

In my role as President, my primary focus this year has been on key priority areas that align ensuring PIPSC is a member-centric organization prepared to address the forthcoming challenges.

Foremost among these priorities is the assurance of improving, safeguarding, and advocating conditions for our members, mainly achieved through collective bargaining, labor relations, and consultation.

In order to advance as a union, it is imperative that we enhance member engagement and awareness. PIPSC must adopt a member-centric lens in all our activities and ensure that all barriers to member participation at all levels are minimized to be truly representative of all members.

Since day one, I have been dedicated to fostering proactive communication with all members, our constituent bodies, and our top leaders through the Advisory Council. The more we collaborate, the stronger our union will become.

I take immense pride in our achievements this year and am confident that we have established a robust foundation upon which to build further.

Return to Workplaces

I am proud that from day one of the Return to Workplace mandates, our stance has been to oppose a one-size-fits-all model. Employers that have adopted these regressive RTW policies are essentially saying to employees that they place more value on the location from which you do your work over the work that you produce. This approach is disruptive to our members' work/life balance, disadvantages people with neurodiversity/disabilities and regional-based location, causes unnecessary environmental impacts and undermines employee productivity which negatively impacts the services Canadians rely on.

We support the principle of "presence with purpose": being at the office when justified by operational needs. We continue to advocate for what was promised: a hybrid-by-design approach that considers employees' unique circumstances and job requirements.

We want this government to stop barreling toward an unnecessary confrontation and negotiate telework with us, at the bargaining table, where this issue belongs.

I also want to acknowledge that many of our members hold front-line jobs that require them to continue to go into their workplaces during the pandemic. I am continually advocating that the Employer recognize the incredible physical and emotional tolls that

were created by their lack of situational acknowledgement and their dismissal of our calls for Pandemic Pay

Bargaining

2023 was a big year for Collective Bargaining with 32 of our 48 Groups in active negotiations, including 18 of our federal public sector bargaining units. "Active Negotiations" encompasses the period from bargaining prep to ratification of a collective agreement.

The tentative agreements have been reached with the AFS, SP, IT, and NRC RO/RCO

November will see all our Treasury Board Groups (SH, RE, CP, and NR) head back to the bargaining table to try and achieve PIPSC-centred agreements.

Bargaining units in Ontario have been challenging the wage restraints imposed by Bill 124 and several hospitals were able to bargain increases on top of the 1%.

PIPSC and our members were out across the country to lend their support and solidarity to the Public Service Alliance of Canada when their bargaining broke down and they were forced to go on strike. I was proud that collaborative union activism moved Canada's largest employer to offer a better deal to PSAC workers. The improvements made to this deal will benefit every worker in this country - public or private, unionized or unrepresented.

Public Service Health Care Plan Changes

July 1, 2023, will be the day that 1.7 million people will remember - as both plan and administration changes created havoc and chaos with thousands of our members' health care benefits.

Public service unions had no say in the selection of Canada Life as the PSHCP administrator and the decision on the service provider was exclusively the Employer's. As such, it is not possible for the bargaining agents themselves to replace Canada Life with another company.

We continue to raise this disastrous transition on a near-daily basis with the Treasury Board.

While Canada Life continues to address these issues, members can reach out to our Pensions and Benefits team (pensionsbenefits@pipsc.ca) for assistance. Guidance is also [posted on our website](#).

Front Line Health Care Professionals

Now is the time for the Federal government to fix long-standing issues within the healthcare professions. Without a significant course correction, the government is effectively privatizing healthcare at the Federal level, leaving remote and isolated indigenous communities, incarcerated populations, and our military members with substandard and inadequate levels of healthcare.

Our members continually face very significant security and workload challenges in addition to recruitment and retention issues.

It would be far cheaper and more effective to invest in a fully-funded, permanent public sector solution than in private sector agency staff.

The solution: fair compensation, more flexible work arrangements, and an enhanced technological infrastructure.

We continue pressuring the employer to take decisive and immediate action to address these problems on a permanent basis.

Strategic Review

The 2022 federal Budget announced a “Strategic Policy Review” of the public service.

In August 2023, new Treasury Board President Anita Anand asked Deputy Ministers to find \$15 billion in savings across the federal government in a “refocusing” exercise

We are concerned that we are going to see austerity when we should be seeing innovation, with a focus on short-term spending cuts rather than investments that will increase revenue in the long term.

