

Report of Vice-President Katie Francis, 2025

Presented to the 106th Annual General Meeting

Dear Colleagues,

This past year, my first year as PIPSC Full-Time Vice-President, has been full of opportunity, excitement, challenges, and growth. The transition from my government science-based position to my now full-time union advocacy position has been an interesting path, but one that I am thankful for.

This year, I have taken on the following major portfolios and projects:

- Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility (EDIA)
- Return to Office (RTO)
- Phoenix Pay System
- Human Rights and Diversity Committee (HRDC), Chair
- Council of Canadians Anti-Austerity Campaign
- PIPSC (staff) Pension Committee

I will provide a summary in this report of some of the activities, initiatives, and accomplishments I have undertaken in this past year, as they relate to my portfolios and beyond.

A large component of my EDIA portfolio has been advocacy for support in areas where we may not be meeting the needs of our members who belong to equity-deserving groups. To further this portfolio, I met with EDIA counterparts at the CLC and other unions to discuss their structures and how those structures have helped them find success. These discussions led to some joint equity initiatives, including a joint PIPSC-CAPE pride delegation in the Capital Pride Parade. I also built our relationships with other external stakeholders, including the Black Class Action Secretariat (BCAS) and Pride at work Canada (PAWC) to determine a path on how our organizations could best support each other. Through these efforts, I brought tangible recommendations to the Board of Directors which resulted in some carried motions to renew support for the BCAS and to become a Proud Partner with Pride at Work Canada. The Proud Partnership allows us to use PAWC's expertise to produce more inclusive policies and allows members to attend their educational webinars.

I also had many internal discussions with senior leaders at the institute on the status of EDIA at PIPSC and where we need to go in the future to best support our members belonging to equity-deserving groups. This included ongoing conversations with our Executive Director and now Chief Operating Officer, General Counsel, the Public Affairs Director, the research team, and the PIPSC EDIA Advisor. These conversations helped to shape the vision and plan for the future of EDIA at PIPSC. One accomplishment that has arisen from my advocacy is the inclusion of demographic questions in the PIPSC AGM registration survey. We must understand who is and who is not in the room at our events in order to understand and eliminate the barriers to participation and this action will help make that a reality.

Related to the EDIA portfolio, one of the first major events I attended as VP, and one that I was proud to have helped organize, was the PIPSC Black History Month Gala. This event, which was in collaboration with the NCR, served as a space for our Black members, staff and allies, to celebrate the month together. Later in the year, I organized the NCR involvement in the Capital Pride Parade to ensure we had strong union representation. This event brought together members from across the NCR to celebrate the diversity of the Public Service and the members we represent. In September, I had the opportunity to represent PIPSC in the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation's ceremony for the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation on Parliament Hill. In this ceremony, I helped to hold the National Memorial Cloth, which contains the names of over 5000 of the residential school children who did not return home. It was an honour to hold the Cloth next to the daughter of a residential school survivor who shared stories of her Father.

With respect to my Return to Office portfolio, I built an internal Task Force to address the challenges and potential path forward with this issue. This team brings together the Director of Collective Bargaining, the Director of Labour Relations, the Manager of the National Policy Office, the Public Affairs Director, and the Senior Advisor to the President. I have also been in consultation with the Treasury Board on the Return to Office issue, which occurs as a result of our successful Policy Grievance. Here we discuss issues of health and safety, capacity issues, policy implementation issues, and address potential future changes to the mandate. This is an issue of great importance to many members, myself included, and one that is being talked about in all corners of the union. While this is a very uphill battle, I am hopeful that our bargaining teams will work to secure the best possible outcome for our members on this issue. If you encounter issues in their workplace with respect to RTO implementation, please let me know as specific examples are very helpful in this consultation.

On the topic of Phoenix, a focus this year was supporting members who have been asked to repay overpayment recovery. If the overpayment was six years ago or longer, then the statute of limitations kicks in and the government cannot force you to repay it, so we are making sure that members are aware of their rights in these scenarios. I have met regularly with the PIPSC Manager of the National Policy Office internally, and with the Technical Subcommittee of the Union Management Consultation Committee on the Phoenix Pay System. This subcommittee offers a forum for bargaining agents to meet with the Treasury Board to find solutions to ongoing issues and to stay informed on the progress of the next generation pay system (Day Force) that will be rolling out in the coming years. I am committed to ensuring that Day Force does not roll out in the same disastrous way that Phoenix did. Further, I have been working with the Public Affairs Team to plan for the 10th Anniversary of the rolling out of Phoenix, occurring next year, to highlight the ongoing issues that still plague many public servants.

I am incredibly proud of the work of the Human Rights and Diversity Committee this year. The committee was filled with diverse members and friends who showed up passionately to each meeting, ready to discuss the most pressing issues affecting our members who belong to equity-deserving groups. We decided to focus our work this year on the findings from a 2022

equity survey that was delivered to PIPSC members, which revealed an alarming level of hate and anti-EDIA sentiments. As such, we chose anti-harassment and combatting hate as our priorities to focus on this year. The HRDC also worked to improve the PIPSC Equity Statement, to develop Terms of Reference for the committee, and brought forward several resolutions for the board to consider sponsoring at the 2025 AGM. For more details on the work of the HRDC, please refer to my committee report, also provided in the AGM package.

This year, I also began my studies with the Canadian Labour Congress' Labour College of Canada program. In the first session of this program, I partook in four courses: The Theory and Practice of Unions, Strategic Thinking, Planning and Development, Labour's Journey Towards Truth and Reconciliation, and Unions in the Political Economy. Beyond the impactful content of the courses that have already proven useful and applicable to my work at PIPSC, the labour college offered the opportunity to build relationships with labour leaders from diverse unions across the country. I am looking forward to the two remaining sessions taking place in 2026.

Finally, I had many opportunities this year to speak with members from across the country. One important mention is the CRPEG members who had a successful strike to secure a fair deal with a difficult employer. I was proud to join them on the picket line and to join the NCR solidarity rally in support of their bargaining team. I also enjoyed conversations with members of the Young Professionals Committee who are working to advance issues of interest to our union's early- and mid-career members. I also had the chance to meet members of equity caucuses who shared their experiences in their workplaces and in our union, with ideas to build safer, more inclusive spaces in these places. I am grateful to have had these opportunities and have learned a lot from these discussions.

In summary, this was a year filled with learning, meaningful conversations, and progress. I am proud of the relationships I've built with colleagues from other unions across the country and with organizations that support unionized workers. These relationships will continue to strengthen PIPSC's place in the labour movement. In the final two years of my term, I look forward to continuing to advocate for members of equity deserving groups, to fighting back against the arbitrary Return to Office mandates, to monitor the roll out of the new pay system, and to listen and learn from our diverse members across the country.

I wish you all a wonderful end of the year and look forward to what the next two years will bring.

Respectfully submitted,

Katie Francis
Full-Time Vice-President, PIPSC