

**DIVIDED LOYALTIES, MANY HATS,
AND PUNCTUATED WORLDS**

The Challenges of Political, Administrative and Stakeholder
Collaboration for Federal Public Servants in Canada

by

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ABSTRACT

While network studies have focused on mapping out the structural linkages between participants within a policy network, less attention has been paid to the behaviours of policy actors. Attention to network behaviour is important because it varies and with implications for the performance, legitimacy, and effectiveness of government.

This dissertation seeks to examine actor behaviour by investigating the challenges, opportunities, and coping strategies of public servants who work in policy networks. Interviews were conducted with forty-five Canadian federal public servants across four horizontal initiatives: the Mackenzie Gas Pipeline Project, the Sector Council Program, Team Canada Inc, and the Federal Initiative to Address HIV/ AIDS in Canada. Together with organizational documents and reports, these interviews highlight the limited ability of networks to support long-term policy development, translate political ambiguity into policy outputs, generate effective leadership, and adopt new collegial cultures. Reconfiguration of existing accountabilities, renewal of central agency support structures, and increased senior leadership might help public servants to overcome key network challenges: gaining inclusion, obtaining commitment, facilitating collegiality, and achieving agreement.

This work highlights the importance of actor-centred understandings of collaboration. It reveals distinct challenges for public servants when they collaborate with other public servants, stakeholders, and political actors and uses a framework of rule contestation due to an *institutional deficit* to understand why they face these challenges. In turn, the concept of rule contestation raises important questions regarding the fit of current political and administrative arrangements for governance in an increasingly networked era.

Keywords: public servants; collaborative government; public policy; networks; challenges; rule contestation

In memory of Arthur Kroeger (1932-2008)

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In 2005, I came to Simon Fraser University in somewhat of an adolescent fit over the state of public bureaucracy in Canada. I had finished my Master of Arts in Public Administration at Carleton University and was brewing over how we as a society were going to address complex problems like climate change, given the hierarchical, fragmented mess of government, each department vested with interrelated mandates. To this, Mike handed me a copy of Kickert, Klijn, and Koppenjan's *Managing Complex Networks: Strategies for the Public Sector*. Indeed, I was far from alone in my agitation. A productive, intellectual outlet for my research interests developed and I am endlessly grateful for Mike's astute and impeccably timely guidance in "getting me there" and ultimately, *here*.

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TERMS

ADM	Assistant Deputy Minister
APGST	Asia-Pacific Gateway Skills Table
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CIHR	Canadian Institutes of Health Research
CSC	Correctional Services Canada
CSHA	Canadian Strategy on HIV/AIDS
DFAIT	Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade
DG	Director General
DM	Deputy Minister
DFO	Department of Fisheries and Oceans
DPRs	Departmental Performance Reports
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
FITT	Forum for International Trade Training
GNWT	Government of Northwest Territories
GOC	Government of Canada
FI	Federal Initiative
HRSDC	Human Resources and Skills Development
IAS	Industrial Adjustment Service
IBD	International Business Development
JRP	Joint Review Panel
MC	Memorandum to Cabinet
MGP	Mackenzie Gas Project
NAS	National AIDS Strategy
NRCan	Natural Resources Canada
NWT	Northwest Territories
PHAC	Public Health Agency of Canada
PMO	Office of the Prime Minister
PCO	Privy Council Office
RMAF	Results-Based Assessment Framework
RPPs	Reports on Planning and Priorities
SCP	Sector Council Program
SMEs	Small to Medium Sized Enterprises
TBS	Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat
TCI	Team Canada Inc

1 INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Over the last forty years, Western countries have devoted much attention to organizing government to better facilitate the resolution of public problems. A popular site of reform has been national civil services, which governments have expanded, contracted, and reorganized to improve administrative performance and strengthen political controls. All the while, other institutions of government – electoral systems, legislatures, the executive branch – have remained relatively stable, untouched by ideationally driven interventions for better governance. Despite years of public administration reform, we have not yet, in the words of one student of public administration, figured out “what works, what does not work, and which change offers the most promise to strengthen government’s policy advisory capacity and its ability to deliver services (Savoie 2000: 3).”

With decades of public restructuring and administrative reform to address the age old concerns of democratic control, organizational performance, and policy effectiveness behind us, this dissertation seeks to do some serious stock taking. Past reforms have been shelved, swapped in for new ways of organizing government. One seemingly new practice has caught attention: collaboration in the development of public policy and delivery of collective goods and services.

Collaborative government seeks to harness the capacities of different organizations, levels of government, and different sectors of society, on the belief that the aspirations of

policy actors including government actors are interdependent: they cannot be realized in the absence of joint work. Civil servants are encouraged and at times, mandated, to work with non-state actors and civil servants in other departments and governments in the development of policy proposals and delivery of goods and services. Governments have introduced measures to facilitate the joint work of autonomous organizations within and outside of government (see Peach 2004).

This has not unequivocally resulted in better policy outputs or a more egalitarian policy process (Bourgon 2007). To be fair, collaborative government has not been easy to implement (Huxham 2003; Keast et al 2004). Public bureaucracies are vertically integrated and stakeholders, hesitant to work with governments they have historically distrusted. There are individual, organizational, and interorganizational challenges to working across organizations and these challenges can prevent all actors from realizing their collective aims.

Challenges to collaboration should be especially disconcerting to those concerned with the alleviation of humanity's most pressing problems. Failures to collaborate can result and have resulted in *policy failures*. The extensive loss of human life and human suffering after Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans is attributed to the poor degree of local, state, and federal coordination (Hicklin and Godwin 2009: 17). It is inconceivable that multidimensional issues such as homelessness and climate change could be addressed by societies in the absence of collaboration. Concern for the challenges involved in collaboration, thus stems from a larger interest in governance structures and the ways in which they can advance or thwart democratic participation and improve or diminish the conditions of human life.

This dissertation documents the challenges to collaboration that have been experienced by civil servants in the Canadian federal government, explains why civil servants face those challenges and asserts what might be done to remove barriers to interorganizational work. Civil servants occupy a critical and influential position in the policy process. This is particularly true today, as so much of what public bureaucracies do amounts to much more than “speaking truth to power.” Civil servants are often expert, tenured, policy actors who run government programs, produce policy options, and have a hand in the development of public policy. They do so increasingly in competition with other policy actors, but they continue to be a significant policy force. They also do so in the absence of clear direction from political masters, whose personal involvement is often limited to two or three political priorities.

Civil servants also work with stakeholder groups representing the interests of labour, business, and civil society. They work too, with officials within the bureaus of other governments. As such, where there is collaboration around public policy issues, there are civil servants sitting at the table. Knowledge of their experience with collaborative government will inform our understanding of the practice of collaboration: how it is taking place, how it can be better supported, and whether its members can be better positioned to realize their interorganizational goals.

Advances in Conceptualizing State-Society Relations

This dissertation draws from concepts of state-society relations developed in political science, public policy, and public administration, to understand the empirical practice of collaborative government. The ways in which multiple, interdependent organizations – both in government and beyond it – work together to meet common

objectives has been the subject of great attention in these fields. Scholars refer to these interorganizational arrangements as they form around public policy issues as *policy networks*, although the terms *horizontal government*, *interorganizational work*, *collaboration* and *governance* are also used.

Definitional debates have consumed much of the study of policy networks. At a basic level, not all scholars have agreed on what phenomenon they are studying and not all scholars use the same terms to refer to the same phenomenon (see Börzel 1998; Blom-Hansen 1997; Jordan and Schubert 1992; Rhodes 1990). Whereas British scholars have understood a policy network as a loose structure within which a more integrated policy community operates, others have defined a policy network as “activated” members of a larger policy community of shared beliefs (see for example, Wilks and Wright 1987).

At a deeper level, definitions of network-related concepts have done some unintended and adverse heavy lifting. Through definitions, scholars have sought to denote what empirical reality to study (definition), how its subgroups differ (description), and what part of that empirical reality *matters* (explanation). Rhodes (1990) has written that others have “not attempted to provide a set of consistent definitions” of policy communities and policy networks but goes on to describe some of these attempts, which are not so much definitions of concepts, but descriptions of the dimensions in which the concepts vary: interests, membership, resources, and degree of interdependence. Concluding that different concepts – policy networks and policy communities – lead to different policy processes and policy outcomes, the dimensions upon which the concepts were differentiated and thereby defined (e.g. resources, members), are assumed the explanatory variables. Definition becomes description

which becomes explanation. The ambition to describe policy networks becomes the basis on which policy networks also *explain*.

Making a distinction between definition, description, and explanation are important precisely because they serve different purposes. Networks should be defined not based on all the ways in which they vary internally (description), or matter externally (explanation) but rather, in the ways in which they differ *constantly* from other concepts. Not all variables of the object “car” define “car” meaning that some distinction needs to be made between definition and description. Not all variables that differentiate subgroups of the object “car” explain its outputs “speed” or outcomes “fatality” either, meaning distinction also needs to be made between description and explanation. Therefore it cannot be assumed that a) what networks are, is also how networks vary (conflating definition with description), and b) how networks vary, is also why networks matter (conflating description with explanation). The ways in which subgroups of networks differ will not invariably explain policy processes or for that matter its policy outputs.

It is with these cautions in mind that this dissertation takes a modest approach to definition, the purpose being to disentangle it from description and explanation. Exceptionalism is our aim. To this end, the term “network” refers to “public policy making and administrative structures involving multiple nodes (agencies and organizations) with multiple linkages” (McGuire 2002: 600). Unlike much (though not all) of the policy network literature, this definition goes beyond informal relations and interpersonal (social) networks (c.f. Meier and O’Toole 2001; Rhodes 1990), to denote actual structures through which public policies are devised, adopted, and implemented. Policy networks have historically referred to personal networks that form spontaneously

in agenda-setting processes (Rhodes 1990), although as Page and Jenkins have noted, this focus reflects a particular bias towards political, bureaucratic and stakeholder elite which have received far greater attention in policy studies than staff in the lower or middle-ranks of an organization. At this level, networks are not just personal and policy-oriented, but organizational and program-oriented. Hierarchical organization has a great deal of influence on the work of subordinates, and so, making middle-ranking civil servants the subject of analysis will invariably affect how networks are defined, described, and understood. Attention to non-elites would necessitate a broadening of the policy network concept to encompass organizational networks, and such a perspective is adopted here.

