develop and implement social media listening strategies to identify key themes surfacing among defined audience segments. This information can help identify potential issues and can help build relationships with media. Over time, it is recommended that the Senate move beyond listening and engage in conversation with Canadians via social media.
- e. It is recommended that the **Senate broadcast from the Chamber** to reinforce the Senate's transparency and accountability. This could be accomplished via livestreaming a webcast, via an app or through more traditional broadcast methods. It is recommended that the broadcast be available on multiple platforms and promoted through social media.

Recommendation #9 Establish an internal communications strategy

It is recommended that the Directorate develop an internal communications strategy that is clearly linked to the overall communications strategy so that messages aimed at Senators, staff and administration staff are consistent with external messaging about the Senate and its work. The internal strategy should support specific internal objectives which could include increased client satisfaction (i.e. Senators and their staffs more satisfied with the Directorate's services), increased pride among employees working for the Senate, and improvement in recruiting and retention. Achieving objectives such as these will contribute toward changing the Directorate's culture (as per Recommendation #5.) The internal communications strategy should include activities aimed at increasing engagement among Senators, their staffs and the administration, and at supporting managers as they communicate with their staffs and gather feedback. It should also include methods of gathering feedback so that the strategy can be assessed and revised as needed.

Recommendation #10 Provide communications support to the Speaker of the Senate

It is recommended that the Directorate continue to provide communications support to the Speaker's Office, and that this support be included in the communications strategy. It is also recommended that a senior communications person act as liaison between the Directorate and the Speaker's Office, coordinating services and managing internal resources. As noted previously, the Senate's day-to-day spokesperson could be a senior staff person within the Speaker's Office.

APPENDIX A

Traditional communications tools assessment

October 3, 2014

The Senate's traditional print tools (internal and external) were assessed according to criteria related to objectives, audiences, messaging and distribution. Items reviewed included current products developed for teachers and students, as well as the general Canadian population. Ultimately, the findings related to process are more revealing than those about the products themselves. The main findings of the review:

- The Communications Directorate's role in outreach via traditional tools has reduced in recent years, as the Library of Parliament coordinates much of Parliament's public and educational outreach via the Visitors' Centre, the Teachers Institute and the Forum for Young Canadians.
- The Directorate contributes to the Library of Parliament's outreach materials as requested.
- While no materials have yet been duplicated by the Senate or the Library of Parliament, there is little to no coordination between the two organizations in terms of alerting each other to the external materials being produced.
- Materials are generally aimed at an educator or general public audience.
- Distribution is generally handled by the Library of Parliament.
- Messaging is informational and not persuasive in tone, and therefore quite consistent.
- Materials are of high quality but somewhat visually inconsistent though this seems to have improved in recent years. Colour has generally been consistent.
- Committee report covers are an exception as they can vary quite widely in visual look and feel; this will be examined more closely in the full review report, once interviews with Committee Chairs are complete.
- Over the past few years, the Directorate's efforts have been focussed online (web and social) when it comes to external facing communications tools.
- The Directorate produces materials at the request of the Speaker and Clerk for special events (i.e. programs) or for distribution to guests. Its role can vary from writing, design and production to just design. Indeed, most publication work now is design (and print coordination when needed).
- It seems that most special projects are ad hoc while materials produced for ceremonial events are planned.

SENATE OF CANADA

Traditional communications tools assessment: detailed table

TOOL	Overview	Format	Goal / Why is it used?	To whom is it directed?	How long has it been in use?	How is it distributed?	Is this a time-sensitive tool?	Other
INTERNAL TOOLS								
Welcome letter	From Directorate Principal Clerk to newly-elected Committee Chairs and Deputy Chairs	Email	To introduce communications services to Chairs and Deputy Chairs	Chair and Deputy Chair of each Senate Committee	Limited use 2009 /2010	email	yes	
Brochure about Directorate's services	Summary of communications services provided to Senators and Senate Committees	Email + print	Promote communications services to Senators	Senators and Committee Clerks	Written in 2005 and last distributed in 2010	n/a	no	
Orientation Guide for New Senators	Guidebook provides key information senators may need in their first few weeks on the job; not intended as a comprehensive resource	PDF-format	Introduces new senators to the work of the Senate and the support services available to them	new senators	Updated as required (Last update August 2014)	Printed copy to senators upon their nomination Online: IntraSen	no	Clerk's Office is the custodian and updates these publication. Communications handles design and layout, not printing.
Senators' Handbook on the Use of Senate Resources	Guidebook on administrative procedures regarding their office management	PDF-format	Designed to give Senators a clear, accessible reference to essential information related to the management of their offices and the conduct of parliamentary duties.	Senators	Updated as required (Last update August 2014)	Online: IntraSen	no	
Information for Departing Senators	Guidebook provides key information Senators may need regarding financial matters, post-retirement services and privileges, and helpful phone numbers.	PDF-format	Designed to give Senators an overview of the procedures to follow and the choices offered as they approach the completion of their service in the Senate.	Departing senators	Updated as required (Last update August 2014)	Available by print upon request to the Clerk's Office Online: IntraSen	no	
Senators Poster	Visual of all sitting Senators	poster	To identify sitting Senators	Senators + staff Senate Administration	Last print run 2014	Internal distribution	Yes	
Senate Emblem and Identity Guidelines	Provides information on how to use the visual marks of the Senate	electronic	To provide guidance on use of Senate emblem	Senators + staff Senate Administration	Emblem created in 2008 Guidelines approved in 2014	Online via IntraSen	no	
The Senate Lapel Pin	instructional brochure	full color brochure	Designed to demonstrate to Senators how to wear a Senate Lapel pin with or without medals or lapel badges for honours.	Senators and their spouses	2007	Online: IntraSen Distributed with pin	no	
Statement of Value and Ethics for the Senate Administration	As described through its title	Electronic And a pocket-sized booklet	Guide for Administration employees	Administration employees	2007	Print and IntraSen Distributed by Human Resources Directorate to new employees	no	Communications Directorate provided graphic design

TOOL	Overview	Format	Goal / Why is it used?	To whom is it directed?	How long has it been in use?	How is it distributed?	Is this a time-sensitive tool?	Other
INTERNAL TOOLS								
Daily media review	Communications Directorate compiles and emails this daily digest of news media coverage on the Senate to all senators and employees. Extracts give a brief summary of each article, and links allow users to read the full text.	Email	Sent each morning (no later than 9:30 a.m.)	Senators Senators' staff Senate Administration		email	yes	Links to clippings are only active at desktop computers and mobile devices within the Senate network Weekly archives are available on IntraSen. N.B. This tool will be examined more closely in the media relations assessment.
4 th Reading: The Senate Employees' Journal	Senate employees' journal / internal newsletter published 4 x/year	Online with a few print copies (e.g. Summer 2014 was 28 pages English) Planning is underway to convert to blog format	Considered by Communications Directorate as the primary internal communications tool. Last survey was done in 2009	Senate Administration employees Senators and their staff	Formerly known as the Internal Journal, the employees' journal has been produced since 2001.	Email Online: IntraSen Small number (25) of printed copies for employees who do not have regular access to computers	moderately	An advisory editorial board, composed of representatives from all directorates and from Senators' offices (representatives from each caucus) advises on 4th Reading's content.
Senate annual Report on Activities	Similar to an annual report, providing an overview of Senate work and finances	2012 version was soft cover book; full colour cover; 2-colour interior; 128 pages	Contains information about the Senate's work over the fiscal year, including Senate membership, legislation, committee work, Administration, outreach activities and financial information. Also contains information about how the Senate functions within Parliament.	General public Senators	Produced since 2001; 2013-2014 version goes into production shortly	2012 was the last printed version; the annual report is now available on the Senate website Moving to HTML-only version has not raised any concerns from Senators or the public.	Yes, although the report can be published several months after year-end, pending text approval.	Directorate received one request from the Clerk for a printed version of the html report but it is not a print form as there are no page breaks; Communications Directorate will produce a printable version in PDF for the next annual report in 2013-2014.

TOOL	Overview	Format	Goal / Why is it used?	To whom is it directed?	How long has it been in use?	How is it distributed?	Is this a time-sensitive tool?	Other
INTERNAL TOOLS								
Parliamentary Treasures: A glimpse inside the Archives of the Senate of Canada	Provides information on the items from the Senate archives	e-book		Senators General public Speaker's Guests Other legislative assemblies	Estimated production date: October 13, 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited number in print for Senators to purchase Available online as PDF and e-book 	no	Produced at the request of the Clerk; took two years as it was not possible to dedicate full-time internal resources; no external support was hired
Programs for Special Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remembrance Ceremony (annual) Speech from the Throne Ceremony Colloque Canada-France Unveiling of Portrait of Cairine Wilson Pages swearing-in Unveiling of the Diamond Jubilee Window Unveiling of the Queen's Corbel 100th Grey Cup Unveiling of the Clerk's Table Calendar 126th Assembly of the IPU Unveiling of the Speaker's Coat of Arms and Presentation of Diamond Jubilee Medals 	varies	Programs for guests at key events	Guests	Many are produced annually while others are 'one-of' events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Printed 	yes	Communications handles design and printing; content is provided by Usher of the Black Rod or International and Parliamentary Affairs.
Salon de la Francophonie	Brochure offers historical, art and architecture information on this meeting room.	Full colour, accordion-fold, 5 panels, bilingual	Describes the history and unusual architecture of Room 263-S in the Centre Block, which is dedicated to Canada's membership in La Francophonie.	General public	Last print run in 2010 Website updated in 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Display cases in and around parliamentary precinct Online Information kits Distribution: 2009: 5711 2010: 3066 2011: 470 2012: 4028 2013: 758 2014: 2571	No	

TOOL	Overview	Format	Goal / Why is it used?	To whom is it directed?	How long has it been in use?	How is it distributed?	Is this a time-sensitive tool?	Other
INTERNAL TOOLS								
Canadian Aboriginal Art in the Senate	Information and visuals re: art in the Aboriginal People's Room of the Senate	Full-colour, poster fold, bilingual	Highlights 33 of the Aboriginal artworks and artifacts in the collection on permanent loan to the Senate by Senator Serge Joyal, displayed in the Aboriginal Peoples Committee Room in the Senate.	General public	Last print run in 2010 Web version updated in 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Display cases in and around parliamentary precinct • Online • Information kits Distribution: 2009: 36745 2010: 26901 2011: 39477 2012: 42889 2013: 9597 2014: 12701	No	
Words of Wisdom	Explains the meaning of six Latin inscriptions in the woodwork of the Speaker's suite of rooms.	32-page booklet is 6.5 x 5.5 inches (64 pages in a bilingual tumble format); also online	Information about the Latin inscriptions	Speaker's Guests	2006 Website updated in 2013	Distributed by the Speaker Print and online	no	
The Constitution Table	Briefly examines the table's history, significance, origin, features, and how it came to its current location in the Senate	Online + small print run	Historical information	Speaker's Guests	2009 Website updated in 2013	Distributed by the Speaker Print run of 2000; also online	no	Produced at the request of the Speaker
Works of Naval Art in the Senate Speaker's Chambers	Historical information on these artworks.	16 page (32 pages in a bilingual tumble format) booklet; also online	Historical information to mark the 100th anniversary of the Canadian Navy		2010 Website updated in 2013	Distributed by the Speaker Print and online	no	Produced at the request of the Speaker
Diamond Jubilee Window	A booklet about the Diamond Jubilee Window	22 pages (44 in a bilingual tumble format); also online	It was produced for the unveiling of the diamond jubilee window that is above the Senate entrance to Centre Block.	Speaker's Guests	April 2012	To Speaker's guests	no	Produced at the request of the Speaker
Fact sheets	The Red Chamber; The Senate and Legislation; Women in the Senate; Working with Canada's Youth; Senate Committees; Key Roles in the Senate	Paper, double-sided; E/F also available in Cantonese Spanish, German, Italian, Inuktitut and Braille	To inform readers on a number of Senate topics	General public	Last update – Summer 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Display cases in and around parliamentary precinct • Online • Information kits Distribution: 2009: 36745 2010: 26901 2011: 39477 2012: 42889 2013: 9597 2014: 12701	no	

