

Presented to the 102nd Annual General Meeting

Dear Members,

I am honoured once again to present a brief progress report on the matters and issues I have been working on over the past year.

Canadians have continued to live in uncertainty in 2021, but we are increasingly adjusting to life in a COVID-19 world. We all want to return to a “normal” life, but we now have new expectations. Most of us appreciate the benefits of working from home and the flexibility it brings to our personal lives. We have also proven our ability to be productive in these new conditions, demonstrating to employers that such changes are not negatively affecting our work.

Preparations for a return to the office have been underway for months. Several consultations were held with the Treasury Board Secretariat representatives to define “the future of work”. We are re-examining a number of directives concerning telework, GCworkplace and health and safety. We have begun trialling a hybrid Office-Home work model with spaces available by reservation (Hotelling). New frameworks are also being developed to guide departments when offices reopen to update managers on the new measures in place.

One of these projects looked into the conditions required to open offices. Office cleaning and disinfection as well as employee’s vaccination status were discussed in great detail with the other bargaining agents. Early in the federal election campaign, we were all surprised by the government’s announcement that full vaccination would be a condition of employment. We proposed some last-minute adjustments, but the government stuck firmly to its position. Given that we represent professionals, scientists and researchers, we believe that the majority of our members support vaccination. On behalf of the Institute, we have taken the position to support immunization as a highly effective tool in fight against COVID-19. However, implementing this government policy creates other problems. We are deploying numerous resources to support members facing difficult choices and consequences.

Phoenix continues to keep us busy. The system as a whole is increasingly stable. The team of PSPC pay advisors and various departments and agencies are making great strides in resolving the oldest files. Recovery of overpayments has also been underway for months.

Phoenix’s replacement, NextGen, is also progressing well. Simple testing was conducted in the Canadian Heritage environment with SAP software. Further testing in more complex environments will be conducted at Fisheries and Oceans and the Coast

Guard. Ceridian is currently the favourite for the next phase of design and experimentation.

PIPSC made great efforts during the short election period to get you up to speed on the different parties' positions regarding the issues that affect you. We are pleased with the outcome of the election. We have kept a government that we can continue to work with, and one in which we know the key players. We must continue to ensure that they listen to the concerns and needs of Canadians. We will need to continue to push for a universal prescription drug plan, tax fairness, and measures that will protect the environment for generations to come. We have to remind the government that the public service must continue to be a model of excellence for the whole world and ensure the best working conditions for all Canadian workers.

I have been very busy in recent months with NextGen's progress and preparing for a return to normal. The President gave me more autonomy on these issues, of which I became spokesperson. I was swamped with media requests on these two issues, and I would say I participated in over 200 television, radio and newspaper interviews in both official languages. I also acted as the Institute's second spokesperson on Francophone media to present our position during the elections. I was honoured to inform the public of our concerns and issues affecting members.

While the pandemic is not over, the Board of Directors allowed some union events to be held in-person, with a number of participants still attending virtually. New health regulations had to be implemented. We also learned how to use Zoom better, and how to implement tools to better organize our meetings and meet the needs of our members. We are adapting, but we still have a lot of work to do to be more inclusive, to energize and motivate our members to get involved in their unions, help their colleagues, and participate in our activities.

I consider it a privilege and an honour to continue serving you. If you have any comments or questions, please feel free to contact me.

Stéphane Aubry
National Vice-President
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