Collaborative government, then represents a type of network. Defining collaborative government as a type of network here, has the aim of definition rather than description or explanation, and thus departs from previous literature. Much like a motorcycle is a type of vehicle not because it contributes to the explanatory power of “vehicle” but because it is interesting enough and distinct enough to warrant recognition, collaborative government is a network, but one with some interesting features: involvement of government agencies, organization around formal policy and program initiatives, and great scope for the contribution of non-elites. It denotes “initiatives by governments ... to work together to accomplish public goals greater than the sum of what each organization could accomplish alone” (Goldsmith and Eggers 2004). Collaborative government is work involving multiple organizations that lack the authority to control one another. Their activities typically denote some degree of sharing of government power, work, and resources for the achievement of their goals. In Canada, the term *horizontal government* often refers to interdepartmental work (see

Peters 1998a), but has been used in ways that encompass intergovernmental work and more collaborative forms of stakeholder consultation as well. Hopkins et al. (2001: 2) have written:

Horizontal management is about more than interdepartmental cooperation. Horizontal initiatives often involve provincial and municipal governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), community groups and leaders, academics, and the international community.

According to Hopkins et al. (2001: viii), horizontal government means “working collaboratively across organizational boundaries.” Horizontal government takes place through networks. It is this broader definition that will be adopted here, and the terms horizontal government and collaborative government used interchangeably throughout this dissertation.

Multiple methods, units of analyses, and theoretical and analytical frameworks exist for the study of networks. Topics that were once largely overlooked (their democraticness, mechanisms for control) have recently garnered attention (see Hajer and Wagenaar 2003; Skelcher et al. 2005; Mathur and Skelcher 2007; Klijn and Skelcher 2007; Greenaway 2007; Sørensen and Torfing 2007; Milward et al 2006). Other areas that were considered new, such as meta-governance and policy network management, are now well-established sub-fields featuring their own societies and annual conferences (e.g. the Roskilde University Centre for Democratic Network Governance).

Canadian scholars have made a modest contribution to policy network studies, reminding us in the 1990s of the importance of meso-level approaches, with the analytical focus being on sectors (Coleman and Skogstad 1990). They also clarified key factors in network structure, conceptualizing networks along the lines of the capacity and autonomy of the state vis-à-vis that of society. This approach allowed researchers

across North America and Europe to see their work as intertwined, as the Canadian typologies consolidated distinctions between pluralism and corporatism and incorporated sensitivity to different political contexts (Coleman and Skogstad 1990; Howlett and Ramesh 2003; Lindquist 1992; Atkinson and Coleman 1992).

Recently, attention has turned away from the descriptions of network structures and towards output-oriented analysis. Output-oriented analyses consider how networks are governed and at times, controlled, how networks constrain and expand participation and legitimacy, and how they evolve and change over time and the implications for public policy. Network governance has become a principle occupation in both Britain (e.g. Marsh and Rhodes 1992, Rhodes 1996, Richardson 2000) and Continental Europe (e.g. Provan and Kenis 2007; Milward and Provan 2003; Milward, Kenis, and Raab 2006; Klijn and Skelcher 2007; Klijn and Koppenjan 2000; Koppenjan and Klijn 2004). American scholars writing in the public administration tradition have made recent contributions to the parallel literature on collaborative government as well (e.g. McGuire 2002, 2006; Agranoff and McGuire 2003; Keast, Mandell, and Brown 2006; O'Toole and Meier 2004a; Hicklin, O'Toole and Meier 2007; Salamon 2002).

While these numerous sub-fields have improved our understanding of what networks are and their utility as both analytical concept and method, there is still much work to be done. Considerable attention has been paid to the structural qualities of networks but far less to the behaviour of network members and its impacts.

Attention to behaviour is important, particularly for scholars who see network structure as the key variable explaining network outputs, policy outputs or even, societal outcomes. As rational choice theorists argue, structures can alter decision paths, and cause some behaviours to become more attractive than others. Structures can also

impact individual preferences by affecting the “frames through which meanings are made and the means by which individuals’ identities are shaped (Blom-Hansen 1997: 674).” The effect of network structure on network outputs is mediated by the actual actions and interactions of its members (Hay and Richards 2000; Marsh and Smith 2000).

This dissertation thus contributes to this body of knowledge by investigating the challenges that civil servants face as a result of their involvement in policy networks.

Origin and Evolution of the Policy Network Concept

Rhodes (2006: 426) defines a policy network as “sets of formal institutional and informal linkages between governmental and other actors structured around shared if endlessly negotiated beliefs and interests in public policy making and implementation.” To pursue their preferred policy initiatives in this context, governments are drawn into consultation with other state and non-state actors who might possess diverging interests and be unlikely to co-operate in the absence of concession or the exercise of authority. The product of their interactions represents a fundamentally new form of governing, not *by governments* but by *networks* (Kooiman 2003; Kickert, Klijn, and Koppenjan 1999; Milward and Provan 2003; Agranoff and McGuire 1998). Networks are arenas in which members typically share *de facto* decision-making space. They empirically exist: government activity in many policy areas now involves (and in cases, relies upon) work with non-state actors. This work can take the form of consultation (input into policy) or partnership (contract to deliver a service, often an infrastructure project such as bridge construction) but can go as far as to feature joint policymaking.

Analysis of state-society relations around public policy issues traces back to pluralism studies in political science in the early 1960s. Originally, the concept of a

policy network developed in the United States to challenge the supposed openness of the policy process theorized by pluralists (Howlett and Ramesh 2003). Critics of pluralism contended – and indeed, found – that close and tightly insulated relations among politicians, powerful industry groups, and regulatory agencies characterized policymaking in Washington (Lowi 1969). This amounted to the usurpation of democracy by powerful state and societal actors. The concept of a policy network thus finds its roots in a relationship that was deemed a societal ill.

Between the 1970s and late 1990s, case studies within specific policy areas together revealed that a spectrum of state-society relations existed: a diffuse, decentralized open *issue network* on one end, and an exclusionary and well organized *policy community* on the other (Hecló 1978; Ripley and Franklin 1984; Richardson and Jordan 1979; Jordan 1981; Jordan and Schubert 1992; Van Waarden 1992). These early case studies described state-society relations as open or closed, and sought to address the democratic implications of network-based forms of governance. The recognition that network structures varied empirically, allowed the concept to gain a bit of neutrality.

Later continuums of the 1990s identified additional structural characteristics upon which empirical instances of networks varied, including the closeness between actors and the type of actors that enjoyed influence. More complex typologies identified the size of the network, integration between members, and resources of members as major determinants of network structure. Models of the larger policy process, in which policy networks are embedded, also developed, highlighting learning on the part of different coalitions of network members (Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith 1993), serendipity, timing, and entrepreneurialism (Kingdon 1995), and the expansion of conflict beyond

the network through alternative *images* and *venues* of power (Baumgartner and Jones 1993). The unique contribution of Canadians to this literature was the theory that state capacity and autonomy vis-à-vis non-state actors *within sectors*, impacted policy outputs (Atkinson and Coleman 1989, 1992; Coleman and Skogstad 1990, Howlett and Ramesh 2003, Coleman and Perl 1999). As Rhodes (2006: 428) has noted however, “this lepidopteran approach to policy networks – collecting and classifying the several species – has become deeply uninteresting.”

Many have argued that descriptions of policy networks in structural terms have limited value because they offer little in the way of explanatory insight (Dowding 1995; Börzel 1998; Peters 1998b; Van Buuren and Erik-Hans 2006). Categorizing motor vehicles by their colour, engine size, and occupancy tells us nothing about what they do and how and why this matters. If policy networks stand to be an important theoretical concept and empirical reality, we must direct attention to understanding their implications at the same time as we seek to understand their various compositions.

It is not, then, the previous literatures’ fixation on structural variables that is problematic but rather, the preoccupation with structural description over both explanation of structure (somewhat interesting) and implications of structure (very interesting). Simply put, policy networks must be explored as both an independent and a dependent variable and descriptions of structure alone do neither. Understanding what a phenomenon is (i.e. what *is* a policy network?) is important work. It allows us to proceed to explanation. In this regard, descriptive structural accounts have been valuable. However, they now represent a saturated contribution.

Fortunately, attention to policy networks as an independent variable has been on the rise, moving the study back towards that which it was originally intended to

illuminate: importance for democracy and policy effectiveness. Interest in broad structural characteristics of networks, such as openness to new actors and ideas, has been supplemented by interest in organizations and their activity within networks. In sum, while interest in networks remains attuned to answering some of the same, long-standing research questions (How democratic are they? What policies do they produce?), the site of interest has shifted somewhat away from network structure to network activity.

The Brokerage Behaviour of Actors in Policy Networks

Recent studies of collaboration within public administration transform a network into an action and thus draw attention to their behavioural content of (Agranoff and McGuire 2003; Meier and O'Toole 2001; Keast, Mandell, and Brown 2006). This literature does not put the emphasis on networks (if it mentions networks at all), but rather, on *networking*. If new interorganizational forms (networks) exist, then it follows that some activity must take place within them. The quantity and intensity of collaboration (what is shared and how much is shared), matter (Sowa 2008; Agranoff 2007). Attention in behavioural studies also turns to the importance of network managers and mediators, the presence of mechanisms for control, the intensity of organizational interdependency by way of shared finances and personnel, and distinct interorganizational activities: collaboration, coordination, and cooperation (Provan and Kenis 2007; Sowa 2008).