TOOL	Overview	Format	Goal / Why is it used?	To whom is it directed?	How long has it been in use?	How is it distributed?	Is this a time-sensitive tool?	Other
INTERNAL TOOLS								
FAQs about the Senate of Canada	Intended for young students, the FAQ brochure is written at a grade six reading comprehension level. It	Full colour brochure	Answers basic questions about the Senate in a fun and visually appealing way.	8- to 12-year-old students	Last print run in 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Display cases in and around parliamentary precinct • Online • Information kits <p>Distribution: 2009: 2937 2010: 2619 2011: 3031 2012: 3652 2013: 956 2014: 2992</p>	no	
Speaker's Parade	Historical and ceremonial details about the Speaker's parade that opens each Senate sitting	Full colour, accordion-fold, 3 panels, bilingual	Details the pomp and ceremony inherited from Britain in this brochure about the Senate Speaker's Parade.	General public	Last update in 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Display cases in and around parliamentary precinct • Online • Information kits <p>Distribution: 2009: 6622 2010: 5580 2011: 430 2012: 1928 2013: 2378 2014: 305</p>	No	Produced at the request of the Speaker
The Senate Today	Details on the Senate – its role, what Senators do, the youth program etc.	Soft cover, bilingual booklet, full colour cover; 1-colour interior; 72 pages	To improve understanding of the Senate's role	General public	Last update in 2010	<p>A version is available on the Senate website, as a microsite</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Display cases in and around parliamentary precinct • Online • Information kits 	No	Booklet is dated given the Senators highlighted (i.e. Roméo Dallaire has retired); phrasing that refers to web is dated

TOOL	Overview	Format	Goal / Why is it used?	To whom is it directed?	How long has it been in use?	How is it distributed?	Is this a time-sensitive tool?	Other
INTERNAL TOOLS								
Constitutional Monarchy	Historical overview of the monarchs whose portraits are in the Senate	Full colour, multi-fold, bilingual	To provide historical information about the kings and queens who have reigned over Canada since 1534.	General public Educators	Last print run in 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Display cases in and around parliamentary precinct • Web • Information kits • Teachers' Institute Distribution: 2009: 9635 2010: 5896 2011: 16670 2012: 6852 2013: 7541 2014: 1762	No	
At Work in the Senate	Information on the people working in the Senate	Full colour, gate-fold, bilingual	Invites visitors to Parliament Hill to learn about the roles of the key players in the Senate chamber.	General public		Distributed by the LoP in display cases around precinct Information kits Distribution: 2009: 1645 2010: 556 2011: 1995 2012: 1962 2013: 1728 2014: 2577	No	Produced in association with the Library of Parliament; Communications contributes to the text and distributes the document. A similar publication about the House of Commons is also available from the Library of Parliament.
Speaker of the Senate	Brochure looks at the Speaker's historic and present-day roles and responsibilities; includes a brief biography of current Speaker Noël A. Kinsella.		To increase understanding of the Speaker's role	General public		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Display cases • Information kits 	No	Produced in association with the Library of Parliament; Communications contributes to the text and distributes the document.

TOOL	Overview	Format	Goal / Why is it used?	To whom is it directed?	How long has it been in use?	How is it distributed?	Is this a time-sensitive tool?	Other
INTERNAL TOOLS								
Bookmark	Contact information and web address	Bilingual, full colour	3 versions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generic • With info on infrared channels for events in the Chamber (Openings, Installation of the GG, etc) • With Info on Audio Channels for visitors in the galleries. 	General public		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generic version: • Display cases around precinct • Information kits Distribution: 2009: 6369 2010: 14486 2011: 17667 2012: 6281 2013: 1374 2014: 415	No	
Heraldic Symbols	Designed to display the Heraldic Symbols in the Senate Speakers Chambers.	Bilingual full color booklet Online + small print run		Speaker's Guests	2010	Distributed by the Speaker Print run of 2000 in 2009 and 2000 in 2010 Online	no	Produced at the request of the Speaker
Two Senate Speakers, One New Brunswick Village	Text includes the biography of each Speaker and a brief description of the village of Saint Martins.	Online + small print run	Provide information about the two Senate Speakers (Foster and Kinsella) who came from the same NB village.	Speaker's Guests	2009	Distributed by the Speaker 1000 print copies	No	Produced at the request of the Speaker
Samuel de Champlain	Produced for the unveiling of the bust of Samuel de Champlain in the Salon de la Francophonie. The event commemorated the 400th anniversary of the founding of the city of Québec.	8.5 x 11 inches tri-fold pamphlet	Information on the bust of Samuel de Champlain	Senators Speaker's Guests	2008	Distributed by the Speaker Print	No	Produced at the request of the Speaker
CD	Provides overview of the Senate; includes video and teacher's guide	CD	Increase understanding of the Senate's role	Teachers students	2006	Website Upon request For sale at the Parliamentary Boutique	No	Produced mainly for classroom use; comments from public have been with regards to downloading issues on the parl.gc.ca website (since the video runs on Windows Media Player that is incompatible with Apple products). The CD is still a popular product

TOOL	Overview	Format	Goal / Why is it used?	To whom is it directed?	How long has it been in use?	How is it distributed?	Is this a time-sensitive tool?	Other
INTERNAL TOOLS								
Mural Inscriptions in the Senate Speaker's Chambers	Latin inscriptions and their English and French translations.	Insert card included in the Words of Wisdom booklet.	Information on the inscriptions	Speaker's Guests	2006	Distributed by the Speaker; he may provide this to guests instead of the larger Words of Wisdom booklet. Print	No	Produced at the request of the Speaker
Page promotion program	Bookmarks, pamphlets, posters	Print	To promote the Page program	Students	2005	Through HR directorate	No	Communications Directorate writes, designs and prints these elements.

Production items for the Speaker's Office:

Speaker's greeting card	Speaker's menu card	Souvenir photo frames	Speaker's Christmas card
Giveaways: mints, pens, pins, bags			

APPENDIX B

Digital communications tools assessment

October 9, 2014

The Senate's digital channels were assessed according to criteria related to audiences, objectives, governance and the technology being used. The channels reviewed included the Senate website (as well as its sub-sites), the Committee website, Senators' websites, ParlVu, digital tools such as e-books and infographics, applications such as PARLinfo and LEGISinfo, the Twitter feed and the internal website IntraSen. The Parl.gc.ca website was also reviewed as it functions as the main gateway for all Canadians to Parliament, including the Senate. Members of the Communications Directorate as well as staff from the Information Systems Directorate (ISD) were interviewed to help gather the necessary information. The main findings of the review:

- The Parliamentary Information Management Committee provides guidance around how information management is shared by the House of Commons, Library of Parliament and Senate.
- However, there does not appear to be an overarching digital content strategy guiding how online content is managed among the House of Commons, Library of Parliament and Senate.
- There is no formal digital governance process in place among the Senate Directorates guiding web development or digital content.
- Social media tools are being used but in the absence of a strategy, their potential for engaging Canadians is not being fully exploited.
- The Intranet has benefited from the guidance of a clear governance charter.

Digital Strategy (content and editorial)

There is no overarching digital or content strategy in place at the Senate between the Directorates, or between House of Commons, Library of Parliament and the Senate, from which to prioritize audiences, content and initiatives. The Communications Directorate Action Plan dating back to May 2005 includes recommendations on "Maximizing use of the Internet" but has not been updated and therefore does not address new channels such as social media.

In the absence of an overarching digital strategy, the Communications Directorate has created tools and begun using channels that it has identified as effective ways to connect with Canadians. These include a Twitter feed, Committee report web sites (Report Mini Sites) that are mobile friendly, infographics that are audience friendly and recently, an e-book. However, these initiatives are largely ad hoc and not integrated into a larger communications plan or digital strategy to meet Institution-wide objectives.

The Senate's twitter feed (@SenateCA) is managed by the Directorate and is intended to connect with Canadians and to demonstrate how Senators are engaged in the nation's business. Specific committee hashtags are used to tweet about meetings, witnesses, links to webcast details, etc. The committee hashtags are also posted in tandem with @SenateCA during committee hearings allowing Canadians who are watching CPAC, to engage in conversation about the subject matter. However, according to Communications Directorate staff, active "listening" or monitoring of the conversation via these hashtags is not typically done.

Governance

Information Services and Communications are both represented on the Parliamentary Information Management Committee (PIM). The PIM Vision, developed in 2004, describes how information management is to be shared among the three major bodies: HoC, Senate and the Parliamentary Library. This has led to positive collaborations such as the development of *LEGISInfo*, an online tool providing electronic access to a wide range of information

on current bills. However, the vision does not address a joint digital communications or content management strategy among the three bodies.

As well, there is no formal governance process in place among the Senate Directorates from which to align a content plan and key messages, web development guidelines and efficient use of resources (both technical and human). Without a governance structure, ad hoc web content management tools have been developed in-house to facilitate and decentralize the maintenance of web content and several “mini web sites” have been built over time under the Sen.parl.gc.ca domain. As well, special projects such as study or report websites or e-books (requiring cooperation between Communications Directorate and ISD) are largely done ad hoc and not prioritized against an overarching road map or action plan.

The Intranet on the other hand, does have a clear governance charter. While it was developed in 2008 and the implementation has been slow, it does outline a solid governance model and a management process for developing and maintaining the site based on specific objectives. As such, the Intranet has a consistent template and navigation framework between Directorates with a balance of centralized and decentralized content management.

