

Responsibility for classification has, with a few exceptions, been delegated to departments, subject to a monitoring process. On a similar basis, delegation of responsibility for the administration of pay is in the process of being delegated to departments. Benefit programs and allowance policies approved by the board are designed to give departments maximum responsibility for administration.

Under the system of collective bargaining established by the Public Service Staff Relations Act, Treasury Board is the employer for employees in the public service, except for separate employers such as the National Research Council and the National Film Board. The board negotiates collective agreements with unions representing 76 bargaining units and advises departments on their administration.

The board develops policy guidelines for public service pension, insurance and related programs, co-ordinates their administration and recommends periodic revisions. It negotiates reciprocal pension transfer agreements with other public and private employers.

**Public Service Commission.** The Public Service Employment Act, which became effective in March 1967, continues the status of the Public Service Commission as an independent agency responsible to Parliament. The commission has the exclusive right and authority to make appointments to and from within the public service. The commission is also empowered to operate staff development and training programs, to assist deputy heads in carrying out training and development and in 1972 was charged to investigate cases of alleged discrimination on grounds of sex, race, national origin, colour or religion in the application and operation of the Public Service Employment Act. Age and marital status were added to these grounds by amendment to the act in 1975.

It may establish boards to decide on appeals against appointments made from within the public service and against release or demotion for incompetence or incapacity; to make recommendations on the revocation of appointments improperly made under delegated authority; and to decide on allegations of political partisanship.

The commission grants or withholds approval of applications for leave of absence from public servants who wish to be candidates in federal, provincial or territorial elections and investigates allegations of improper political activities by public servants.

The act authorizes the commission to delegate to deputy heads any of its powers, except those relating to appeals and inquiries. The commission has delegated powers to make appointments in operational and administrative support categories; however, departments are required to use Canada employment centres as their recruitment agency for appointments from outside the public service. Appointing authority has been delegated in the

administrative and foreign service, technical, and scientific and professional categories under conditions which preserve the commission's authority as central recruiting agency for the public service of Canada with a few exceptions, that is, those cases where a department is virtually the sole employer of a particular occupational specialty. The commission ensures that appointments made under delegated authority comply with the law and commission policies.

The Public Service Commission is guardian of the merit principle, ensuring that high standards are maintained in the service, consistent with adequate representation of the two official language groups, a bilingual capability to the extent prescribed by the government, equal employment and career development opportunities irrespective of sex, race, national origin, colour, age, marital status or religion, and encouragement of opportunities for the disadvantaged.

Any Canadian citizen may apply for a position in the federal public service. Competitive examinations are announced through the news media and posters displayed on public notice boards of Canada employment centres, Public Service Commission of Canada offices, major post offices and other selected locations.

One of the paramount responsibilities of the Public Service Commission relates to staffing in accordance with the merit principle. In recognition of affinity of work and for administrative reasons, public service positions have been aggregated in six broad occupational categories: executive, scientific and professional, technical, administrative and foreign service, administrative support, and operational. The classification system divides these categories into a host of occupational groups, in which positions are similar in skills required and the work performed.

Appointments to public service positions are normally made from within the service, except when it may be in the best interests of the service to do otherwise. In an internal selection process, prospective candidates may be identified through an employee inventory, or may respond to a notice posted to advertise the position. The successful candidate is chosen by a selection board which examines all the candidates. Unsuccessful candidates may appeal the results of the competition. The Public Service Commission maintains an employee inventory for positions at senior management and senior executive levels.

Under other circumstances it may be decided to transfer employees between positions. In exceptional instances an employee may be promoted without competition; other public servants have the right to appeal such a staffing action. A right to appeal also exists when a decision has been taken to recommend an employee's demotion or release because of incompetence or incapacity.