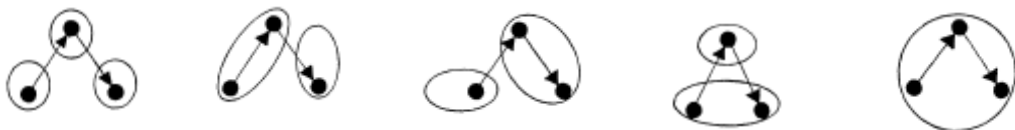
An important contribution to the literature is Meier and O'Toole's (2008) work on the relationship between the amount of networking that managers do, and the policy outputs that follow from it. Based on data from over 1,000 Texas schools, Meier and O'Toole examine networks from the perspective of a single organization, which must

allocate its time and resources between intra- and inter-organizational work. They find that participation in networks has a positive (although diminishing) impact on an organization's outputs, so that from a quantitative perspective, networks are considered good. They increase policy effectiveness. They allow organizations to do more together than they would do alone.

A corollary of networking behaviour existing is the prospect for organizations to have different strategies for interaction. Unfortunately, recent literature also tends to treat the *nature* of networking (as opposed to the *amount*) as either an important constant or an unimportant variable. But, how one networks (in addition to how *much* one networks) should matter, especially if this involves different activities and different types of interactions.

Fernandez and Gould's (1994) work suggests that networking is heterogeneous, and specifies five different structures for brokerage. A limitation of this conception of brokerage however is it does not differentiate the interests, nor the sources of power that come from the positions held by members of a network so that it is not clear what brokers actually do in these positions, including, if they even broker at all.

Figure 1.1 Five Types of Brokerage: A Structural Approach



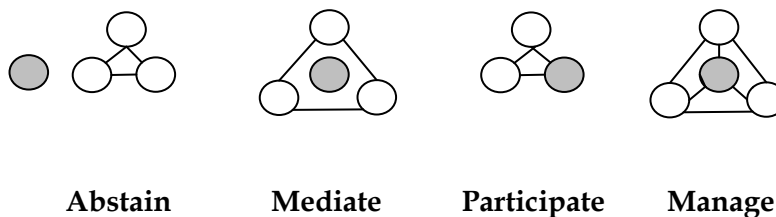
Liaison Representative Gatekeeper Itinerant Broker Coordinator

Adapted from Fernandez and Gould (1994: 1459)

It is possible to buttress this formation with a behavioural account, so that, instead of looking at one behaviour (brokerage) across five network structures, we look at four or five different behaviours across a single network structure. We can identify brokerage

as only one *type* of strategy of interaction within an interorganizational context. Simply put, if not everyone performs the role of mediator in networks, other roles must exist (Kingdon 1995). Even actors *positioned* as mediators might *play* different roles. Structure need not determine action. Some actors might abstain from the network, especially if they believe that the network is a waste of their time and they would rather do things on their own (Marsh and Olsen 1986; Hicklin, O'Toole, and Meier 2007). Others, sensing personal importance might abstain as a means of advantage, waiting for compliance or resources to attract them into a more active strategy. Some may participate because of a substantive interest in the network's outcomes and having formed a particular interest or goal that they would like to see realized, they go about trying to get others to align with them (Greenaway et al. 2007; Kingdon 1995). Finally there may be those that are actively involved in the network (unlike abstainers), but who neither conform to a solely participatory, nor solely mediation position. These types of individuals have been identified by scholars as key to the effective realization of network-level goals (Kingdon 1995; Kickert, Klijn, and Koppenjan 1999; Provan and Kenis 2007). These individuals are part participant and part mediator and can be termed *network managers*. They exist as a policy participant within the network at the same time as they attempt to steer it as a process mediator. These four types of network behaviours are summarized in figure 1.2.

Figure 1.2 Four Types of Network Activities: A Behavioural Approach



From a descriptive perspective then, we may know the behavioural content of networks: actors can abstain from, mediate, participate in or manage *negotiations* within a network. Such descriptive analyses are weak however, because they do not paint an adequate picture of why, when, how, and with what impact. We must aim for more than a descriptive account, if the behavioural content of networks is to add to the explanatory power of the policy network concept, altogether. Ultimately, to understand the behaviour of actors within networks, we need to understand the challenges they face in working interorganizationally.

One challenge of interorganizational work can be gleaned from Fernandez and Gould's (1994) study. Within U.S. health networks, the authors found that government representatives positioned as mediators (meaning that they enjoy communication links with at least two separate actors that do not enjoy communication links with each other) enjoyed far greater influence when they *abstained* from advocating particular policies. Fernandez and Gould (1994: 1481) concluded that, "the power of the state derives in part from a structural position that mediates the flow of information in the policy-making process, but that this form of power vanishes if government actors publicly endorse specific policy initiatives."

Daugbjerg (1997) has also argued that influence in interorganizational settings where organizations lack the ability to command others, stems from solidarity and high levels of trust that well-integrated groups have for one another (structural power) . Lacking that, their power derives from the material resources they have at their disposal for lobbying, bullying, and persuasion (ideational power). Putting these points together then, network mediators are rich in structural power but weak in ideational power;

network participants are weak in structural power but rich in ideational power, and network managers have intermediate endowments in both.

Network literature has insufficiently explored how network behaviour varies, and no study to date has broadened this research agenda beyond the singular activity of mediating to cover a spectrum of network activities, as suggested in figure 1.2. To give credit, Canadian policy studies have examined the roles played by public actors in policy networks but their focus has been on a single type of network behaviour within a particular relationship (see Pal 1993; Malloy 2003; Teghtsoonian 2005).

Studies of collaboration in public administration nonetheless inform the work of political scientists, whose interests lie in understanding the policy process through policy networks. For one, the notion of collaboration allows us to delve more deeply into what exactly is a policy network. While networks are often defined by political scientists in structural terms (e.g. “two or more independent organizations with some overlapping objective that come together to achieve a common mandate...”), it is what is done within that structure that matters as much as, if not more than, the structure itself. If a policy network can indeed be defined as organizations that come together to deliver on common mandates, the inevitable question is, *come together ... and then what? Interact? Interact, how?* While this seems an obvious point, it has been overlooked in the last few decades of policy network studies in political science (see Hay and Richards 2000). What do organizations – and individuals – actually do within policy networks? What challenges do they face in doing this activity? Scholars have repeatedly touted difficulties with interorganizational work – inability to command others and lack of trust between members – but these theoretical challenges need to be placed within an

institutional and political context. How does the inability to command others affect work within networks? What does it make difficult to do? How do actors cope?

Public Servants as Network Managers

An assumption of this dissertation is *network processes are affected by the behaviour of civil servants within them and network processes impact network outputs*. Such an assertion is not a new or uncommon one. Others have stressed the importance of civil servants to both the policy process and policy outcomes (Lipsky 1980; Ripley and Franklin 1984; Pressman and Wildavsky 1984).¹ The sub-field of collaborative government within public administration exists *because* civil servants matter to policy networks.

This begs the question however, how prevalent are policy networks? For civil servants to stand to be important, networks need to exist. Recent studies show a high prevalence of and increasing resort to policymaking through networks (Hall and O'Toole 2000; Bruijn, Heuvelhof, and Veld 2002). Studies in both Europe and the United States have confirmed that governments now employ network management to affect the outcomes of the policy process (Kohler-Koch 1996; Johansson and Borell 1999; Hall and O'Toole 2000). References to horizontal government in speeches from the throne, as well as new central agency guides on the topic and recently introduced audits of horizontal programs by the Auditor General, suggest that this work is increasing in Canada as well. The Canada School of Public Service has recently published a flurry of material on

¹ Civil servant, in this context, refers to public sector employees who are members of the government's civil service. The respective body in Canada at the federal level is the Public Service of Canada. Throughout this dissertation, civil servants and public servants will be used interchangeably.

horizontal government.² Think-tank literature aimed at public managers in Canada also stresses the importance of a new skill set for a more horizontally oriented, societally engaged public service:

The challenge here is moving departmental employees culturally from a control or policing role to the mindset of facilitation and coordination... Contemporary managers must develop the relationship-building, negotiating, contract management, risk assessment, and performance measurement skills required to work effectively in a partnership world. (Langford 1999, 105-111)

Thus, the feeling within government and academia is policy networks do exist and have repercussions for the work of civil servants.

Networks affect the work of civil servants by limiting the ability of members to direct the behaviour of other members (Howlett 2000) and thus require unique management skills (Agranoff 2006). This is not to say that hierarchical mechanisms of control are not available to network members but rather, that they are not the predominant mechanism for control within network settings. Inability to hierarchically control is pronounced in Canada: networks feature agents of the federal, provincial and Aboriginal governments, public agencies under different ministerial authorities, organized civil society, and industrial sectors. Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat's horizontal results database reveals that of fifty-eight horizontal initiatives active in 2009, forty-seven list partner organizations that are administratively independent.

In such a context of weak hierarchical mechanisms for control, scholars argue that public servants should act as network leaders to ensure the productive functioning of networks (Lindquist 1992; Kenis and Provan 2007; Bueren, Klijn and Koppenjan

² Eight publications on horizontal government have been published since 1991, seven of which were written between 2000 and 2004. While it may surprise the reader to note that the last publication on horizontal government by the CPSP was put out in 2004, only one publication has been released by the CPSP since then, Evert Lindquist's (2006), "A Critical Moment: Capturing and Conveying the Evolution of the Canadian Public Service."

2003). The study of public servants in policy networks predominantly occurs through the lens of *network management*, as outlined in figure 1.2. Kickert, Klijn and Koppenjan (1999: 11) define network management as a steering activity employed by public actors within networks aimed at “initiating and facilitating interaction processes between actors, [and] creating and changing network arrangements for better coordination.”

In the absence of a central actor or authority structure, network managers must cope with the complex interactions that take place between participants who hold diverse and unstable preferences, strategies, and cognitive frameworks. Lacking high levels of trust and/or institutional constraints on opportunistic behaviour, investing time, resources, and energies into the processes of mutual adjustment can be a highly risky affair for participants resulting in significant costs, especially if participation entails adjusting one’s preferences, goals, strategies, and perceptions in order to facilitate “better” outcomes for the group (Kickert and Koppenjan 1999). Network management is therefore critical to network functioning (Kenis and Provan 2007: 33). Bueren, Klijn, and Koppenjan (2003) have emphasized the importance of network managers for getting organizations to come together, air their disagreements, build up a level of trust, and develop some sort of agreement on a common way forward.