Channel	Overview	Audience	Objectives/ Content and Editorial	Governance	Management and Execution	Platform/ Technology
Web Sites (Internet)						
<p>Parl.gc.ca http://www.parl.gc.ca/Default.aspx?Language=E</p>	<p>Umbrella website / main gateway for the Canadian public and other stakeholders about how Parliament works, Parliamentary business, Senators and bills etc.</p> <p><i>*This assessment does not encompass HoC and therefore we did not interview HoC staff, but the web site was reviewed as it provides a critical gateway to the Senate’s main site.</i></p>	<p>Canadian public</p>	<p>Parl.gc.ca is the main gateway for all Canadians to Parliament, including the Senate.</p> <p>There is duplication of information with the Senate website under <i>How Parliament Works</i> in a section called “<i>The Senate Today</i>” that leads to an entirely different micro-site apart from the main Senate portal. http://www.parl.gc.ca/AboutHowParlWorks.aspx?Language=E</p> <p>RE: Senators Bios The Senators’ bios are found on all three main sites (HoC, Senate and LoP) in different layouts. A list of current Senators with photos appears on the Senate portal (http://sen.parl.gc.ca/portal/canada-senators-e.htm) and a listing also appears on the Parl.gc.ca site (http://www.parl.gc.ca/SenatorsMembers/Senate/SenatorsBiography/ISenator.asp?Language=E)</p> <p>However, the links to the actual bios themselves on each site point to the same database, maintained by Senate ISD Directorate. http://www.parl.gc.ca/SenatorsMembers/Senate/SenatorsBiography/isenator_det.asp?senatorid=2869&sortord=N&Language=E&M=M)</p>	<p>There is a Parliamentary Information Management Committee; the Director of ISD and Communications are both on the committee.</p> <p><i>A Parliamentary Information Management (PIM) Vision</i>, developed in 2004, describes how information management is to be shared among the three major bodies: HoC, Senate and the Parliamentary Library.</p> <p>The document does not specifically address a joint digital communications strategy or content/editorial management among the three bodies.</p> <p>The PIM vision describes information management as an “enabler for openness and transparency by which the public can hold the elected representatives and the government accountable for its actions and enable citizen participation...”</p>	<p>The 2004 report outlined the goal of having an agile infrastructure among the three major stakeholders; it was to be a road map from 2004-2009.</p> <p>HoC maintains and is responsible for the overall architecture of parl.gc.ca. Updates to architecture are done quarterly and written requests to update the Senate home page must be provided to HoC staff.</p> <p>Senate staff are able to access and update certain, though not all, Senate pages directly under Parl.gc.ca. A document called “Design revamp of parl.gc.ca senate pages”, provided by Communications Directorate design staff, indicates a road map to do so.</p>	<p>Many parts of the site are “fed” by a system called PRISM developed by HoC in 2000. Defined by ISD staff as a customer built “Legislative Management System”, it contains minutes on meetings, debates, studies, meeting notes.</p> <p>PRISM was put in place partly to “re-use and re-purpose parliamentary information and information holdings” according to the PIM Vision 2004</p> <p>PRISM also feeds LEGISinfo (see further down in this table).</p> <p>Parl.gc.ca is not mobile friendly except for the Visitor Information section which is done as a responsive web site (meaning it can be viewed on all devices.)</p>

			<p>There is also a list of Senators found on PARLinfo. The bios on that site look slightly different but we are told by ISD Directorate that the information is pulled from the main database source mentioned above.</p> <p>http://www.parl.gc.ca/parlinfo/lists/ParliamentarianAge.aspx?Chamber=b571082f-7b2d-4d6a-b30a-b6025a9cbb98</p> <p>Each Senator also has a personal website where his/her bio can be found which may or may not be the same as the one posted in the database referenced above. (See Senators' website section below).</p>			
<p>Senate Portal (also known as the Senate website) http://sen.parl.gc.ca/portal/home-e.htm</p>	<p>Website "portal" housed under the Parl.gc.ca umbrella. Accessible through a hyperlink on the Parl.gc.ca home page or directly through the subdomain Sen.parl.gc.ca</p>	<p>No formal audience definition has been agreed upon by the Clerk, Speaker, Communications Directorate i.e. there is no overarching strategy that defines the audience for the websites, however the Directorate defines the site's audiences as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educators • Stakeholders (those with a stake or interest in a topic being studied by a committee) • Parliamentary media • Local and regional media • Digital Citizens 	<p>Content is posted ad hoc largely at the request of the Clerk or proactively by the Directorate.</p> <p>There is no editorial strategy in place between Directorates within the Senate or among the Senate, HoC and PoC.</p> <p>However, certain content is shared between Parl and Sen sites such as Senators' bios: http://www.parl.gc.ca/SenatorsMembers/Senate/SenatorsBiography/isenator_det.asp?senator_id=3571&sortord=N&Language=E&M=M</p> <p>This collaboration largely takes place between IT staff to facilitate maintenance. (See more detailed note above under Parl.gc.ca)</p>	<p>The Communications Directorate is responsible for the Senate's institutional presence on the website.</p> <p>Originally, the Senate site was intended to be a simple portal of links leading back to Parl.gc.ca. However, due to constraints on timely updating at the HoC, the Directorate took on the role of creating pages so that the Senate portal became a website, under parl.g.ca, which now acts as the main online presence for the Senate and Senators.</p>	<p>The content on the site is managed by the Communications Directorate. Some content is posted directly by Directorate staff (graphic designers) such as RMS reports but more technical work is managed by ISD staff. For example, News Releases, are produced in Word by the Directorate and sent to all Senate staff. ISD staff converts the documents to HTML, posts them on the website and creates the pointer for the RSS feed.</p> <p>Directorate staff tells us that Google analytics has been implemented on certain pages and is reviewed by the Directorate staff, in particular the lead on digital engagement. However, statistics are not widely disseminated or discussed amongst Directorate to guide editorial decisions.</p>	<p>The Senate website does not have a primary content management system (CMS) in place however, smaller ad hoc systems have been developed over the years to respond to various requests to create microsites such as that of the Speaker or a template for Senators' individual sites etc.). These are documented below in the Micro-site section.</p> <p>IRIS is a Legislative Information System built in-house by the Senate Information Systems staff. IRIS publishes committee web site information (see below) and current Senator bios.</p> <p>Originally the Senate and HoC were to share PRISM but it would have taken many hours</p>

						<p>and resources to adapt PRISM to support Senate needs. The solution was to create “data exchange mechanisms” to share information, for example Senators’ bios.</p> <p>ISD staff state that IRIS is currently used for legislative information only / and not as a content management system for editorial content. IRIS was introduced in a phased approach to manage the following information:</p> <p>1st module: Senators’ bios 2nd module: Committee information (live on October 14) 3rd module: Senators’ attendance records (back-end only). Date of release not known at time of this assessment and there are no plans in place to have this information published online. It is public information but currently only available on paper.</p> <p>The Principal Clerk of Committees is the lead on the IRIS implementation.</p>
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Sub-Sites or Micro Sites						
<p>Speaker of the Senate <i>(At the time of this review, the Speaker was Speaker Kinsella)</i></p> <p>http://sen.parl.gc.ca/nkinsella/English/home-e.asp</p>	<p>Separate micro site under the Sen.parl subdomain.</p> <p>The site has common branding with the Senate site but has a different navigation and layout.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educators • Stakeholders Parliamentary media • Local and regional media • Digital Citizens 	<p>Content objectives and priorities are defined by the staff in the office of the Speaker of the Senate.</p> <p>No overarching content or editorial strategy has been developed between the Communications Directorate and Speaker of the Senate office.</p>	Usher of the Black Rod	<p>Layout/ design was built by Communications. A resource at ISD is responsible for html of this site.</p>	<p>The site has a custom built CMS that was developed by an Ottawa-based company about three years ago according to ISD staff.</p> <p>Speaker of the Senate staff wanted to manage this content, however time became a challenge and maintenance is now done by ISD.</p> <p>The micro site is not mobile friendly.</p>
Senators' websites	Individual websites for each Senator	<p>No formal or common audience definition for the Senators' sites has been provided. However, through conversations with Directorate staff, the general audience for these sites is understood to be:</p> <p>Citizens living in Senators' regions Media General public</p>	<p>There is no overarching strategy in place that outlines the objectives for Senators' websites however a common template was developed by Information Systems which links to a bio, expense reports and committee home page etc.</p> <p>According to Directorate staff, some Senators request a different website design while about 50 Senators use the standard template.</p> <p>Note: Individual websites need not be bilingual.</p>	<p>Each Senator is provided with a common template for his/her website which comes with a content management system (CMS). They can also choose to outsource the development of the site to an external agency for a unique look and feel; they are not obliged to use the template provided.</p> <p>According to ISD, approximately 50 Senators use the the content management system and template provided by ISD.</p>	<p>According to information on IntraSen, the Senate's intranet system, the Directorate can provide digital communications support/ advisory services re: Senators' presence but this is solely at request of Senators and / or their staff.</p>	<p>A custom-built CMS was developed for the Senators' websites. (The CMS has 5-6 templates available for layout). Senators' staff can update content, photos; it also contains a blog tool with comment filtering. (Approval module included).</p> <p>Senators can choose to have an outside agency build their site. In this case, ISD provides server space but will not maintain the site.</p>
<p>The Senate Page Program http://www.parl.gc.ca/Employment/Senate/PageProgram/senpages-E.htm</p>	<p>Separate site under Parl.gc.ca</p> <p>The site has a common branding to the Senate site but has a different architecture, navigation and layout.</p>	Those interested in becoming a page for the Senate. (This is inferred from the website directly).	There is not a formal overarching content or editorial strategy in place between the directorates.	Usher of the Black Rod	<p>Usher of the Black Rod provides content and decides on editorial, and ISD maintains.</p> <p>Branding/look and feel reviewed by the Directorate.</p>	<p>HTML</p> <p>Site is not mobile friendly</p>
<p>Working at the Senate http://sen.parl.gc.ca/Employment/inde</p>	<p>Separate HR site hosted externally</p> <p>The site has a common</p>	Those interested in working at the Senate (This is inferred from the website directly).	There is not a formal overarching content or editorial strategy in place between the directorates.	Human Resources	<p>HR and CGI</p> <p>Branding/look and feel reviewed by the Directorate.</p>	<p>Hosted at CGI /externally.</p> <p>Site is not mobile friendly</p>

<p>x-e.htm</p>	<p>branding to the Senate site but has a different architecture, navigation and layout.</p>					
<p>Committee website (and committee sub-sites)</p>	<p>Housed under Parl.gc.ca</p> <p>The site has a common branding to the Senate site but has a different architecture, navigation and layout.</p> <p>Each committee has its own sub-website; they have a common layout, architecture and navigation system.</p>	<p>No formal audience definition has been approved but the Communications Directorate defines the site’s audiences as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educators • Stakeholders • Parliamentary media • Local and regional media • Digital Citizens <p>The committee site also has information specifically for witnesses at committee meetings.</p>	<p>Clerks manage the parliamentary information posted to each Committee website.</p> <p>The Communications Directorate determines what is featured on the Committee home page (profile five studies or reports on the home page).</p>	<p>Committee Clerks</p>	<p>There is no agreed-upon approach, between the Directorate and Committee Clerks, to managing digital content for committees. The exception is the management of parliamentary information such as reports, studies and bills, which is done directly through IRIS; see next column.</p> <p>Currently, supporting communications content such as Report Micro Sites (RMS) or infographics are developed either at the request of the Clerk of each committee or proactively by the Directorate.</p>	<p>Starting on October 14, all dynamic information (i.e. information that changes / is updated regularly) on the committee websites will be fed by IRIS. This allows the Clerk (admin assistants) to post agendas, briefs, meetings, information on witnesses, minutes etc. This is currently being done through a system called CommDB</p> <p>Site is not mobile friendly</p>
<p>Committee Report Micro-Sites (RMS) and Annual Report micro site</p>	<p>The Directorate develops microsites for certain studies deemed of high interest to the public.</p> <p>The Senate annual reports are developed yearly in html and PDF.</p>	<p>No clear audience was defined for the RMS between the Directorate and Committee staff.</p> <p>Annual reports are built for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educators Stakeholders Parliamentary media Local and regional media Digital Citizens 	<p>OLLO – This committee had the first Report Microsite (RMS); it was launched in April 2014 http://www.parl.gc.ca/Content/SEN/Committee/412/ollo/rms/01Apr14/Home-e.htm</p> <p>The objective is to help disseminate information on specific studies or reports. The RMS “Uses ‘compressed news release’ format – including photos of Senators to personalize the site”. (Provided by the Directorate)</p> <p>Includes social sharing “toolbar” on main page.</p> <p>The Annual report follows a standard table of contents and</p>	<p>The Directorate makes the decision to develop an RMS; it handles design and uses content from the committee’s report.</p> <p>The Directorate designs and develops the annual report online and print.</p>	<p>Managed by Directorate staff and designers.</p>	<p>For both types of reports, the last versions developed were responsive html designs, meaning pages can be viewed on any device including smart phones.</p>