We have reached out to departments demanding consultation with bargaining agents to avoid the severe program cuts and the loss of thousands of federal government jobs. Many of us remember the Harper era “Strategic Spending Review” a decade ago and would prefer not to have a repeat

Defending Public Science

Our over 15,000 public scientists, engineers, and researchers are some of the world’s best but they need the resources to do their jobs. We can’t depend on the private sector to provide solutions to today’s challenges.

I am continuing to lobby the government to:

- Increase spending on federal Research and Development.
- Task the Chief Science Advisor with developing detailed metrics to better monitor federal science capacity in the future.
- Protect and promote scientific integrity – we cannot go back to the days of muzzling our federal public scientists.
- Ensure that women are no longer under-represented in federal public science.

Next Generation Pay System (NextGen)

The government has publicly committed to working with our members to design and build a pay system that works (NextGen).

Phase 1 testing of Ceridian's software has been completed. It is viable but not yet ready for rollout. Further work is required before it can be submitted to the Employer for review.

Responsibility for the new system has been moved by the government from the Treasury Board to Public Services and Procurement Canada.

Phoenix-related problems continue to plague thousands of our members. We are currently considering a coordinated new approach with other bargaining agents whose members are also severely impacted by the ongoing fiasco.

Contracting Out

Over the last year, I have been called to the Hill twice to [testify before the House of Common Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates \(OGGO\)](#). [This is](#) proof positive that PIPSC is now recognized as the leading expert on outsourcing in the federal public service.

Over the past few years, we have consistently delivered the same message, backed up by very extensive research: contracted-out work impacts the security of the government's IT systems, results in higher costs and lower quality services for Canadians, less transparency, less accountability and the loss of institutional knowledge and skills. And it hurts the ability of the government to recruit the professionals it needs.

Years of unchecked spending on consultants has resulted in a shadow public service operating alongside the government workforce. This shadow public service plays by an entirely different set of rules: consultants are not hired based on merit, representation,

fairness, or transparency; they are not subject to budget restraints or hiring freezes; and they are not accountable to the Canadian public.

The government must update its staffing policies and make hiring quicker and more efficient. It needs to invest in in-house expertise. There is no doubt that it would be far better to invest in a fully funded, permanent public sector solution to delivering high-quality, cost-effective services to Canadians.

Tax Fairness

PIPSC represents nearly 15,000 auditors, managers, forensic accountants, and other tax professionals at the CRA.

Budget 2023 formalized the creation of a public registry to identify "beneficial owners" of companies and real estate holdings. PIPSC has long advocated for this initiative based on the expert opinions of AFS members at the CRA. By shedding light on shady practices, the beneficial ownership registry will prove to be a critical tool in the fight against tax evasion.

Budget 2023 outlined positive prospective changes to Canada's General Anti-Avoidance Rules. These rules have been criticized by CRA auditors for making it too easy for companies to shift profits to tax havens that were made in Canada.

Budget 2023 closed tax loopholes and improved international cooperation in ways supported by PIPSC professionals.

We hope to see continued steps taken towards tax fairness, including an investment in the CRA that would allow our members to work to their full potential.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusiveness

PIPSC should be an inclusive, diversified organization. However, our research shows that many racialized members do not "see themselves" in the union right now.

We are taking action to correct this:

- We are developing a full EDI strategy to attract members from all backgrounds into our leadership.
- The Board of Directors has established six new Equity caucuses – Black, Indigenous, (Dis)Ability, Workers of Colour, LGBTQ2S+, and Women – under the Human Rights and Diversity Committee.

We will work toward identifying and eliminating barriers to the creation of environments that allow all members to reach their full potential within our union.

Additionally, at the request of the Black Class Action Secretariat and in solidarity with their lawsuit against the federal Employer, I attended the United Nations Forum for People of African Descent, which took place in New York from May 29 to June 2, 2023. Unfortunately, I didn't get an opportunity to speak at the Forum due to the high number of registrants vying for the floor. Nonetheless, we are actively exploring ways to amplify our message in support of the Black Federal Employee Caucus (FBEC).

Organizing and Growing Our Union

Abacus research demonstrates a gap in our existing onboarding process for new members.

We're developing an updated onboarding process, including:

- Innovative and streamlined internal processes
- Clear engagement strategies, including targeted programming and digital tools

We're looking to educate our new members, highlight the great work we're doing, and encourage new members' participation in union activities.

Support for our NB Crown Prosecutors

We supported our NB Crown Prosecutors Group ahead of the provincial budget through a successful media campaign that led to direct discussions with the government.