The network management literature has informed this dissertation’s agenda in two ways. First, it has provided evidence that public network management exists and is an activity in which governments frequently engage (Kohler-Koch 1996; Johansson and Borell 1999; Hall and O’Toole 2000; Van Buuren and Klijn 2006). Second, it has shown – albeit simplistically – that instances of network management do matter for the effectiveness and efficiency of public policy (Agranoff and McGuire 1998; Meier and O’Toole 2001).

However, these findings are unsatisfying from the perspective of understanding the nature of public servants' involvement in networks because, as already stated, they assume, *a priori*, a particular role and strategy for public servants (network management). As well, studies of network management have occurred almost exclusively within the American and European context and may not be applicable to Canada. Few of these studies have entailed systematic analyses (e.g. Koppenjan and Klijn 2004; Sørensen and Torfing 2007), limiting the development of general inferences. Agranoff and McGuire (1998) have conducted a comprehensive studies using economic development data collected on 237 cities but their work, like the work of Meier and O'Toole (2001) and Provan and Milward (1995) looks only at the frequency and consistency of management behaviour and not, its nature.

Taken together, a significant lacuna exists within the study of public actors in network settings: little is known about the work that they do, the degree to which it differs across policy fields and policy networks, and the range of strategies and behaviours specifically employed by public servants to influence network interactions. As such, this dissertation takes the call from Hall and O'Toole (2000: 683) seriously:

It is clear that treating single administrative units as the primary unit of analysis in the performance of public programs is likely to miss some of the complex interorganizational dynamics specified as important in policy. And it is equally certain that although the generalizations and skills consequential in the management of single agencies remain highly relevant in the more complex institutional settings demanded by modern programs, the challenges of managing public programs demand further attention to patterns and tasks that arise in networks of interdependent actors.

The lack of attention to what public actors do in policy networks is concerning given Pal (2001) and Skogstad's (2005) mutual contention that the importance of policy networks to political scientists stems not just from their impacts on the quality of policy analysis

but from their function as “relatively untried sinews for implementation and delivery (Pal 2001: 214).”

Approaches to Studying Networks

Historically, scholars have taken two major approaches to the study of policy networks. The long-standing one has been case study analysis, which has highlighted for scholars a) evidence that policy networks indeed exist, b) the complexity of the policy decision process and c) that particular theoretical assumptions about networks do not hold up in empirical analysis (Huxham and Vagen 2005). Case studies have in general allowed scholars to document different types of networks and their respective processes and outcomes based on primarily structural characteristics.

David Knoke, Edward Laumann, Franz Pappi and colleagues have advanced a second approach to policy networks based on social network analysis (see Heinz, Laumann, Salisbury and Nelson 1990; Knoke 1990; Knoke 1993; Knoke, Pappi, Broadbent, and Tsujinaka 1996; Laumann and Knoke 1987; Pappi and Knoke 1991; Pappi and Henning 1999). Dowding (1995) has criticised this work for producing little more than self-evident conclusions already established through simpler, less time-consuming and less-costly case study research. Nonetheless, this work demonstrates and validates a new approach to studying policy networks that is complementary to the case study approach dominating network studies in political science. Quantitative methods not only broaden the methodological toolkit; they expand the research agenda, allowing questions that until now have been difficult to answer through case studies alone to be entertained. We can now map the prevalence, size, and relational structure of networks.

That stated, a problem common to both case study research in political science and quantitative studies in organizational behaviour and sociology is both suffer from a small number of cases. The 1987 research conducted by Edward Laumann and colleagues (and funded through an impressive \$392,273 grant from the National Science Foundation) featured only two substantive policy networks. Yet, it is among the most ambitious studies to date. Mapping out the structural relations alone between actors in a single policy network is an extremely demanding, expensive, and time-consuming research activity. Robinson (2006: 597) notes:

Networks are difficult subjects for large sample studies. Each network is somewhat like a small sample in and of itself. To get a large sample of networks would require a large sample of samples. This is a daunting but important task.

Until a quantitative approach to studying policy networks that is reliable, feasible, insightful, and allows for “a large sample of a large sample” is developed, case study research remains the best method to address questions important to political scientists. Specifically, uncertainty lingers over the state’s role in building, sustaining, and influencing policy networks, the behaviour of network members, and the importance of ideas and perceptions to them. Because quantitative approaches focus heavily on social structure (dyadic relations, the unit of analysis), they are a poor choice for answering political scientists’ outstanding research questions.

Statement of Research Questions

The purpose of this dissertation is to understand collaborative government. To do so, it takes a behavioural approach, focussing on public servants as a particular kind of network actor. It will examine the contradictions for the work of public servants that interorganizational activity presents, to better understand actor behaviour rather than

why a network is structured a particular way. In this way, it will advance the study of policy networks. Three research questions inform the study's methodological approach:

- (a) What challenges do public servants face in policy networks and why?
- (b) How do these challenges affect their work?
- (c) What do public servants do to cope with these challenges?

A good research design stems from its relevance to the research questions (Yin 2003).

The nature of the knowledge sought of the social world, not the preferred methodological toolkit, should guide decisions. The decision to employ qualitative methods for this dissertation derives from both practical considerations and normative assumptions.

While statistical generalization is an admirable, legitimate aim of the social sciences, it is hampered by human behaviour, which is embedded in and varies by context. The potential and probable deviation between what people believe and what they actually do, compels researchers to be sensitive to the beliefs, ideas, and meanings that actors attribute to processes, alongside those very processes themselves. Individual action cannot be understood unless the meaning they assign to that action and the context in which that action takes place, is also understood. These normative points compel the adoption of a qualitative methodology.

From a practical viewpoint, this dissertation finds that the types of phenomena under current examination are best suited to the qualitative approach. The study of public actors in network settings – what they do and why they do it – involves phenomena (a) that are largely unknown; (b) that are operating within complex systems and processes (networks); (c) in which tacit knowledge and subjective understandings stand to be important; (d) of which actual practices may differ from stated ones.

Concern for *context* (i.e. roles, norms, procedures, and incentives) and *meaning* (i.e.

thoughts, feelings, beliefs, and assumptions) explicit in the research questions, calls for a research agenda focused on *individuals' lived experiences*. The data gathering method most suited to this research is in-depth interviews (Marshall and Rossman 2006).

In sum, this dissertation uses the qualitative method. It is informed by the goals of description, exploration and explanation. This study is first, exploratory; it aims to generate hypotheses for future research, identifying variables that may have hitherto gone unspecified. It asks the “what is happening” question: what challenges do public actors face in network settings? The study is also explanatory; it seeks to clarify relationships and produce a theory for how things are interrelated. It asks the “why does it happen” question: why do public actors face these challenges? Finally, this research serves a descriptive purpose, asking the “how did it happen” question: how do these challenges affect the behaviour of public actors in networks?

Purpose and Structure of Dissertation

The dissertation explores the work of public actors in network settings: the challenges they face, why they face them, how they affect their work and what they do to cope with them. The dissertation focuses on empirical instances of collaborative government in Canada. Unlike previous studies of policy networks, the unit of analysis for this dissertation is not the structural arrangement of the policy network *per se*, but the public actor and their efforts to realize their governance ambitions through non-hierarchical work involving other public and non-public actors.

This dissertation will proceed as follows. Chapter two will present the theoretical framework and research methodology. It will describe the selection of cases and the key variables that informed it. It will do so based on a review of public

administration reform in Canada as well as an analytic framework that treats conflict within networks as a consequence of rule contestation within institutional deficits. Drawing on the work of Jonathan Malloy, Donald Savoie, and Frank Baumgartner and B.D. Jones, this chapter will also outline three sources of rule contestation that arise within network settings, along with their consequences. Chapter three introduces four cases studies, examining their origins, structures, purposes, and activities. Based on these attributes, subsequent chapters aim to understand the challenges that public servants faced in doing interorganizational work.

Chapter four focuses on the relationship between public servants and their counterparts in other federal agencies. Chapter five turns to the interactions among public servants and stakeholder groups. Chapter six addresses the hierarchical implications of interorganizational work, examining the relationships between public servants and political actors, and as an extension of this, the interaction between bureaucratic and political networks. The dissertation closes with a chapter on the general challenges of interorganizational work in Canada's public service and application of the rule contestation model.

2 STUDY DESIGN AND METHOD

Introduction

This chapter will further explain the research design for this study. All decisions regarding data collection and analyses are guided by the research questions, aimed here at understanding and explaining the challenges that public servants face in networks and why they face them. The first part of this chapter offers initial theoretical propositions and situates the study in the context of past efforts in Canada to reform the federal public service. The second part provides a rationale for case selection and data collection and describes the data analysis techniques employed.

Theoretical Propositions

As noted by Yin (2003: 13), case study research “benefits from the prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis.” Sutton and Straw (1995: 378) explain that theoretical propositions represent a “story about why acts, events, structure, and thoughts occur.” Theory development is essential to case study research because it helps to elucidate those cases, those aspects of those cases and those methods of data collection and analysis that are most useful and relevant to the research program (King, Keohane, and Verba 1994; Marshall and Rossman 2006; Mason 2002). In the absence of theory, case study research risks haphazard treatment of the research questions, its validity and reliability as scientific research compromised.

This dissertation draws from ideas within political science, public policy and policy administration to develop a theoretical framework to understand the challenges that public servants face in interorganizational work and why they face them. The three theoretical propositions presented in this chapter (*divided loyalties*, *many hats*, and *punctuated worlds*), spell out the institutional contradictions that may impede public servants' interorganizational work. One of these contradictions was examined in chapter one (see figure 1.2). All three phenomena derive in part from the evolving practice of public administration in Canada, the topic of the subsequent section of this chapter.

In order to understand broadly, why public servants face these institutional contradictions, this chapter will develop a framework, combining the new institutionalism of Ostrom (1986), updated for the network context by Blom-Hansen (1997) with the work of Hajer (2003) on the concept of an "institutional void." Taken together, the framework explains the challenges that civil servants face in network settings as the result of rule contestations that occur when actors are thrown into new interorganizational settings, partially void of consistent, and commonly held rules. Rule contestation results when actors do not share the same understandings of formal and informal rules, nor have a complete understanding of what the formal and informal rules are or should be. In this context, the violation, by one member, of a rule held by and mattering to another network member, can result in conflict between those members, with consequences for actors' own efficacy, perceived credibility, and collegiality towards others.