			also contains a social sharing “toolbar” on main page. Its main objective is to inform all Canadians on the activities of the Senate.			
Office of the Senate’s Ethics Officer http://www.sen.parl.gc.ca/seo-cse/eng/Home-e.html	Found under the Sen.Parl.gc.ca domain. Website which outlines the duties and functions of the Senate Ethics Officer as set out under the <i>Conflict of Interest Code for Senators</i> . The site has a different branding, architecture, navigation and layout than the Senate site.	No clear audience was defined between the Directorate and the OSEO Staff.	There is not a formal overarching content or editorial strategy in place between the directorates.	Staff of the OSEO are responsible for the overall governance. According to ISD staff, the site was designed internally 10 years ago by a member of the ISD staff who is no longer there.	The Directorate does not have any role to play in the content or management of this Website. ISD maintains the site.	HTML site. According to ISD staff, the “Public Registry” page, containing a list of PDFs, has a simple custom built tool which allows staff at the OSEO to upload the files directly to the site. http://www.sen.parl.gc.ca/seo-cse/PublicRegistry.aspx?Lang=E&Year=2013-2014
Other Digital Communication Tools						
Infographics	High level information presented in a visually appealing format	Same as for the Senate website	Two examples were found: ENEV- First infographic for report tabling (PDF) http://www.parl.gc.ca/Content/SEN/Committee/411/ENEV/DPK/22Aug13/images/infographic-e.pdf Five things Canadians should know about Senate Committees http://www.parl.gc.ca/sencommitteebusiness/page.aspx?parl=41&ses=2&id=5thingsC&Language=E There are no formal editorial guidelines outlining when an infographic should be produced.	Initiative of the Communications Directorate to produce more engaging content.	Library of Parliament has subject matter analysts/ specialists who are key to producing this content however helping develop communication products is not part of their mandate.	Posted as PDFs or Images.
E-Book	Parliamentary Treasures is the first e-book to be	Audiences are not clearly defined.	Requested by the Clerk to document archival material	The Clerk as lead helped encourage support from other	Writing, design and photography were done internally over two years;	It can be downloaded to most e readers (and it is free).

	launched by the Senate. (Design and photography support by Communications Directorate)		held by the Senate It launches in October; Senators can purchase copies for distribution	departments and encouraged collaboration.	director of ISD was project lead. The Directorate asked for the opportunity to sell the book on Amazon but legal reasons prevent this.	Meant for tablet platform but also easily accessible via PC and smartphone. Could be used as a template for future e-books.
Video on Demand /Live Webcasting						
ParlVu	Video on Demand and Live Webcasting of committee meetings. FYI: Chamber debates are only available in audio format.	Same as the Senate website although the format of the tool and the search mechanisms suggest that users would already be familiar with committee structure, format and processes.	Directorate is able to broadcast three committee meetings simultaneously. If a 4 th committee requests broadcasting, Directorate staff used agreed upon criteria to prioritize the requests.	Responsibility for broadcast was transferred to the Communications Directorate in summer, 2014. ISD supports and manages the servers; the Committees Directorate manages technicians	TV directors work for HoC but they also provide paid services to the Senate. (This is under ISD Director) Communications oversees special requests for live streaming, video production etc.	Platform: SLIQ Media Technology. Legislative digital media solutions. Videos are in Windows media format and not accessible on certain platforms such as iOS (which is used by Apple products); not easily accessible on smart phones generally. ISD is investigating a newer technology that the HoC is using.
Other/ Applications						
LEGISinfo	Web based application/database (sophisticated search tool) part of HoC website. <i>*Technically under HoC and not part of functional review however, this application houses information about bills being reviewed by the Senate.</i>	Based on the nature of the search tool (outlined below), it seems this would apply to legislative staff, researchers, journalists etc. Searches can be done by inputting bills by title or number. An advanced search can be done by bill type, sponsor, Chamber, committee, ministry, and Parliament and session.	LEGISinfo contains information on legislation before Parliament providing electronic access to a wide range of information about each bill such as: status, votes, major speeches at second reading; coming into force data; legislative summaries etc.	LEGISinfo is a collaborative effort of the Senate, the House of Commons and the Library of Parliament. Maintained by HoC IT staff.	Management of this application was not part of this functional review.	Custom built application with PRISM Provides information on bills.
PARLinfo	Focus is on historical information	Unknown, as HoC staff were not interviewed as part of this assessment.	"The PARLINFO database contains information about the people and events that have	Library of Parliament As outlined on the site: "The	HoC staff were not interviewed as part of this assessment.	Custom built application supported by HoC and owned by Library of Parliament.

	<i>*Technically under HoC and not part of functional review however, this site houses information about the Senate and Senators.</i>		shaped Parliament since 1867. “	PARLINFO team makes every effort to ensure the accuracy and currency of its information, using authoritative, publicly available sources to develop the Senator and MP profiles.”		PARLinfo and IRIS share content through a “Direct exchange mechanism”
SOCIAL						
Twitter feed #Senca @SenateCA	<p>Institutional Twitter feed launched in 2011.</p> <p>20,009 followers as of September 29, 2014.</p> <p>According to the Directorate, 23 Senators have their own Twitter accounts.</p>	<p>Educators</p> <p>Stakeholders</p> <p>Parliamentary media</p> <p>Local and regional media</p> <p>Digital Citizens</p>	<p>Goal: demonstrating that Senators are always engaged in the nation’s business.</p> <p>Content (as defined in the Terms of Use and developed in collaboration with Legal) http://sen.parl.gc.ca/portal/twitter/Terms-e.htm</p> <p>The architectural and historical richness of Canada’s Upper Chamber and general interest content through web content links, photos, audio clips</p> <p>Coverage of special events in the chamber; news releases and other communications products; updates about new content on the Senate website.</p>	<p>Communications Directorate oversees Twitter account. Engagement with audience is based on the terms of use (always based on fact and not opinion). All tweets approved by Director, Communications.</p>	<p>Digital team meets every two weeks to review metrics and discuss/ plan upcoming weeks.</p> <p>RE: Engagement as found in Terms of Use: “@SenateCA is an information service and not a platform for policy discussions. For discussion of public policy issues that are important to you, we encourage you to connect with senators directly.”</p> <p>A specific hashtag, @jsenca, is used by journalists who need technical support while in the Senate. This has received positive feedback.</p>	<p>Hootsuite for scheduling tweets and social media content management.</p> <p>Production tools: PicPlayPost/ Vinyet /Adobe Voice / Stop Motion / PhotoShop. Vine - used as a video player tool</p> <p>Tweetdeck used on desktop for monitoring.</p>
Twitter hashtags (related to Committees.)	Each committee has a published hashtag that is listed on the Committee website and also displayed on CPAC during committee meetings.	Same as above	Committee hashtags are used to post about Committee activities including notice of meetings, information about witnesses, location of meetings, links to webcast, information on committee travel, reports, news conferences etc.	Twitter support is provided to Committees as requested.	The Directorate feels that many Senators are not keen to engage with the public via Twitter.	iPads are not connected to the Senate’s internal network therefore real time engagement via twitter is limited when traveling with Committees.

			<p>Committee hashtags are posted in tandem with @SenateCA during committee hearings allowing Canadians who are watching to engage in real time in conversation about the subject matter.</p> <p>However, active “listening” and monitoring of hashtag conversations is limited. Directorate staff used to send a list of tweets tied to committee hashtags to the Steering Committee, with the intent to document and share the conversations happening on twitter but they were asked to stop.</p> <p>According to an internal survey conducted in the spring of 2014, Senators’ staff members indicated that they would like training on the benefits /usage of social media.</p>			
INTRANET						
IntraSen	Internal web site	Senate employees	<p>Objectives of the Intranet were defined in the IntraSen 2008 Charter.</p> <p>In summary:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Lighten the administrative burden 2) Improve internal communications 3) Enhance flow of official corporate information in real time 4) Enhance employees’ levels of knowledge and awareness 	<p>A detailed governance framework was developed in 2008 which outlines “a management process for developing and maintaining the website...based on the three principles of relevance, standardization and maintenance.”</p> <p>Responsibility for the governance of the Intranet was recently given to the Directorate. Governance framework calls for an Executive Committee Council comprised of the Director of Communications, the Clerk, the Director General of</p>	<p>Guiding principles were defined in the governance framework as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Relevance / value of the content 2) Up to date 3) Standardization /consistency <p>The Intranet was built to allow for decentralized content management. While each Directorate can manage certain parts of their own site such as quick links, introduction and other key information, there is consistent navigation which</p>	<p>Site was built using SharePoint 2007.</p> <p>Collaboration sites have also been developed using SharePoint 2013 (for example a site was developed to help manage the Open House project among internal team members)</p>

				<p>PPSD (security and accommodation and services) and the directors of HR and Finance. This has not yet been put in place.</p> <p>The governance framework also calls for a working committee to be chaired by the lead on internal communications and representatives from the same offices. This group would meet regularly to develop and implement the recommendations and directions from the executive committee.</p> <p>This governance model has not yet been fully implemented and is not yet fully functional.</p>	<p>facilitates the user experience.</p> <p>Each Directorate can submit news content to appear on the IntraSen home page. Users can customize certain parts of the IntraSen home page under “My Area”.</p> <p>Communications has recently updated the template for the Directorate home page with photography, a Twitter feed and graphic imagery. The Communications Directorate is hoping this will become the new standard for Directorate Home pages (but it is currently not part of the standard format developed by ISD)</p>	
Office Management Resource Portal	Micro site within IntraSen	Senators’ staff	<p>Consultations were conducted with Senators’ staff (report results were still being summarized at time of this assessment); approximately 150 staff participated.</p> <p>The portal will contain functional information necessary for daily tasks in a Senator’s office such as: hiring staff, managing Senator’s attendance, committees and training, finding IT and office support services, submitting expenses etc.</p>	<p>The new portal’s development is being led by the Human Resources and Finance Directorates.</p> <p>At time of writing, the new portal had not yet been launched.</p>	Led by HR and Finance and maintained by ISD.	SharePoint
Media Review System http://senmedia.sen.ca	Application built in-house. Info imported every morning from News Desk. (News Desk is an outside service licensed by the Library of Parliament –	Senate staff, Senators, all administrative staff	Provides daily summary of media coverage as it pertains to certain pre-defined key words.	Maintained by ISD and managed by the Directorate.	<p>ISD set up the initial the “key words”, for example: Sen. Senators. Senate, etc.</p> <p>Communications staff reads all the clips and removes those that are not pertinent, then sends in an updated key word request, if required. Staff</p>	<p>Application built in-house. Info imported every morning from News Desk.</p> <p>Senmedia.sen.ca is only accessible from desk top computers and mobile phones</p>

					<p>"tags" stories by category publishes the media review. This generates an email that is then forwarded to all audiences i.e. Senators, their staff. This is also automatically posted to the Intranet.</p> <p>The summary contains links to articles on http://senmedia.sen.ca (internal link only). PDFs of articles are attached to the media summary when Senators are not sitting.</p>	<p>within the Senate network due to copyright costs.</p>
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APPENDIX C

sen.parl.gc.ca Google Analytics High Level Review As of December 31, 2014

Introduction

The following is a high level review of Google Analytics data [from October 1, 2013 to October 1, 2014] for the sen.parl.gc.ca web site. The data was reviewed to glean insight on user behavior and to complement the review of the digital tools assessment findings. However, in the absence of an overarching web or digital strategy, the statistics were not reviewed against stated objectives or desired outcomes. Also, certain pages of potentially high interest to Senate audiences, such as the Committee website, are not part of this overall analysis as the Communications Directorate does not have access to these stats under their Google Analytics account. Because of this, the following analysis is functional (gleaning insights from the stats alone) rather than performance based (evaluating how the website is supporting a specific set of action-oriented tasks or objectives from a stated audience).