Our work led directly to the provincial government providing funding for some 30 additional Prosecutors in its March budget.

For more details, see [this interview with Group President Shara Munn](#).

Navigar

With rapid advancements in Artificial intelligence, the future of knowledge worker employment is quickly shifting and will have a huge impact on the jobs of our members.

In collaboration with the Future Skills Centre, PIPSC has been developing an innovative and engaging new skills development platform for public service professionals to

guarantee our members' careers are protected and enhanced as the world of work evolves.

PIPSC members will have access to Navigar, a sophisticated online skill development planning tool that will

- delivers the information you will need, whether you want to grow in your current field or pivot to a new profession, and create a skills development plan personalized to your goals, assists you in planning and advocating for your professional development by providing data-backed industry insights about possible careers and the future of work
- Provide access to over 40,000 relevant resources: courses, books, audiobooks, etc.

Navigar lays out the skills and training you'll need to succeed, as well as providing career insights into the future of work.

You can look to Navigar as a PIPSC member for clarification on the skills you'll need to adapt to the workforce changes that will determine your career path. Navigar will be available later this year.

Single plan pay equity BA victory

This fall, the federal Pay Equity Commissioner ruled in favor of unions opposing the Treasury Board's multiple pay equity plan request from June 2022. This affects about 252,000 employees, requiring a thorough comparison of female-dominated roles with male-dominated ones, regardless of bargaining units.

Initially, the Treasury Board sought to categorize jobs into three distinct plans:

- Public Service Alliance of Canada
- The Professional Institute of the Public Service of Canada
- All other unions and unrepresented employees.

This could have limited comparisons, hindering progress.

The essence of pay equity legislation is closing the wage gap between genders by ensuring fair evaluation of female-dominated roles against equivalent male-dominated positions.

By mandating a unified pay equity committee, we remove restrictions on selecting male comparator jobs, ensuring the best matches, regardless of initial accreditation.

This victory is a significant step towards recognizing the vital work primarily performed by women and closing the wage gap!

Climate change

I was honoured that the Canadian Labour Congress asked PIPSC to take a leading role in the Canadian Labour Delegation at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 28) in recognition of the role we play in representing climate change researchers, science policy advisors, and professionals in the nuclear energy sector.

This is a major recognition for PIPSC on several fronts. First, through our surveys, a vast majority of our members have indicated that they want to see progress on the front of climate change. Also, this aligns with the values promoted by the Strategic Bargaining Committee with the inclusion of demands on greening the collective agreement in this round of TBS bargaining. This lets us “walk the walk” and continue demonstrating that we support these values as the Union.

The fact that the CLC asked us to take on this role further demonstrates that we are trusted partners and that we have a seat at the table in the broader labour community, and not just the federal public sector. Also, being a UN conference, it demonstrates to our members that we have a voice on the international stage.

The voice of labour will be important in these talks. Both to push for progress on setting and meeting ambitious targets - but also to do so in a way that's worker-friendly and ensures both economic and environmental sustainability

Artificial Intelligence

As the government looks to both regulate and use Artificial Intelligence, we must be part of those conversations. The public service professionals PIPSC represents have a wealth of experience and insights to share that will be critical for the government to get the use of AI right.

We also must support employees so they have opportunities for upskilling and training. This is a smart and cost-effective way of making sure today's public service workforce is ready to take on the challenges of the offices of tomorrow.

In June, the federal government tabled the Artificial Intelligence and Data Act (AIDA) as part of a broader Bill, C-27, which also amends Canada's Privacy Act. While a step

forward, the bill needs to be improved. We welcome Minister François-Phillippe Champagne's openness to amending this bill.

First and foremost, both this law and the government's AI guidelines must include unambiguous language around how our use of AI must not harm individuals or groups.

The bill also creates a new Advisory Committee and AI Commissioner. These are positive moves but must be made stronger, more effective, and independent by creating a new AI agency with greater powers to regulate and research AI.

We must widen the advice the minister is getting from the new council, so it's not limited to academic and business representatives. It's critical we also have the voices of workers and the community there, too. Additionally, the new AI commissioner should be independent of the minister.

Reconciliation

In hopes of making an important step toward reconciliation, PIPSC commissioned a long-overdue report for us to understand and contextualize PIPSC's involvement in colonial institutions, policies, and programs that negatively impacted Indigenous peoples.