Approaches to Understanding Behaviour

Scholars have adopted numerous approaches to understand processes within policy networks. Examined here are two major ones: *rational choice* and *new institutionalism*. While both approaches contribute a meaningful piece to this dissertation's theoretical framework, each has its own weaknesses that limit its individual utility.

Rational choice theory is a deductive approach that gained popularity as an alternative to heavily descriptive, institutional studies that had until the 1960s comprised the bulk of literature in political science. Rational choice theory claims to be able to explain individual behaviour in all facets of life deducing from the single concept of the rational actor. According to the theory, individuals are "rational" in that they will always behave in ways that maximize their utility. Applied to the political realm, public choice theory deduces from the rational actor model, the dynamics of entire political institutions: bureaucracies, legislatures, and political parties (Downs 1967; Niskanen 1973; Riker 1962). More recently, rational choice theory has been employed within *network theory*, to understand the interactions between interdependent sets of actors.

While there is no doubt that individuals do at times "act rationally", on an empirical note, many of the predicted behaviours of public servants set out by public choice theory simply do not hold up in practice. Principal-agent theory assumes formal contract development between elected officials and public servants, which rarely exist in practice due to the complexity of the policy process: agents have multiple "masters" and masters do not know in specific terms, what it is they want (Page and Jenkins 2005; Meier and O'Toole 2006). Further, Page and Jenkins (2005) find that middle-ranking civil servants in the UK's Whitehall, as agents, do not have a propensity to "shirk" and

act self-interestedly in ways that harm the principal, as principal-agent theory suggests. Instead, they “bend over backwards to produce policies consistent with what ministers want (Page and Jenkins 2005: 128).” In the absence of clear direction from their ministers, civil servants seek out cues from political priorities, informal conversations, departmental budgets, and government documents. In this way, civil servants trade in the clarity of contracts for more ambiguous norms and expectations that do not necessarily increase the discretion they feel they have in the tasks that they perform.

That the actual behaviour of public servants deviates from predicted behaviour under a rational choice framework, should not surprise us. A further limitation of rational choice is precisely the assumption that individuals are rational utility maximizers with exogenous preferences. Scholars have persuasively argued that human beings are only boundedly rational: decision environments can be so complex as to limit an individual’s ability to consider all factors (Simon 1957; Lindblom 1959). In an interorganizational setting, individuals deal with multiple uncertainties. Uncertainty about the policy issue and the policy process including who are participants and what their interests are, mean that individuals cannot act rationally (Klijn 2002).

Even if actors enjoyed full knowledge about alternatives, and decision-paths, it is not clear that actors develop preferences and act independently from their institutional context. *New institutionalism* picks up where rational choice theory leaves off. New institutionalism accepts the importance of the individual, and thus, constitutes a depart from more traditional institutional approaches (e.g. Dawson and Ward 1970). However, it also shifts the focus from individuals to the effect of institutions on them. Hall and Taylor (1996) outline three major approaches: historical institutionalism, rational choice institutionalism, and sociological institutionalism. While their differences are

significant, they are not altogether mutually exclusive. Their distinctiveness turns on the extent to which a) preference formation is exogenous or endogenous, and b) self-motivation is instrumental or sociological. Whereas economic institutionalism sees individuals driven by the logic of consequentiality, sociological institutionalism sees individuals driven by the logic of appropriateness: norms and expectations established within the social context. In practice, it seems likely that actors are influenced both by their own strategic calculation based on self interest (rational utility maximization), as well as social norms and moral and cognitive templates shaped by institutional context. As such, no one perspective alone can carry the analysis very far. If preference formation does not occur independent of context, then institutions stand to matter a great deal more than rational choice theorists have credited. If actors indeed seek, if only partially, to maximize their utility based on exogenous preferences, if multiple, conflicting institutions exist, and if various actors interpret institutions differently, then the study of institutions alone will not suffice either.

With that in mind, this dissertation seeks to combine the perspective of sociological and rational choice institutionalism to understand the challenges of horizontal government. Interest in institutions stems from the belief that individuals do not form identities and preferences independent of their institutional context and that formal and informal rules structure interactions between individuals, without wholly determining them. Moreover, the lack of clarity of rules and actors' developing different expectations for the rules can lead to contestation between actors whose rational interests lie in seeing different, conflicting rules realized.

Rule Contestation in Networks

Though few studies have examined the actual challenges faced by civil servants in networks, scholars hold that interorganizational work is difficult because of the absence of shared values, stable membership, and common interests. deLeon and Varda (2009) make the point that interorganizational work entails not just the collision of clashing policy interests but as well of clashing *understandings of policy processes*. In decision arenas containing high institutional uncertainty, new institutionalism alone, will not be able to help us account for network processes. Clashing understandings of policy processes are relevant here because ensuing conflict can prevent members from achieving individual as well as common policy goals as deLeon and Varda (2009: 63) have written:

The blending of multisectoral interests has the classic elements of public-private partnerships and the potential for failure when the mixing of values, norms, power, trust, and experience might clash and produce undesirable conflict and tension. Indeed, collaborative policy networks do not result unequivocally in better policy outcomes.

Recent empirical analyses clarify that networks contain a great deal of process uncertainty for participants. Koppenjan and Klijn (2004) were surprised to find that it is common for networks to lack a clear inventory of who is even a member. Huxham and Vangen (2005) discover that networks rarely contain a clear idea of network goals, and in many cases, members themselves have difficulty identifying *personal* goals. John Kingdon (1984: 90) described government in some disorderly terms, some time ago:

People don't necessarily understand the organization of which they are a part: the left hand doesn't know what the right hand is doing. Some people take on an importance that is not commensurate with their formal role and others are impotent despite considerable powers on paper. A description of the federal government as an organized anarchy is not far wide of the mark.

Together, this strengthens the contention made by Hajer (2003) that classical-modernist institutions may no longer be the locus of politics because globalization and individualism have dislocated sources of authority and power. Taking politics out of this institutional context means operating in an “institutional void”: “there are no clear rules and norms according to which politics is to be conducted and policy measures are to be agreed upon (Hajer 2003: 175).” The term “institutional void” is developed to capture the irrelevance of the “rules we know” – representative democracy, politics-administration dichotomy, ministerial responsibility, and expert-driven policy analysis – in new political spaces created around the issues of climate change, biotechnology, and food production. For Hajer, an institutional void exists when new rules need to be created because old rules have become irrelevant. Old rules have become irrelevant because the locus of politics has moved. *Rules* refers not only to generalizable procedures contained in formal agreements or political instructions, but less formal practices and evolving customs as well. Expectations, indeed, are an individual’s notion of what the rules will be.

For other scholars, the complexity of policy processes in the context of multi-level governance has led not to an institutional vacuum but rather, institutional overload, but the implication is much the same. Sullivan and Skelcher (2002) have argued that the once “hollow state” has become the “congested state” featuring institutional complexity, and multiple governance mechanisms. According to Hajer and Wagenaar (2006: 12) “governing is less a matter of ruling through hierarchical authority structures and more and more a matter of negotiating through a decentralized series of floating alliances.” Governing now consists of multiple modes of social organization (market, hierarchy, clan) and mechanisms of control (Fleming and Rhodes 2005; Kenis

and Provan 2000). The hollowing out of the state over the last quarter century has led to a “governance mess” of interdependent relations between state and societal actors (Lowndes and Sullivan 2004) foreshadowed by Alan Cairns (1986).

These ideas of institutional voids and institutional gluts, as Everingham (2009) points out, have in common recognition of the increasing anarchy of governance spaces, including those that lie within domestic states and can thus be reframed as an *institutional deficit*. Regardless of whether the rules are too few or too many, the challenge remains the same: for public servants it is unclear what they ought to be doing. Rules have become conflicting, ambiguous and fleeting.

This has struck a chord in Canada. Donald Savoie (2008a) recently pronounced that Canada’s political-administrative style privileges individuals over institutions. What this means is that the rules of the game from which bureaucrats take their cues have shifted from bureaucratic guidelines and processes to *ex-poste* political and media judgment. Savoie argues that the concentration of power in first ministers, coupled with policy making and delivery through networks leads to unpredictable policy processes:

Some individuals can establish their own rules, starting with the prime minister. Institutions, administrative organizations, norms, rules, and expected behaviour are today more amorphous and transient than at any time in the past ... boundaries are collapsing between the political world and bureaucracy (Savoie 2008a: 326).

As Savoie (2008a: 149) explains, boundaries have been important to the civil service, for they define responsibilities, and “establish who has legitimate access to certain decision making arenas, as well as departmental mandates, and who is responsible for what.” The absence of clear boundaries invites different interpretations of rules. Actors may have a vested interest in seeing particular rules adopted and behave in ways to

institutionalize their preferences. Rules then reflect the power differentials between actors.

Skelcher et al. (2005) have argued that partnership based government attempts to conceal the reality of unequal power between actors through a *policy discourse* of equality and collegiality. Meanings associated with the concept *chairperson* may differ markedly amongst network actors, ranging from “an individual who seeks to gain the commitment of all parties to a decision” to “personal or sectional power” privileging an individual’s allies (Skelcher et al 2005: 578). The result is that:

[d]ifferent discourses about policy-making will contain distinct emphases on particular elements, and these in turn will shape the rules for governance by partnership... provid[ing] the medium through which institutional arrangements for public governance become socially constructed and hence meaningful (Skelcher et al 2005: 578).

Chris Huxham (2000) argues that the term “collaboration” has an *ideological connotation* associated with participation and empowerment, which can lead actors to develop expectations that outcomes from processes dubbed “collaborative” will be substantively inclusive and more politically legitimate than otherwise. She goes as far as to say that “such variety [of conceptions of collaboration] would suggest that participants might be wise to check out their own and others’ assumptions in this respect in order to avoid entering collaborative situations with different expectations about the inter-organizational form with which they are involved. If this happens it is not likely that they can all be satisfied with the outcomes from the collaboration, however they may turnout (Huxham 2000: 341).”