Visitors and Visits

sen. parl.gc.ca receives on average 37,078 visits (or sessions) a month. **Over half of the visitors to parl.gc.ca (62.7%) are first time users (unique users) and 37.3% are returning.** See figure 2 for unique visitors. A high number of new visitors a month suggests that the Senate is successful at generating visits to the site and/or that there is a high level of interest from Canadians searching for information on the Senate. However, the lower number of return visits indicate that once users visit the site, they don't feel a need to return.

It is difficult to assess the number of visits as either high or low without comparable data. If the Communications Directorate would like to compare these numbers against other government sites, it would need to enable benchmarking reports in Google Analytics. These reports allow one to anonymously share and compare data to other 'like' that also share their data. Google removes all identifiable information about the domain (URL), combines the data in comparable industries and reports aggregate results in the Benchmarking reports section of Analytics.

On average, visitors are spending 2.24 minutes on the site and visiting 2.4 web pages. This statistic alone would be encouraging however, when after removing the extreme maximums and minimums found in the "average" time spent metric, and reviewing the "engagement statistics" in detail, one can see that **over half the visitors to the site are staying approximately 10 seconds.** (See figure 1). This could indicate that visitors are not finding what they are looking for or that the links are not delivering what was expected. Only a more thorough usability study, combined with stakeholder analysis (a complete website audit) could uncover the true nature of the low engagement. Note, as a reference, this type of detailed audit and stakeholder analysis was conducted for the Parliament of Canada Web site in December 2011 by an outside research firm, Phase 5, and a final report delivered in March 2012.

Of the total visits to the site within the last year, 16% were on mobile devices. Of mobile visitors, 44% were accessing with an iPad and 26% via iPhone. It is expected this number will continue to grow as more and more Canadians consume content via mobile device.

Figure 1

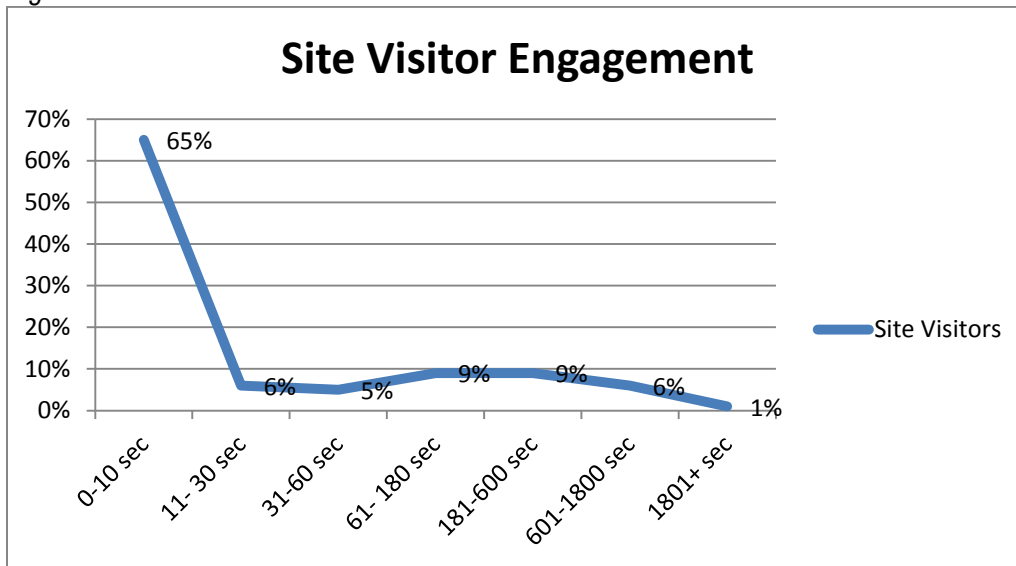
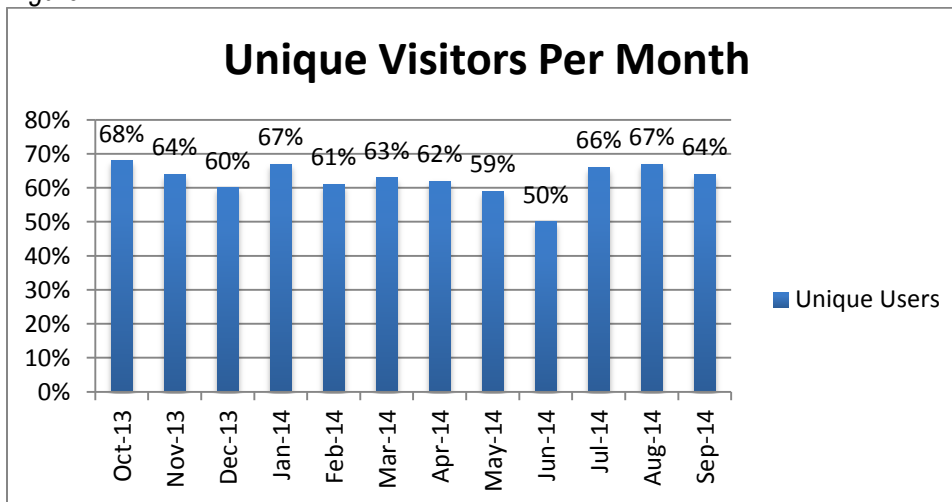


Figure 2



Over 92% of the visitors come from within Canada, 59% of those from Ontario and 31% of those come from Ottawa. Google Analytics calculates a visitor's geographic location using their IP address so this measure can be skewed but still a very good general indicator of traffic; see figures 3, 4, and 5.

Figure 3

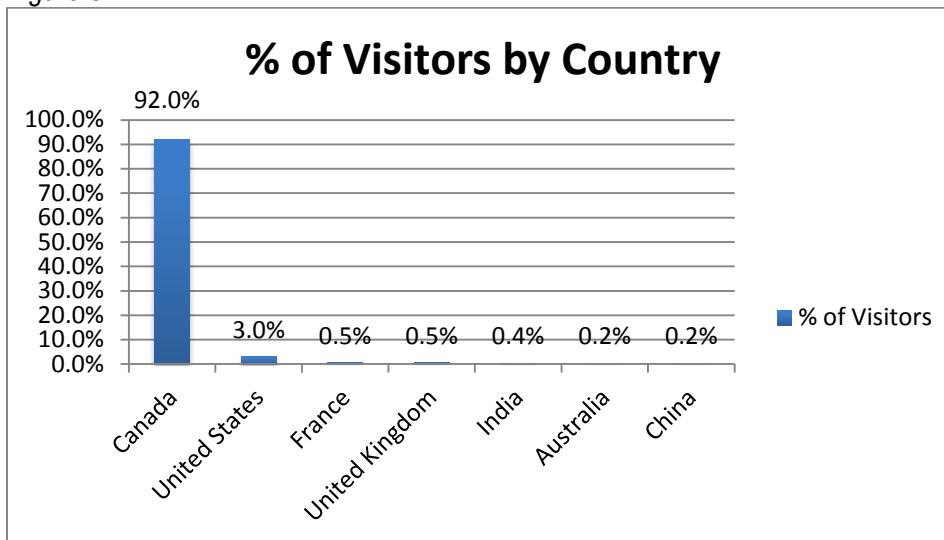


Figure 4

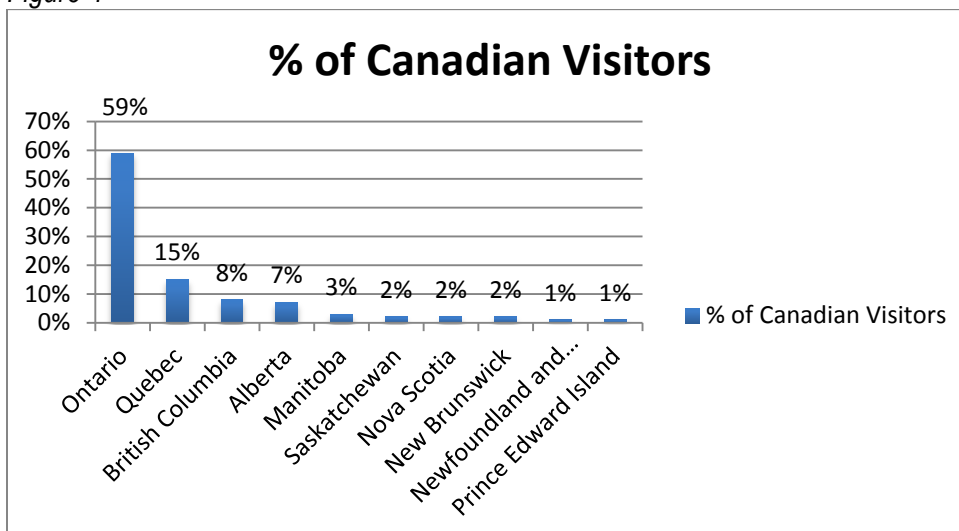
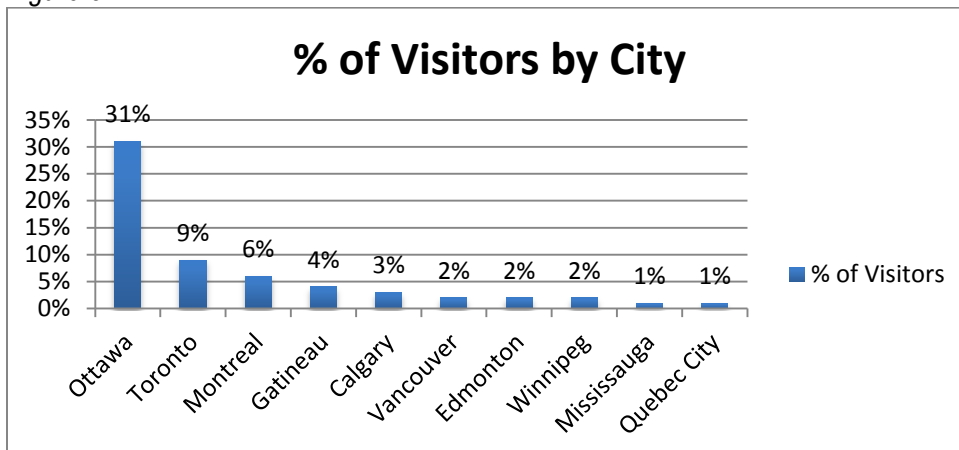


Figure 5



Content

An analysis of the top 10 pages viewed over the span of a year indicates that **visitors are largely coming to sen.parl.gc.ca looking for information on a specific Senator or to access parliamentary information** such as debates and journals. A small percentage were looking for student employment. **It is important to note that the committee website(s), housed under the parl.gc.ca domain, are not included in these stats as we did not have access to those analytics under the sen.gc.ca google analytics account.*

PAGE TITLE	% Visitors
Current Senators	11 %
Senate of Canada	9 %
Senate Debates	6 %
Senators by Province	4 %
Order Paper and Notice Paper - Senate of Canada	4 %
Senate Journals	3 %
Student Employment Program – Senate of Canada	3 %
Senate of Canada – Canada’s Senators	3 %
Sénat du Canada	2 %

Source of Traffic

This metric measures the source of traffic driving the most visits to a web site. The three main types of traffic sources are listed below.