This report has been in the making for over 2 years. It was developed with the help of research experts who developed a strong understanding of PIPSC's history and its members' interactions with Indigenous peoples. It uncovers the hard truth – that PIPSC members played a key role in the cultural genocide of Indigenous peoples by upholding residential schools, Indian hospitals, nutritional experiments, forced relocations, and the Sixties Scoop.

To repair our relationship with Indigenous communities and work towards reconciliation we must acknowledge that PIPSC has been involved in harmful practices and continues to uphold many of them to this day.

We ask that members join us on this journey of continued learning and reflect on how it applies to their work. We also hope to use this report as a training and educational tool for PIPSC members and leaders today.

This report is the first, significant step towards a long journey of reconciliation, which includes partnering with Indigenous members, communities, and survivor groups to develop concrete actions and next steps. I hope to establish mutual respect and inspire our membership to listen to the truth, understand it, educate ourselves and others, and acknowledge the trauma so that we can heal.

Regular meetings with MPs, Ministers and senior TBS representatives, and employer reps

I have met with Former TBS Minister Fortier, new TBS Minister Anand, Minister of Labour O'Regan, Jagmeet Singh, Minister of National Revenue Bibeau, PSPC Minister Duclos, new CFIA President Kochhar, and new Chief Human Resources Officer Bogden. We delved into several crucial topics including outsourcing, RTO, tax fairness, and labour in general.

House of Commons Committee appearances

In January 2023, I testified before the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates (OGGO) regarding the McKinsey contracts and the broader impact of outsourcing on our members, public services, and Canadian taxpayers.

This appearance followed my previous one in October 2022, where I addressed similar concerns about outsourcing. Then, in May 2023, I participated in the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure, and Communities (TRAN) hearing regarding McKinsey's involvement in the establishment of the Canada Infrastructure Bank. Unfortunately, no testimony could be provided as witnesses were dismissed due to a heated exchange between MPs from different parties.

In collaboration with the Canadian Labour Congress, we have formally requested the opportunity to testify before the Standing Committee on Industry and Technology for its examination of Bill C-27 (Consumer Privacy Protection Act, the Personal Information and Data Protection Tribunal Act, and the Artificial Intelligence and Data Act). We anticipate this meeting will likely take place in the upcoming Fall.

Liaising with partners in the House of Labour

Lobby Day: Our Board of Directors and staff participated in the Canadian Labour Congress Lobby Day this year. These days are a crucial opportunity to solidify our connections with Labour allies. I also took the opportunity to relay member concerns around RTO and bargaining to various people in government.

Over the course of the day, we met with Members of Parliament, Senators, Parliamentary staff, and then-current Treasury Board President Mona Fortier.

The top issues discussed at these meetings were:

- Investing in the care economy
- Jobs in a sustainable economy
- Anti-scab legislation; Bill C-228
- Protecting Pensions

Canadian Labour Congress Convention: Every three years, the Canadian Labour Congress hosts a Convention attended by local union delegates. PIPSC leaders attended the 2023 CLC Convention in Montreal. Delegates present proposed resolutions to be debated and adopted as policies. The Congress then creates an Action Plan based on the resolutions, committee reports, and policies. The plan is a progressive agenda for our labour movement, serving as a guide for Congress and its affiliated unions for the next three years.

The theme this year was Lifting Everyone Up, and the event brought together thousands of workers from across the country to chart a progressive path forward for everyone.

Indigenous Lobby Day: In 2019, the CLC held its first-ever Indigenous Lobby Day. Members from 29 union affiliates came together to meet with Members of Parliament and Senators on Parliament Hill. The CLC held its second Indigenous Lobby Day on October 3rd, 2023, and PIPSC Board of Directors and Indigenous Caucus members participated in the event.

Key issues discussed were:

- Addressing residential school damages by immediately implementing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action 71–76: Missing children and burials
- Providing adequate funding to create needed publicly delivered water infrastructure and eliminating all First Nations long-term boil water advisories
- Addressing the issue of missing Indigenous women, girls, and Two-Spirit people, in calling for the government to establish a national Red Dress Alert system, implement the National Action Plan, quickly fulfill the Calls for Justice from the National Inquiry, and prioritize and adequately fund the issue with the Manitoba government.

Webinars held on important issues

We continued to offer our members opportunities to participate in webinars on key PIPSC issues. A selection of webinars offered this year include:

- PIPSC 101
- Bargaining 101
- Women in STEM
- Solidarity with PSAC
- Organizing a Hybrid Event
- Tactical Session on Texting

These workshops were attended by over 5000 people, and over 1700 potential volunteers were identified.