Those who study new institutional settings for political-administrative relations – policy networks – seem to overlook this reality of conflicting rules or unclear and insufficient rules and the potential for rule contestation: struggle between actors

enjoying different degrees of power, for the realization of their preferred rule. The emphasis in network studies has been on the stability and shared agreement on norms, expectations, and rules using a game-analytic framework (Rhodes 1990; Blom-Hansen 1997; Klijn and Koppenjan 2000; van Buuren and Klijn 2006). The accumulation of recent counterfactual case studies however, calls into question the wisdom of such an approach. The work of Huxham (2000), Imperial (2005) and Parker (2007) among others reveal that policy networks are not as pluralistic and voluntaristic as has been thought.

The framework developed here however is precisely concerned with conflict and struggle and the way in which rules can contribute to the challenges of horizontal work. Collaborative government implicates actors and organizations to work collegially, but within a formal institutional context of responsible government. This potential contradiction of rules, among others, may limit the ability of actors to achieve stability around shared norms, expectations, and rules for horizontal work.

Support for this concept of an institutional deficit can be found in the empirical work of many others. Malloy's (2003) case study analysis of government agencies for women's and Aboriginal policy reveals that conflict can occur between government and stakeholder groups as a result of the different values and expectations that each group holds toward the relationship. Individuals in boundary-spanning positions can experience role conflict when multiple actors hold differing expectations (Lindblom 1959). They can also suffer from role ambiguity, when inadequate information exists about expectations from others, resources available, and consequences of particular actions (Malloy 2003; Kenis and Provan 2006). Network roles, according to the new institutionalism of Elinor Ostrom (1986), can be understood as *one type* of institutional rules, among many other institutional rules.

Quantitative studies are also proof of institutional deficits in networks, showing that as the frequency, duration, and intensity of interorganizational work increases, level of conflict including disagreement between members of a network also tends to decrease (Meier and O'Toole 2001). Networks open to new members tend to struggle with commitment and agreement as a result of lack of trust and lack of common purpose (Dery 2000; Daugbjerg 1997). New members not only bring their own interests, ideas, and values to a network; they also imbue the network with new rules through their actions and interactions.

Scholars have yet to directly apply the concept of an institutional deficit to understand conflict in networks and challenges of networking (the exception being the “sense-making” perspective of Termeer 2009), despite the explanatory power such an approach has to offer.³ Two explanations might account for this omission. First, the attentiveness of political scientists to the structural characteristics of networks has obscured attention to network processes, the level at which formal and informal rules operate. Second, public administration scholars have shown greater interest in managerial techniques, and thus, tend to neglect institutional variation altogether. However, if perceived rules (informed by a combination of the logic of appropriateness and the logic of consequentiality) are the intermediate variable between structure and behaviour, it seems futile to explain behaviour or the implications of structure in their absence.

³ An excellent example is Paul Sabatier's (1988) well-known and widely applied *advocacy coalition* framework of the policy process. While it acknowledges issue-based contestation as a major feature of the policy process that leads to learning about substantive policy, it is curious that this framework is entirely silent on rule-based contestation. This is unfortunate, as the advocacy coalition framework could very well be applied to better understand the process of rule contestation: different coalitions within a policy subsystem can hold different “process beliefs” and “resources”, and seek to learn the *rules in play* by observing others, while trying to shape the rules in play through their own behaviour.

Blom-Hansen's (1997) call for the incorporation of the *new institutionalism* into network theory proves to be a good starting point for operationalizing the concept of an institutional deficit. Blom-Hansen (1997) uses Ostrom's (1986) framework of institutional analysis to better understand structural variations in networks. According to Ostrom, seven types of institutional rules together structure interactions in an "action arena" (i.e. organizational setting) and are summarized in table 2.1.

Table 2.1 A New Institutional Approach to Networks

Rule Type	Description
<i>Position</i>	Specify a set of positions and how many participants hold each position
<i>Boundary</i>	Specify how participants are chosen to hold these positions and how participants leave these positions
<i>Scope</i>	Specify the set of outcomes that may be affected and the external inducements and/or costs assigned to each of these outcomes.
<i>Authority</i>	Specify the set of actions assigned to a position at a particular node
<i>Aggregation</i>	Specify the decision function to be used at a particular node to map actions into intermediate or final outcomes
<i>Information</i>	Authorize channels of communication among participants in positions and specify the language and form in which communication will take place
<i>Payoff</i>	Prescribe how benefits and costs are to be distributed to participants in positions.

Adapted from Blom-Hansen (1997)

Blom-Hansen uses this framework to compare the rules that exist within a closed *policy community* with those that typically exist within more open *issue networks*. This dissertation however, is not interested in describing how different network structures have different institutional rules but rather, how characteristics of a network affect the

experience of networking for its members, and particularly, challenges faced by civil servant members. As such, the interest here is in *rule conflict*, rather than rules per se.

The framework developed by Blom-Hansen could be improved to inform this agenda in a few ways. First, the framework was developed solely around the perspective of economic institutionalism, and thus overlooks the ways in which actor preferences and meanings associated with behaviour are socially produced (Marsh and Olsen 1872). Second, the framework assumes that rules are clear and consensual, even when they change over time, rather than emerging, uncertain, unstable, and contested, as Hajer (2003) has suggested. Finally, the perspective underemphasizes that rules are negotiated in an environment where actors have unequal power, structurally and materially. Enduring rules tend to favour those with power. Powerful actors have an incentive to retain previous rules while less powerful actors have a vested interest in developing new rules. Together then, the framework proposed by Blom-Hansen can be improved to recognize the institutional deficit in which policy networks operate, the unequal distributions of power within them, and the instrumental and sociological logics informing the behaviour of their members.

Combining the notion of institutional deficits with Blom-Hansen's application of Ostrom's (1986) seven classes of institutional rules to the network setting, we can produce a framework for the challenges faced by civil servants in interorganizational work, and one that takes the interaction between agency and structure seriously. Institutions, as informal and formal rules, not only shape the attractiveness of decision paths (logic of consequentiality), they also shape what we consider to be appropriate decision paths (logic of appropriateness). They are embedded in our relationships, rather than existing, explicitly, outside of and above them. Thus, to understand the rules

that operate within networks, we need to pay close attention to the nature of relationships within a network.

The framework proposed here is precisely concerned with explaining the experience of networking for network members. As a new relational environment, networks contain conflicting, evolving, ambiguous, and often only tacit rules that their various members bring to them (as expectations) and produce within them (in interactions). Rules that are ambiguous or contradictory can easily be broken and cause conflict between those who broke rules and those for which the rules were most important (Kickert and Koppenjan 2000). Actors can interpret their context incorrectly; they can fail to appropriately gauge the rules (and thereby, break them), or, the rules themselves, since they are emerging and often, implicit, can conflict with other rules. Any behaviour on the part of an individual to which the rule applies, becomes controversial (Malloy 2003).

Conflict can therefore result from different actors holding different and inconsistent rules or from inconsistent rules being held simultaneously by all actors. Networks, by placing individuals within an institutional deficit, increase the potential for rule conflict to occur. Conflict becomes particularly acute when the various, often incompatible rules to which actors differentially subscribe are unequally reproduced and institutionalized within the network. That is, the institutionalization of new rules over time also reflects the unequal share of power and resources between network members.

A question that this dissertation will explore is whether different types of policy networks will encounter different *sources* of rule contestation and different *degrees* of rule contestation. Over the last half-century, Canada's federal government has experimented

with different ways of structuring government to more effectively develop and implement public policy. Debate continues over how best to organize public administrations. Some policy sectors have experienced deep institutional change as a result of past waves of administrative reform. Past waves of reform targeted different government activities: regulation, prior to the 1980s, contracting and coordination in the 1980s and 1990s, and policy development in the 21st century onwards (Bakvis and Juillet 2004). While imperfect, the Canadian experience with institutional reform, differentiated across activities and policy sectors of government, constitutes a natural experiment, and therefore an opportunity to evaluate not only the framework developed here, but as well ideas for structuring government. Is rule contestation more severe in particular sectors? Are some types of rules more prone to contestation in particular sectors?

To understand better the challenges that civil servants face working interorganizationally, this dissertation will examine how challenges manifest differently and similarly for civil servants across four sites of administrative reform. It departs from the neo-institutional perspective that “actors create certain mutual shared expectations of others’ behaviour and rules that constitute situation definitions and behaviour” which underestimates the potential for rule conflict and rule ambiguity (see Klijn 1996: 101; Blom-Hansen 1997; Klijn and Teisman 1999). Actors may *think* that their expectation of others’ behaviour is mutual, but this may not be the case, particularly if there are inescapable contradictions in rules. The existing public policy literature provides indication of at least three possible instances of rule contestation along with their implications. They are rooted in civil servants’ relationships with other civil servants, stakeholder groups, and political actors and are labelled here as *divided loyalties*, *mixed hats*, and *punctuated worlds*.

Three Sources of Rule Contestation

1. Divided Loyalties & Feelings of Disempowerment

One potential source of rule contestation is within the relationship between civil servants and political masters. Canadian scholars have recently argued that “dividing loyalties” are occurring within the federal public service. Senior-level civil servants find themselves overwhelmed by political demands in an increasingly transparent political system while lower-level civil servants engage more in consultation with stakeholders, the result of societal demands for consultation and a general decline of citizen deference (Aucoin 1995; Savoie 2008a).

Divided loyalties stand to be a critical source of rule contestation in the interorganizational work of public servants. Lower-level civil servants may know little about the political game that takes place above them. Policy proposals made collaboratively within working level policy networks will not translate into policy decisions if they fail to receive approval in political networks above them. The less alignment there is between the working level and political level, the more unpredictable political network decisions will seem to members of working level networks. When there is rule contestation between the two levels of federal public service, ensuing conflict calls into question the influence of the lower-level network, whose notions of the rules may take a back seat to those of the political network. The result can be intense feelings of disempowerment among working level civil servants.