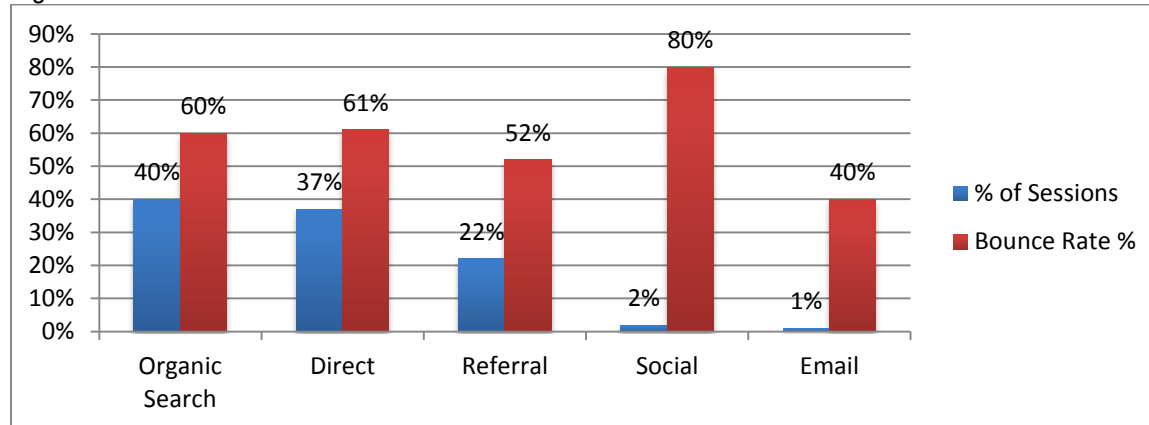
- ‘Organic search:’ this term refers to visitors who discover the site after searching for a keyword in a search engine (Google, Bing, Yahoo).
- Direct: These visitors come to the site after typing its specific URL directly into their browser.
- Referral traffic: These visitors come to the site via links from other sites such as parl.gc.ca or social media.

From October 2013 to October 2014:

- **40% of the traffic to the sen.parl.gc.ca originated from a search** (Google being the main search engine of choice)
- **37% were direct visits** (which correlates with the finding that 37% are repeat visitors. Most repeat visitors have bookmarked the sites to which they often return.)
- **22% came from referrals** (The top three sources were parl.gc.ca, from within the Senate portal itself and intraparl.parl.gc.ca to a much lesser extent)
- Two per cent (2%) **came as a result of a post via social media** and 1% came via email marketing.

Figure 6 highlights the specific channels and their associated “bounce rates”. A bounce rate is the percentage of visitors who left the website after viewing just one page. As stated previously, over half the visitors stay approximately 10 seconds. Bounce rates, along with traffic source, is a general indicator of the efficacy of that channel in pointing visitors to useful or engaging content.

Figure 6

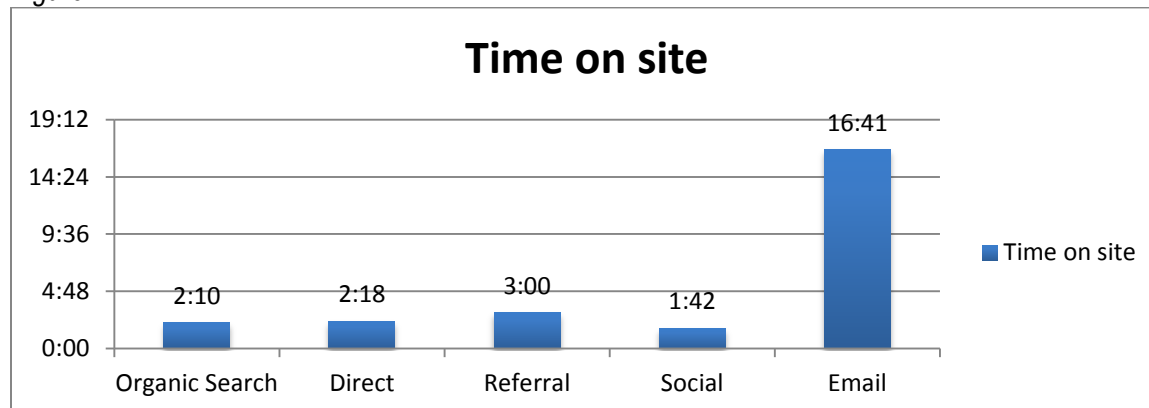


**It is important to note that a bounce rate of 50% or lower is considered acceptable for content rich sites.*

It appears that a referral from another site and links via email are the best at providing visitors with information of value, delivering what is expected. Conversely, social media (one can assume Twitter is the main channel for the Senate) has the highest bounce rate. It is important to note that while many visitors who come to the site via Twitter will be your target audience, a large proportion might not be. Many will have been attracted by a particular piece of posted or retweeted content but will leave as soon as they've read or viewed the item of interest resulting in a high bounce rate. Of course, you want to maximize return on resources /investment in this channel by creating engaging content that will increase visitor count while decreasing the overall bounce rate.

Figure 7 shows the time spent on the site by channel. **The shortest time on the site by channel was also attributed to social media. All other channels performed significantly better at engaging site visitors, especially email.** One can assume the daily news report sent via email plays a significant role in this number.

Figure 7



APPENDIX D

Survey Summary Report

as of November 20, 2014

Between October 28 and November 12, 2014, 54 Senators responded to a survey intended to support the Communications Functional Review currently being led by Blueprint Public Relations. The survey was completed on-line or on-paper, and typically required approximately 20 minutes. (With random distribution among Senators, the survey should be accurate to within $\pm 10\%$, 19 times out of 20.)

Views of Senate communications *in general*

Senators do not hold positive views of the current state of external communications at the Senate. External communications are widely considered *poor* or *very poor* (78%). Most Senators cannot identify *any* strengths in external communications at the Senate, but they name many shortcomings. Chief among the shortcomings is a failure to promote the Senate or Senators. Other significant concerns are poor media relations, poor crisis management, and a strong tendency to be reactive rather than proactive.

Negative views of current communications notwithstanding, there is very strong support for greater transparency at the Senate (91%) and efforts to increase the public profile of the Senate (98%). Ninety-seven percent believe the Senate should be more proactive with the media.

Internal communications are judged to be *adequate* (45%) or *poor* (30%). Senators are most positive about events (44%) and IntraSen (41%), but only one-quarter or less are positive about the media coverage summaries (26%) or *4th Reading* (20%).

Awareness of the Communications Directorate

Senators are not very familiar with most aspects of the work of the Communications Directorate. With the exception of the media summaries, less than one Senator in five says he or she is *very* familiar with any of the eleven roles tested. At least one-half of Senators say they are unfamiliar with most areas of the Directorate's work. Fully three-quarters are unfamiliar with communications tools on IntraSen (74%) and strategic communications planning (78%).

Interaction with the Communications Directorate is currently quite limited. Beyond one or two occasions at most, the large majority of Senators have never sought assistance or guidance from the Directorate, used the communications tools on IntraSen, or contacted the Directorate to express either satisfaction or dissatisfaction with its work.

Less than one-half of Senators say they understand the role of the Communications Directorate (45%) or are familiar with its budget and resources (34%). Only one Senator in four (28%) say their office has a working relationship with the Communications Directorate. This lack of familiarity may be a contributing factor to the Directorate's poor reputation among Senators.

Perceptions of the Communications Directorate

Overall perceptions of the Communications Directorate are negative. More than two-thirds of Senators rate the work of the Directorate as *poor* (46%) or *very poor* (22%). Perceptions of the Directorate are equally negative in the 12 specific areas tested. Not more than one-quarter of Senators (25%) offer a positive rating in any area. That said, one-quarter to one-half cannot offer any opinion in these areas, reflecting the low familiarity noted earlier.

Engagement

Several factors confirm that many Senators are less than fully engaged on the issue of communications. Response to the survey invitation was initially very slow. Considerable promotion was required, including an extension of the deadline, to obtain 54 surveys from 88 eligible Senators. (This is a response rate of 61%). In addition, one-half of Senators left most open-ended questions unanswered, suggesting that they either had no views or were not inclined to devote additional time to the survey. Taken together, these facts strongly suggest that communications is not an issue about upon which most Senators are currently focused.

