

Growth in number, variety and complexity of the demands placed on the government requires it not only to adjust its policies but to make changes in the organization of the public service so that required policies can be implemented. Major reorganizations of the public service were authorized by a series of government organization acts in 1966, 1969, 1970, 1976, 1979 and 1982.

## 19.2 The executive

### 19.2.1 The Crown

**The Sovereign.** Since Confederation Canada has had six sovereigns: Victoria, Edward VII, George V, Edward VIII, George VI and Elizabeth II. The present sovereign is not only Queen of Canada but is also head of state of other countries in the Commonwealth as well as being the formal head of the Commonwealth. Her title for Canada was approved by Parliament and established by a royal proclamation on May 28, 1953: Elizabeth the Second, by the grace of God of the United Kingdom, Canada and her other realms and territories, Queen, Head of the Commonwealth, Defender of the Faith.

From time to time the Queen personally discharges the functions of the Crown in Canada, such as the appointment of the Governor General, which Her Majesty does on the recommendation of the prime minister of Canada. During a royal visit, the Queen may participate in ceremonies normally carried out in her name by the Governor General, such as the opening of Parliament or the granting of a general amnesty.

**The Governor General** is the representative of the Crown in Canada. The Right Honourable Jeanne Sauv , the 23rd Governor General since Confederation and Canada's first woman Governor General, was appointed by Queen Elizabeth on December 23, 1983 and took office on May 14, 1984. Constitutionally, the Queen of Canada is the Canadian head of state but the Governor General fulfils her role on her behalf. The letters patent revised and issued under the Great Seal of Canada on October 1, 1947 authorized and empowered the Governor General, on the advice of the Canadian ministers to exercise all powers and authorities lawfully belonging to the Sovereign in respect of Canada.

Following are the Governors General of Canada since Confederation, with dates of assumption of office:

- The Viscount Monck of Ballytrammon, July 1, 1867
- The Baron Lisgar of Lisgar and Bailieborough, February 2, 1869
- The Earl of Dufferin, June 25, 1872
- The Marquis of Lorne, November 25, 1878
- The Marquis of Lansdowne, October 23, 1883
- The Baron Stanley of Preston, June 11, 1888

- The Earl of Aberdeen, September 18, 1893
- The Earl of Minto, November 12, 1898
- The Earl Grey, December 10, 1904
- Field Marshal HRH The Duke of Connaught, October 13, 1911
- The Duke of Devonshire, November 11, 1916
- General The Baron Byng of Vimy, August 11, 1921
- The Viscount Willingdon of Raton, October 2, 1926
- The Earl of Bessborough, April 4, 1931
- The Baron Tweedsmuir of Elfield, November 2, 1935
- Major General The Earl of Athlone, June 21, 1940
- Field Marshal The Viscount Alexander of Tunis, April 12, 1946
- The Right Honourable Vincent Massey, February 28, 1952
- General The Right Honourable Georges P. Vanier, September 15, 1959
- The Right Honourable Roland Michener, April 17, 1967
- The Right Honourable Jules L ger, January 14, 1974
- The Right Honourable Edward Schreyer, January 21, 1979
- The Right Honourable Jeanne Sauv , May 14, 1984.

One of the most important responsibilities of the Governor General is to ensure that the country always has a government. If the office of the prime minister becomes vacant because of death or resignation, the Governor General must see that it is filled and that a new government is formed.

As the Queen's representative, the Governor General summons, prorogues and dissolves Parliament on the advice of the prime minister. The Governor General signs orders-in-council, commissions and other state documents, and gives assent to bills that have been passed in both houses of Parliament and which thereby become acts of Parliament with the force of law. In virtually all cases the Governor General is bound by constitutional convention to carry out these duties in accordance with the advice of the responsible ministers. Should the Governor General not wish to accept their advice, and should they maintain that advice, the only alternative is to replace the existing government with a new government but only if the principle of responsible government could be upheld. Thus the Governor General's discretion in choosing another government is strictly limited to a situation in which a person other than the existing prime minister could command the confidence of the House of Commons.

**Canadian honours system.** An exclusively Canadian honours system was introduced in 1967 with the establishment of the Order of Canada. The honours system was enlarged in 1972 with the addition of the Order of Military Merit and three decorations to be awarded in recognition of acts of bravery. A description of these awards and a list of the recipients