2. Many Hats & Loss of Credibility

A second potential source of network-based rule contestation is gleaned from the work of Kickert and Koppenhan (1999). These authors theorize four different interaction

styles that public actors adopt within networks. Applied here, government actors have *multiple hats* to choose from: they can abstain from network activities, participate in them as ordinary actors, impose their own solutions on the network, or manage the interaction processes through procedural instruments. *Mediating* is added to Kickert and Koppenhan's conceptualization as a fifth category, in recognition of the recent work on brokerage and state advocacy structures (Fernandez and Gould 1994; Malloy 1999b, 2001, 2003).

Table 2.2 Theories of Interest Intermediation

Government Network Behaviour in Response to Societal Interests	Corresponding state theories
Abstain	Pluralism
Participate	New Public Management
Mediate	State Advocacy Structure
Manage	Network Management
Impose	Elitism

As chapter one noted, a trade-off may exist between one's power over policy processes and one's influence over policy substance. This implies that the central network position of network manager is unstable and unsustainable. Network managers pursue policy interests *while* also mediating the network and thus play a hybrid role of network participant and network mediator. However, Fernandez and Gould (1994) have found that a mediator's structural authority in a network derives from their credibility as a neutral party. Other participants rely on mediators to receive and send information, adjusting their own beliefs and interests because of the mediator's ability to remain

neutral throughout the process. State actors in a position to mediate lose the structural aspect of that influence by participating (i.e. taking a stand) in policy events.

Empirically in Canada, horizontal initiatives overwhelming vest *ideationally* involved line departments with the role of network mediator, making lead actors also network managers, a violation of rules regarding boundaries, positions, and authorities, if indeed Fernandez and Gould's (1994) work holds in the Canadian context. Actors that attempt to merge positions mediating and participation positions in networks (using structural centrality for the pursuit of particularistic interests) might be seen as breaking the rules, the result being a loss of their credibility as a neutral third party.

3. Punctuated Worlds & Revert to Antagonism

A third source of rule contestation is based on Baumgartner and Jones's (1993) theory of agenda-setting and stands to be particularly relevant to the relationship between civil servants and stakeholders. Baumgartner and Jones have developed a model of policymaking referred to as a "punctuated equilibrium": due to path-dependent policy processes, policymaking features long periods of stability (in images, venues, and participants), only to be interrupted infrequently and momentarily by periods of instability that can result in dramatic policy change.

The concept of a *punctuated equilibrium*, applied to the relationship between network actors highlights the fragility of collegiality. Network relations may too feature stable interactions only to erupt momentarily into unstable interactions as a result of the build-up of contradictions in institutional rules that can no longer be addressed through "normal policymaking" alone. Where power-sharing is informally established rather than formally enacted, collaborative government offers procedural inclusion but not

necessarily substantive inclusion to new actors. Though collaborative relations may endure between civil servants and stakeholders for long periods of time, their relationship might be vulnerable to brief episodes of antagonism, stemming from this institutional contradiction: stakeholders can interact collegially with public servants in bureaucratic networks that informally make public policy but this does not change the stakeholders' non-collegial relationship with formal decision-makers. When informal collaboration does not lead to preferred policy outcomes, stakeholders may resort to traditional lobbying-bargaining tactics directed at counterparts in the public service. As such, collaboration between public servants and stakeholders may take place in a *punctuated world*, where antagonism punctuates relatively long enduring periods of collaboration and collegiality due to *contradicting rules*.

Collaborative government in Canada may be riddled with rule contestations, especially given the country's long history of public administration reform, which has agitated public servants' relations with other public servants, their political masters, and ultimately, citizens. It is towards this history, termed here, *the problem of governability* that this dissertation turns.

The Problem of Governability

State-society relations in Canada and beyond have undergone significant change over the last half century, propelled by changing social values, economic circumstances, demographics, and government institutions (Nevitte 1996; Inglehart 1997; Putnam 2000). In the 1970s, scholars began to write of a *legitimacy crisis*: Electoral participation rates had declined, citizens were demanding to be more substantively included in policymaking, and there seemed to be an overall growing disillusionment with politics

as usual. Ambitious policies of the 1960s and 1970s (e.g. Kennedy and Johnson's Great Society, Pearson and Trudeau's Just Society), had also fallen short of heartfelt optimism that government would fix society.

As these pressures were mounting on government, politicians' felt that their ability to control the public service was weakening. Governments had expanded in the post-WWII era to address societal problems that appeared to be increasingly complex and demanding of expert knowledge. The growing complexity of societal problems had produced a highly specialized public service that *generalist* politicians had become even more dependent upon. As the bureaucracy grew larger, it was ever more difficult for ministers to know what was going on within their departments. Delegated authority left ministers with little ability to control, and in an era of heightened public attention to scandal, control seemed even more necessary. Citizens' desire to be more involved in policymaking, through public hearings and consultations, would implicate the bureaucracy in policymaking even further.

The result of these societal pressures, combined with the ideological motivations of politicians for fiscal constraint, was that government would change. By the 1990s, suspicions had become entrenched that so-called government mandarins were wasteful and ineffective, buffered from the incentives for efficiency that exist in a competitive market, making decisions contrary to the public interest. A set of reforms to increase the responsiveness of government and transparency to the public were introduced (albeit to varying degrees) across Canada, the U.S., U.K., Australia, and New Zealand under the label, *new public management*.

Government Reorganization under the New Public Management

Since recognition of a crisis of governability, the public sector has undergone numerous changes, undertaken to strengthen administrative deference to political priorities (accountability), strategic direction of government as a whole (coordination), and the efficiency of administrative outputs (performance) (Savoie 2003: 11). While the new public management was implemented differently and to varying degrees across the western world, (indeed, many later reforms were initiated by Labour governments), what all governments subscribing to new public management shared was an enthusiasm for the application of market ideas to the administration of government. Reforms were introduced to invigorate the public service with the “right” incentives and simultaneously, move a significant portion of government work into its more appropriate domain, the market.

At the individual level, the main focus of new public management was on managerialism and entrepreneurial management that stressed individual competence, ability for decisive action, and attention to results. Its antecedent, *traditional administration* was viewed as too preoccupied with attention to detail and rule-adherence. To encourage entrepreneurial management, governments introduced new quantitative standards and performance measurements.

At the organizational level, new public management promoted the marketization of bureaucracy. Government units were to relate to one another and to other aspects of society in a contractual manner. Within the bureaucracy, this meant that government units should be independent and autonomous. *Special operating agencies* were created in Canada to facilitate the contract-based intra-governmental coordination. Public-private-partnerships (also, *alternative service delivery*) were also advocated as an efficient way of

providing public goods and services. Even the relationship between state and society was repackaged as a contractual one, citizens being referred to as clients and customers.

Finally, at the system level, new public management emphasized a preference for market-based delivery of goods and services over state-based delivery. Products and services that did not *need* (in the very technical sense) to be provided by the state, *should be* provided by the market instead, due to the greater efficiency and flexibility of private sector managerial practices and of market mechanisms, which would lead to reduced costs for and greater responsiveness to citizens.

How far did Canada go in implementing the new public management? Among states that incorporated new public management into their political rhetoric, the actual impact of new public management on government organization was modest, though significant and enduring (Aucoin 1995). Since the 1962 recommendations from the Glassco Commission under the Diefenbaker administration, Canada's civil service has undergone constant restructuring (Bourgault, Demers, and Williams 1997). In 1976, Auditor General, J.J. Macdonell quite resoundingly declared that the government had "lost, or is close to losing effective control of the public purse." The following year, Brian Mulroney's Conservatives achieved the largest majority government ever, a rare second punctuation of Conservative party rule on a nearly hundred year long record of Liberal government.

Despite the perceived crisis moment and the new leadership marshalled in to address it, the Canadian experience with new public management was not a revolutionary one. Mulroney initiated Public Service 2000 and the Ministerial Task Force on Program Review over his two terms, to cut inefficient programs, run government more like business, and make programs accessible to citizens but their

impacts were minimal; they failed to meet their stated objectives due to stunted implementation (Savoie 1995). In terms of organizational level change, less than five-percent of the public service became organized into special policy agencies (compare this to 60% in Britain) and in all cases, traditional lines of authority (with the agency head reporting to the departmental deputy minister rather than the minister) remained intact (Bakvis 2000: 77). The creation of the position of chief-of-staff and expanded allowances for other political staff did little to reduce the minister's dependence on the bureaucracy for policy expertise as the political staff lacked comparable ones (Plasse 1994).

Two reasons account for the limited implementation of new public management in Canada. One, it did not appear that the Conservative government had been particularly serious or interested in substantive public service reform in practice, although certainly the rhetoric of change had been vocalized by Mulroney on numerous occasions (who spoke of sacking public servants with "pink slips and running shoes"). Two, there had also been serious resistance by senior civil servants, whose experience of (failed) managerial reforms under Trudeau's Liberals made them increasingly cynical toward any reform that contained the whiff of *rational choice* including those advocated as part of the new public management (Aucoin 1995: 15).

Despite the limited execution and success of new public management reforms in Canada, the public service was affected by its ideas, particularly its rhetoric. An unease and suspicion crept into the relationship between the government and its administration, breaking, as Savoie has put it (2003), the traditional bargain between ministers and public servants. Deputy Ministers quit. The ones that remained tempered their advice to the political context. The Privy Council Office took charge to see the

promotion of public servants ideological compatible with the Conservative government (Bakvis 2000). Early new public management reforms did not lead to significant change in the hardware of government but the software of public administration felt its effects.