APPENDIX E INTERVIEW GUIDES AND LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

SENATORS

Senator Denise Batters	Senator Diane Bellemare	Senator Doug Black	Senator Claude Carignan Leader of the Government
Senator Jane Cordy	Senator James Cowan Leader of the Opposition	Senator Jean-Guy Dagenais	Senator Dennis Dawson Deputy Chair, Advisory Working Group on Communications
Senator Art Eggleton Deputy Chair, Social Affairs, Science and Technology	Senator Linda Frum	Senator Joan Fraser Deputy Leader of the Opposition	Senator Stephen Greene
Senator Celine Hervieux-Payette Deputy Chair of Banking, Trade and Commerce	Senator Leo Housakos Chair, Advisory Working Group on Communications	Senator Mobina Jaffer Chair, Human Rights	Senator Noël Kinsella Speaker ⁵²
Senator Daniel Lang	Senator Ghislain Maltais	Senator Elizabeth Marshall Government Whip	Senator Yonah Martin Deputy Leader of the Government
Senator Elaine McCoy	Senator Grant Mitchell Deputy Chair, National Security and Defence	Senator James Munson Opposition Whip	Senator Richard Neufeld
Senator Pierre Claude Nolin Speaker ⁵³	Senator Pierrette Ringuette	Senator Judith Seidman	Senator Carolyn Stewart-Olsen
Senator David Wells			

OFFICIALS, STAFF, EXPERTS

1. Shaila Anwar, Committee Clerk for Legal and Constitutional Affairs
2. Heather Bradley, Director of Communications, Office of the Speaker of the House of Commons
3. Janelle Feldstein, Chief of Staff, Speakers Office
4. Sébastien Gariépy, Communications Coordinator Office of the Leader of the Government in the Senate
5. Lynn Gordon, Committee Clerk for Energy, the Environment and Natural Resources
6. Benet Hiscock, Director of Public Information, House of Lords Information Office, UK
7. Sonia L'Heureux, Parliamentary Librarian

⁵² Retired November 2014, during the communications review

⁵³ Appointed Speaker December 2014, during the communications review

8. Alex Marland, Associate Professor, Political Science; Associate Dean (Undergraduate), Faculty of Arts, Memorial University
9. Gary W. O'Brien, Clerk of the Senate
10. Greg Peters, Usher of the Black Rod
11. Jessica Richardson, Committee clerk for Social Affairs, Science and Technology
12. Marc Roy, Director of Communications, Leader of the Opposition in the Senate
13. Master Hugh Segal, Massey College, retired Senator

MEDIA

- | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Joël-Denis Bellavance | La Presse |
| 2. Madeleine Blais-Morin | Radio-Canada |
| 3. Jennifer Ditchburn | Canadian Press |
| 4. Michelle Lamarche | TVA |
| 5. Michael Le Couteur | Global TV |
| 6. Jordan Press | Ottawa Citizen |
| 7. Althia Raj | Huffington Post Canada |
| 8. Abbas Rana | The Hill Times |
| 9. Chris Rands | CBC |
| 10. Mercedes Stephenson | CTV |
| 11. Hannah Thibedeau | CBC |
| 12. Elizabeth Thompson | iPolitics |
| 13. Terry Guillon | Chief of the Press Gallery |

DIRECTORATE

1. Blair Armitage, Principal Clerk
2. Ceri Au, Communications Officer
3. Debbie Murphy, Communications Coordinator
4. Francine Pressault, Chief, Public Information
5. Karen Schwinghamer, Manager, Communications
6. Annie Trudel, Communications Assistant

+ Group meetings with ISD and web teams; Government Caucus, Opposition Caucus, Government Senate staff, Opposition Senate staff

SENATE: Communications Functional Review**Interview Guide: Senators**

Final, as of October 22, 2014

Hello, my name is {insert BPR team member name} and I am {calling / meeting with you} as part of the communications review project being led by the Advisory Working Group on Communications. Our firm has been hired to conduct a functional review of communications, both internal and external, and to develop a communications plan based on the outcome of that review. We will be speaking with a number of your colleagues (from both the Government and Opposition) as well as staff representatives, officials and the media. We would like to understand your expectations of the communications function, and the challenges and opportunities you may see.

Please note that all responses will be held in confidence. We will not be providing a report on each interview to the Working Group but rather an aggregate of the interview results. We have a few questions I'd like to run through with you; it should take about 30 – 45 minutes to complete.

1. You've been a Senator for 5 years. What have you observed about public perception of the Senate over that time?
 - a. Why do you think the public has this perception?
2. How do you articulate the value of the Senate as an institution?
3. In your view, what should be communicated to Canadians about the value of the Senate?
4. What have you observed about media coverage of the Senate?
 - a. Why do you think media coverage is like that?
5. What changes are needed for the Senate to communicate more effectively with Canadians?
{Probe, if needed, for transparency, civic literacy, broadcasting from the Chamber, travel, outreach, etc.}
6. How effective is internal communications at the Senate?
7. What communications support would you like to receive, for your office?
8. What do you expect the Communications Directorate to do / provide, to help the Senate communicate more effectively with Canadians?
 - a. To help with internal communications?
9. How important is it to you that the Senate administration be non-partisan?
 - a. How do you define non-partisan? (If it isn't clear in the response.)
10. For committee chairs and deputy chairs only: Do you see the Communications Directorate as a communications authority to whom you would turn for counsel (for media relations, issues management and general communications)?
 - a. If not, why not?

11. What role do you see for yourself in communicating about the Senate to Canadians?
{Probe, if needed, for participating in Speakers Bureau-type of initiative, speaking to media, activities on social media, etc.}
12. What are your expectations of this communications review?
13. Final thoughts?

Thank you for your time; your comments are invaluable to this exercise.

Interview Guide: Officials
Final, as of September 24, 2014

Hello, my name is *{insert BPR team member name}* and I am *{calling / meeting with you}* as part of the communications review project being led by the Advisory Working Group on Communications. Our firm has been hired to conduct a functional review of communications, both internal and external, and to develop a communications plan based on the outcome of that review. We will be speaking with staff representatives, officials, Senators and media. As officials in leadership positions, we would like to understand your expectations of the communications function, and the challenges and opportunities you may see.

Please note that all responses will be held in confidence. We will not be providing a report on each interview to the Working Group but rather an aggregate of the interview results. We have a few questions I'd like to run through with you; it should take about 30 minutes to complete.

1. Please describe your role at the Senate.
{This is more of an ice-breaker question, though it will be important to understand the role of each person we are interviewing}.
 2. What priority do you think is currently placed on communications at the Senate?
{Probe for importance of both internal and external}
 3. Who are the key audiences/stakeholders important to your area of responsibility?
{Probe for other Senators, Canadian public, citizens in my region, media, youth, etc.}
 4. What services / products do you expect the Communications Directorate to provide for the Senate, overall? *{Probe – if needed -- for web services, media relations, communications planning, social media services, event planning, broadcasting}*
 - a. Are these being provided, in your view?
 - b. If so, how well are they being provided?
 5. What services / products do you expect the Communications Directorate to provide in support of your work specifically? *{Probe – if needed -- for web services, media relations, communications planning, social media services}*
 - a. Are these being provided, in your view?
 - b. If so, how well are they being provided?
-

6. How do you work with the Communications Directorate (if at all)? In other words, how do you engage their services? What kind of experience is it?
{Probe for strengths and weaknesses}
7. Do you use the communications tools available on IntraSen? i.e. the communications plan template?
8. Have you hired outside communications support? What is good / bad about doing that?
9. Who is responsible for committee communications? (You, the Clerk, the communications advisor, the Chair or someone else?)
10. The Communications Directorate distributes a daily media scan, and writes and distributes the 4th Reading internal newsletter.
 - a. What are your impressions of these **internal** resources?
 - b. How do you use them? {Probe for browse, read thoroughly?}
 - c. Are there other internal communications tools that you use or would like to see created?
11. The Communications Directorate updates the Senate website including committee pages, and manages the Twitter account.
 - a. What are your impressions of these **external** resources?
 - b. Are there other external communications tools that you would like to see created?
12. The Communications Directorate provides media relations support – are you part of the approval process for a media advisory or media release?
 - a. If yes, what are your views on the process—is it effective?
13. If you were to identify **one** area of communications that could be more effective, and **one** area that should remain as-is, what would they be?
14. Is there an organization that excels at communications that you would like the Senate to emulate?
 - a. If yes, who and what do you admire?
15. Briefly, what would you like to see happen as a result of this communications review?
16. Final thoughts?
Thank you for your time; your comments are invaluable to this exercise.

Interview Guide: Staff
as of September 25, 2014

Hello, my name is *{insert BPR team member name}* and I am *{calling / meeting with you}* as part of the communications review project being led by the Advisory Working Group on Communications. Our firm has been hired to conduct a functional review of communications, both internal and external, and to develop a communications plan based on the outcome of that review. We will be speaking with staff representatives, officials, Senators and media. As staff in leadership positions, we would like to understand your expectations of the communications function, and the challenges and opportunities you may see.

Please note that all responses will be held in confidence. We will not be providing a report on each interview to the Working Group but rather an aggregate of the interview results. We have a few questions I'd like to run through with you; it should take about 30 minutes to complete.

-
1. Please describe your role at the Senate.
{This is more of an ice-breaker question, though it will be important to understand the role of each person we are interviewing}.
 2. What priority do you think is currently placed on communications at the Senate?
{Probe for importance of both internal and external}
 3. Who do you feel are the Senate's key audiences – to whom should communications effort be directed?
{Probe for other Senators, Canadian public, citizens in my region, media, youth, etc.}
 4. What services / products do you expect the Communications Directorate to provide for the Senate, overall? *{Probe – if needed -- for web services, media relations, communications planning, social media services, event planning, broadcasting}*
 - a. Are these being provided, in your view?
 - b. If so, how well are they being provided?
 5. What services / products do you expect the Communications Directorate to provide in support of your work specifically? *{Probe – if needed -- for web services, media relations, communications planning, social media services}*
 - a. Are these being provided, in your view?
 - b. If so, how well are they being provided?
 6. How do you work with the Communications Directorate (if at all)? In other words, how do you engage their services? What kind of experience is it? *{Probe for strengths and weaknesses}*
 7. The Communications Directorate distributes a daily media scan, and writes and distributes the 4th Reading internal newsletter.
 - a. What are your impressions of these **internal** resources?
 - b. How do you use them? *{Probe for browse, read thoroughly?}*
 - c. Are there other internal communications tools that you use or would like to see created?

8. The Communications Directorate updates the Senate website including committee pages, and manages the Twitter account.
 - a. What are your impressions of these **external** resources?
 - b. Are there other external communications tools that you would like to see created?
9. The Communications Directorate provides media relations support – are you part of the approval process for a media advisory or media release?
 - a. If yes, what are your views on the process—is it effective?
10. If you were to identify **one** area of communications that could be more effective, and **one** area that should remain as-is, what would they be?
11. Is there an organization that excels at communications that you would like the Senate to emulate?
 - a. If yes, who and what do you admire?
12. Briefly, what would you like to see happen as a result of this communications review?
13. Final thoughts?

Thank you for your time; your comments are invaluable to this exercise.

Interview Guide: Best Practices

Final, as of September 25, 2014

Hello, my name is *{insert BPR team member name}* and I am calling you as part of the communications review project for the Senate of Canada, being led by the Advisory Working Group on Communications. Our firm is conducting a functional review of communications, both internal and external, and is developing a communications plan based on the outcome of that review. We believe it would be valuable to understand how other governing bodies conduct communications and connect with their citizens. I will be sharing your responses with the Working Group, so they can learn about your best practices. I have a few questions I'd like to run through with you; it should take about 30 minutes to complete.

1. Please describe your role.
{This is more of an ice-breaker question, though it will be important to understand the role of each person we are interviewing}.
2. What priority is placed on communications in your organization?
{Probe for importance of both internal and external}
3. Please describe the communications function.
 - a. What objectives does it set out to achieve?
 - b. Where does the function sit in the overall structure?
 - c. Where are decisions about communications made?
 - d. What stakeholder groups (outside of communications) influence those decisions?

- e. Does the function provide communications counsel to the Senate or actually implement communications work?
 - f. Is the communications function integrated with other, related functions such as IT?
 - g. What type of budget does it have?
 - h. How many staff?
4. What types of services / products does your communications group provide for the Senate, overall?
- {Probe for media relations, web services, social media, outreach, crisis counselling, etc.}*
- *If the communications group provides media relations services, What is the extent of their work? Who is the spokesperson? Do all media inquiries flow through the communications group?*
 - *Is the communications group responsible for social media content and posting? If not, who is?*
 - *Is the communications group responsible for web content and posting? If not, who is?*
 - *What are examples that illustrate success?*
5. What types of services / products does your communications group provide for individual Senators?
6. Is it important that the communications group act in a non-partisan manner?
- *If so, how does it communicate about the role and work of the Senate without becoming political?*
 - *How do you balance communications to support “the institution” and “political parties/Senators” when there are situations with conflicting mandates/agendas?*
 - *Are there additional challenges that you encounter?*
7. Who are the main audiences you want to reach?
- {Probe for other Senators, citizens, media, youth, etc.}*
8. How do you track and evaluate success?
9. Does the Senate of Canada have a reputation in terms of communications?
10. As the Senate of Canada reviews its own communications function, what piece of advice would you offer?

Final thoughts?

Thank you for your time; your comments are invaluable to this exercise.

Interview Guide: Management

Final, as of October 7, 2014

Hello, my name is *{insert BPR team member name}* and I am calling you as part of the communications review project for the Senate of Canada, being led by the Advisory Working Group on Communications. Our firm is conducting a functional review of communications, both internal and external, and is developing

a communications plan based on the outcome of that review. We believe it would be valuable to understand current thinking about how legislative bodies like the Senate are seen by citizens and how these bodies can address issues of credibility and engagement. I will be sharing your responses with the Working Group. I have a few questions I'd like to run through with you; it should take about 30 minutes to complete.

1. Please describe the work you currently do.

{This is more of an ice-breaker question, though it will be important to understand the role of each person we are interviewing}.

2. As a professional in the area of government *{insert area of expertise per interviewee}* how do you articulate the value of the Senate of Canada as an institution?
3. What are your observations about the Senate and how the public perceives it?
 - a. Why do you think the public has this perception?
4. What are your views on how the media covers the Senate?

5. What changes would you recommend that the Senate adopt, to begin to change perceptions?
{Probe, if needed, for transparency, civic literacy, broadcasting from the Chamber, travel, outreach, etc.}

6. What role do you think the Communications Directorate can play in changing public perceptions of the Senate?

7. How important is the principle of non-partisanship to the role of Senate Administration?
{Probe, if needed, about how the work and role of Senate can be conveyed without becoming political.}

8. Final thoughts?

Thank you for your time; your comments are invaluable to this exercise.

Interview Guide: Media Representatives / Journalists

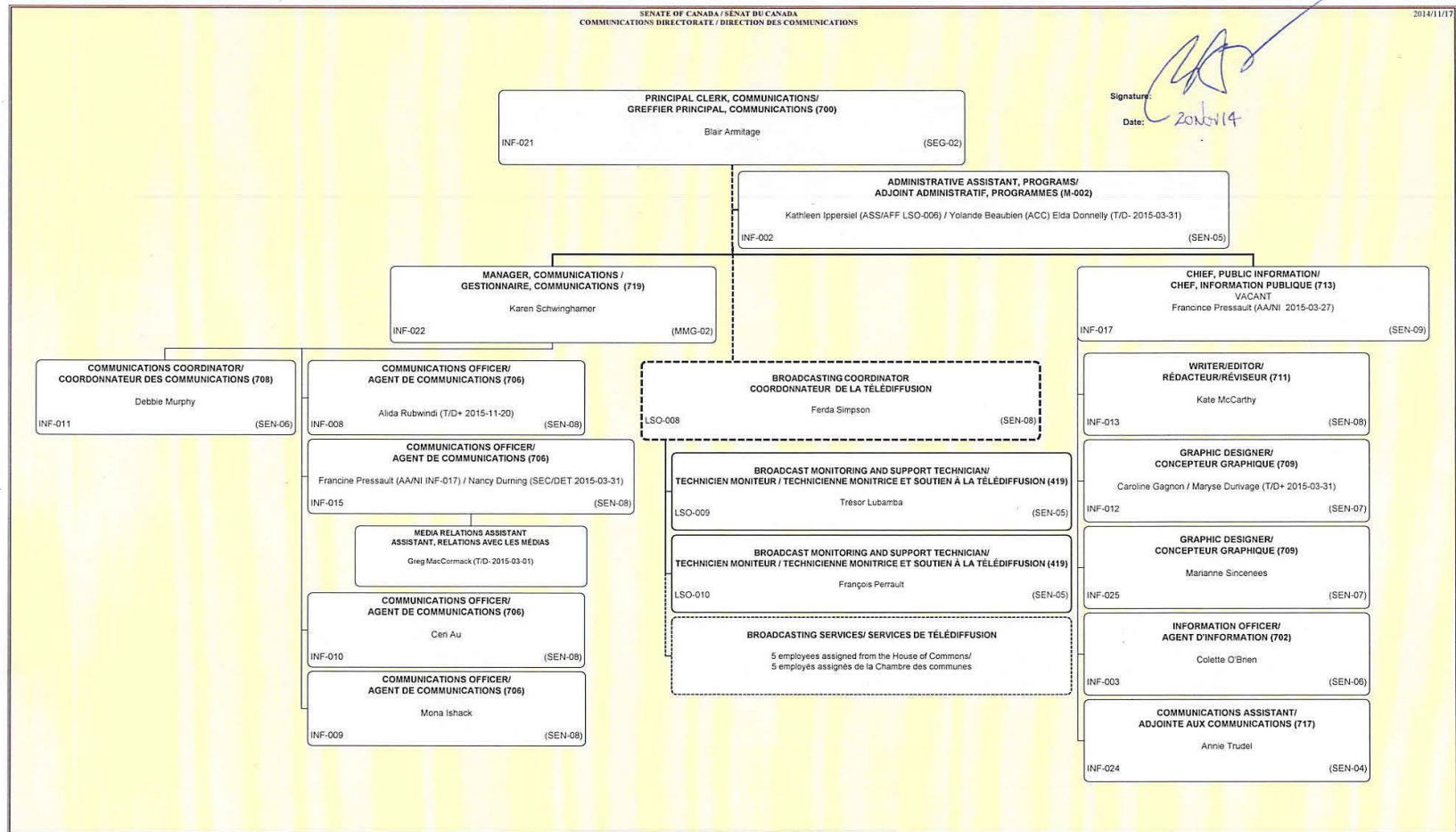
Final, as of October 1, 2014

Hello, my name is *{insert BPR team member name}* and I am *{calling / meeting with you}* as part of the communications review project being led by the Senate Advisory Working Group on Communications. Our firm is conducting a functional review of communications and is developing a communications plan based on the outcome of that review. We are speaking with you and your colleagues who report on the Senate. We would like to understand your perspective on reporting about the Senate – how difficult or how easy it is to gather the information that you need to do your work.

Please note that all responses will be held in confidence. Comments will not be attributed to source. We will not be providing a report on each interview to the Working Group but rather an aggregate of the interview results. We have a few questions I'd like to run through with you; it should take about 30 minutes to complete.

1. Generally speaking, could you please give me a sense of your experience reporting on the Senate?
2. When you have a question about the Senate, do you typically contact the Senate communications office?
 - a. If so, do you usually get what you need?
 - b. If not, why not? How do you proceed?
3. If they do call the Directorate:
 - a. What is the process to be followed in getting your request or question answered?
 - b. Does that process work for you? Why or why not?
4. Do you receive the kind of services / products {e.g. *probe spokesperson comment, news releases, background information, website, etc.*} you would expect from the Senate?
 - a. If yes:
 - i. Are they being provided to you in a timely fashion?
 - ii. Are they in an appropriate format? Language?
 - iii. Is the information easy to understand?
5. When the Senate has news to share with media, do you get what you expect/need? {e.g. *spokesperson comment, probe news releases, background information, website, etc.*}
If yes:
 - i. Are they being provided to you in a timely fashion?
 - ii. Are they in an appropriate format? Language?
 - iii. Is the information easy to understand?
6. Are these issues the same or different when you are covering the release of a Senate Committee Report?
7. How could things work better for you?
8. On a scale of one to 10, how would you rate your level of satisfaction when liaising with the Senate communications team – with “1” being very dissatisfied and “10” being very satisfied?
9. In your opinion, how does the Senate Communications Directorate, and specifically the media relations function, compare to that of other government organizations in terms of services provided to the media?
10. In your opinion, what shapes or impacts the amount of media coverage the Senate receives? What would drive additional media coverage?
11. Do you have any final thoughts?

APPENDIX F COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTORATE ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



APPENDIX G

Communications Directorate: Summary of Responsibilities by Role

(Summarized by *Blueprint Public Relations* from Directorate documents.)

Media Relations and Communications Services: team of five responsible for support to committees and media relations work

- Manager, Communications
 - Manages 4 Communications Officers and 1 Communications Support Officer
 - Provides strategic advice to Director in such areas as planning, policies, staffing, media relations, issues management
 - Provides strategic advice to Clerk and to Steering Committee of Internal Economy
 - Acts as project manager on change initiatives such as website, tool kit
 - Represents institution on inter-institutional working groups and committees
- Communications Officers (3)
 - Provides strategic communications advice and media relations support to committees; this can involve communications plans, media lists, media management, environmental scanning, travel, digital press kits
 - Provides strategic communications advice, media relations support to the Speaker
 - Creates content for the Senate portal, committee websites and Speaker's website
 - Media relations / information services
 - File maintenance
- Communications Support Coordinator (1)
 - Works under direction of Communications Officers; responsibilities include:
 - Preparing and distributing media advisories and releases
 - Organizing logistics for press conferences; other events
 - Preparing media clippings
 - Creating reporting tools
 - Creating audio and visual content for social media

Public Information Group: team of six responsible for the Senate's online presence (portal and IntraSen), publications, social media, internal communications, and support to the officers working in events, digital and committees.

- Chief, Public Information (1, acting)
 - Supervises work of 2 graphic designers, 1 writer / editor, 1 Information Officer, 1 Communications Assistant and contractors as needed
 - Provides strategic advice to Director in such areas as planning and management documents
 - Acts as project manager for all activities including change initiatives
 - Leads Senate website renewal
 - Manages special requests such as design projects
 - Acts as media relations officer as needed
- Web/Graphic Designers (2)
 - Designs and produces digital, social, print media such as logos, signage, posters, stationery, invitations, programs, report covers
 - Designs, develops, publishes and maintains accessible websites
 - Provides / coordinates video and photography services

- Writer / Editor (1)
 - Lead on internal communications strategy and initiatives
 - Researches, writes annual report
 - Editor and writer of 4th Reading
 - Researches and writes / edits and proofs web and print content as needed
- Information Officer (1)
 - Supports, coordinates outreach events such as Forum for Young Canadians, Teachers' Institute Resource Fair
 - Collects information for 4th Reading
 - Coordinates photography and filming requests
 - Responds to public and internal inquiries
- Communications Assistant (1)
 - Performs clerical tasks
 - Screens incoming phone calls
 - Compiles and distributes daily media coverage summary
 - Conducts social media monitoring
 - Maintains media and public requests database
 - Compiles media lists
 - Drafts tweets for committee notices of meetings
 - Maintains corporate calendar, publications inventory

Broadcasting Group: is made up of one employee in the Communications Directorate and four staff who are employed by the House of Commons. Functional supervision is provided by a Communications Officer from the Media Relations and Communications Services group.

- Broadcasting Monitoring and Support Technician (1)

APPENDIX H News release process As of May 2012