Significant change of the hardware came later, under the Liberal government of the mid-1990s. The Liberal party won the 1993 federal election on a campaign of deriding the Conservatives for, as Marcel Massé put it, “reinforcing simplistic biases” and portraying “government [and] the people who work in it...as inefficient, bureaucratic and unreliable” (Aucoin 1995: 14). Ironically, Chrétien’s Liberals facilitated some of the most severe cuts to the public service in Canada’s history under its program review and facilitated deeper government restructuring than Conservative predecessors. Consolidation of the finance portfolio began with Mulroney’s decision to abolish twenty advisory bodies (including the Economics Council of Canada) but was strengthened under Chrétien’s government. The Department of Finance saw its power grow under program review and new public management ideals of smaller government. Indeed the six tests that informed cuts under program review amounted to major tenants of new public management. Privatization of CN, devolution of airports to local authorities, commercialization of the St. Lawrence Seaway, and transfer of air navigation services to the newly created non-profit company Nav Canada, transformed the transportation portfolio of government from an operations-based department to a policy one (TBS 1996; Bakvis 2000: 83).

In sum then, new public management *reforms* of the 1980s and early 1990s were modest, but their impact was significant, and provided the basis for more substantive measures in the late 1990s. That is, the new public management in Canada had software effects under Mulroney’s Conservative government and hardware effects under

Chrétien's Liberal government, together with lasting consequences for public administration.

Revisiting New Public Management

New public management lost favour among practitioners and academics for many reasons. For one, new public management treated bureaucracy as an inherent "bad." From the belief that a politics-administration dichotomy should exist in government, it adopted the perspective from public choice theory that public servants are inherently poor managers because of the principal-agent dilemma and moral hazard on the part of the policymaker.⁴ The principal-agent dilemma inherent in bureaucratic organizations that rely on delegated authority prevents the attainment of the politics-administration dichotomy. As the assumption that a politics-administrative dichotomy should (and could) exist began to hold less sway, the rest of new public management unraveled along with it.

There were more targeted attacks on the new public management, to be sure. Some scholars argued that program review and the new public management represented nothing more than *new right* ideology. A few even charged that the proponents of new public management were directly implicated in a flashy display of clever but "plastic" rhetoric, designed to impart maximum emotive affection with minimum meaningful content (Savoie 1995, 1996; Shields and Evans 1998; Wright and

⁴ The new public management aimed to give public servants discretion over management (along the lines of "let the managers manage" ... and only manage), and strengthen politicians control over the allocation of values in public policy. In this regard, the managerial strain of new public management "reasserts the policy/administration dichotomy with a vengeance (Aucoin 1990: 127)."

Rodal 1997).⁵ For Shields and Evans (1998: 72) the new public management was simply “a technocratic veneer in a political agenda.”

In more substantive terms, program review inspired by new public management created numerous problems for the professional values, and therefore professionalism, of the public service. Emphasis on responsiveness to clients, cost-effectiveness, and risk-taking, including innovation and creativity conflicted with traditional public service values of neutrality, anonymity and life-tenure of public servants (Dwivedi and Gow 1999). Emphasis on autonomy and decentralization too undermined affinity to government-wide goals. Emphasis on management, contracting out, early retirement, and privatization also had the affect of siphoning off the policy knowledge and expertise of departments, particularly senior officials leading to a loss of organizational memory (Shields and Evans 1998; Bourgault 2007; Bakvis and Juillet 2004).

Those who stayed were at once told to do more (for citizens) using less (from elected officials). They were “given” greater managerial scope to affect change in society (act entrepreneurially), while being held to account narrowly (sometimes publically) for their actions (see Sutherland 1991). They were to be responsive to their political masters on the one hand, but needed anonymity on the other, if they are also able to provide neutral and objective advice. Attainment of both, which remains critical to the realization of “good government,” amounts to a capricious balancing act, one that had on account of new public management reform and rhetoric fixated on the principal-agent dilemma, veered too far towards political responsiveness (Bakvis 2006). Federal scientists directly felt the impact of new public management reforms. In the cases of fish

⁵ Donald Savoie has criticized Osborne and Gaebler for what he calls their deliberate use a “value-laden lexicon” which is captured in the terms “reinventing,” “re-engineering,” and “empowering.”

stocks and regulatory approval of rBST, senior public servants asked scientists at Health Canada and Fisheries and Oceans Canada to alter the presentation of their scientific findings to better reflect political preferences (see Hutchings, Walters, and Haedrich 1997; Turner 2001).

Regardless of whether the new public management is seen as an honest fix to real objective problems or the clever sales pitch of a political ideology, the new public management has impacted Canadian politics and policy making, including administration practices (Savoie 2003), policy outputs (Shields and Evans 1998), political structures (Simeon 1997), public service values (Dwivedi and Gow 1999), and notions of citizenship (Jenson and Phillips 1996). At the least, it produced an environment ripe for rule contestation, as competing values were introduced, and conflicting behaviours encouraged in political rhetoric.

From New Public Management to the New Governance

Two lasting contributions of the new public management to address the problem of governability are its focus on administration as a site of political renewal and its problematization of the government's monopoly over public program delivery. The new governance (through policy networks) that scholars now describe as having replaced new public management is concerned with these two new public management legacies. The rhetoric of the private sector being superior to the public sector has been (somewhat) discarded; what has been retained is an interest in new modes of program delivery, with interest in new modes of policymaking added. The new governance deemphasizes new public management's concern with competition to privilege the synergy and complementarity in the delivery of public goods and services (Salamon

2002). What societies want to accomplish require more than any one sector, much less any one actor in any one sector, acting independently and competitively. Wicked policy issues require something more than previous prescriptions for organizational specialization, fragmentation, and contractual interaction. Wicked policy issues require collective action and policy networks represent vehicles for their delivery.

The governance institutions (policy networks) that this dissertation seeks to understand thus find their origins in the problems that new public management sought to address (namely, issue complexity, policy internationalization, and culture change) but also the challenges it caused. Administrative fragmentation and specialization in the name of new public management increased the complexity of the public servant and created coordination problems that governments now aim to moderate (Dunleavy et al 2006).

We see ongoing efforts to overcome this fragmentation today through horizontal government. Federal and provincial governments aim to cultivate a centralizing “corporate culture” to fight the centrifugal tendencies of specialized departments. In the recent past, governments have at the most senior level, tailored hiring practices (e.g. the Leadership Network), encouraged interdepartmental mobility, hosted orientations and socialization activities (particularly for deputy ministers), provided mentoring, professional support and learning programmes, fostered interdepartmental committees, and tied performance evaluations to corporate and supra-departmental criteria (Bourgault 2007). While some of these practices reflect values of the new public management (the promotion of generalists and greater accountability on performance), on the whole, activities that strengthen and unify the policy expertise at the highest level

of the public service are fundamentally at odds with a management philosophy developed out of politicians' suspicions about the trustworthiness of public servants.

New public management reforms in Canada however, have affected more than just management. They have also led to a "hollowing out" of the state, increasing the government's dependence on non-public actors for information, resources, and expertise (Howlett 2000; Milward 1996; Rhodes 1996). This hollowing out has in turn affected the very processes of policy making in Canada, which now increasingly take the form of funding to NGOs, contacts with private and not-for-profit organizations for service delivery, and public-private partnerships (Prince 2007; Pal 1993; Howett 2000). Cutbacks to the policy function of the public service also opened the doors for management consultants and research non-profits to fill the void (Speers 2007: 407). Speers refers to this cadre of policy experts operating outside the professional and institutional norms of the public service as the "invisible private service."

Together these two movements (internal fragmentation and external policy diffusion) have altered relationships between political and administrative realms, administrative organizations themselves and between state and societal actors more broadly. In sharing policy space with external policy experts, the very content of the work that public servants do and should do has been affected. Scholars argue that public servants must hone skills that "deepen knowledge and skill in facilitation, negotiation, or advocacy (Howlett and Lindquist 2007: 105)." As Lindquist (1992: 129) suggests "public managers should go beyond furthering the interests of particular departments and where possible act in the interests of larger policy communities." Much of the existing literature prescribes and predicts a greater role for public actors in steering public policy (Hoppe and Jeliazkova 2006; Lindquist 1992).

This is not simply a throwback to the new public management's rhetoric of "steer, not row". This earlier reference to *steering* was much more a desire to separate politics from administration and to let governments let markets get things done through privatization, public private partnerships, and contracting out. More recently, the concept of steering has been used to denote a meta-governance role for government (Bruijn and Heuvelhof 1995; Howlett 2000; Mur-Veeman, van Raak, and Paulus 1999). It follows that public actors should convene interested stakeholders and facilitate their interactions towards improved public policy outcomes which would otherwise be unattainable if all actors pursued their policy ambitions uncoordinated and unilaterally (Kickert and Koppenjan 1999). The involvement of public servants in facilitating inclusion and managing the structures and processes within which policy actors participate, is heralded as the public service most relevant to complex policy process featuring actors with diverse interests and their own sources of policy knowledge (Howlett and Lindquist 2007; Prince 2007; Voyer 2007; Lindquist 1992; Atkinson and Coleman 1989; Coleman and Skogstad 1990). In other words, public servants should practice network management.

Interaction with societal actors is not a new feature of policymaking in Canada. How governments interact with other actors, however, is. Not only has interaction become more prevalent and routine, it has increasingly featured risk sharing and joint decision-making. The Treasury Board Secretariat of Canada's *horizontal initiatives database* is evidence of risk sharing and joint decision making in policymaking and delivery. Many initiatives feature governance structures that are steered entirely or jointly by what are termed, *non-federal partners*. In some cases, these partners are other governments, as in the Working Group of the Early Childhood Development Agreement

but in others, partners are affected individuals, independent experts, business organizations and organizations of civil society: the National Aboriginal Council on HIV/AIDS, the Joint Review Panel of the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Initiative, and the Canadian Biotechnology Advisory Committee. Modern policy networks are not just public-private partnerships and other contract-based tools for policy implementation popularized by the new public management but as well, voluntary, flexible, and ever changing structures for delivering but also, informing policy decisions altogether.

In sum, with expectations for what governments can get done alone scaled down from the rational-linear thinking of the 1970s and lessons learned from the privileging of one sector over others during the late 1980s and 1990s, a new emerging logic of government emphasizes collaboration. This prompts the question, how are public servants being affected by the growing emphasis that the Canadian government has now placed on collaborative government?

Case Selection

This study of policymaking through networks acknowledges that policy sectors inherit institutional legacies from past waves of reform. Canada's experience with new public management and recent interest in collaborative government provides an opportunity to evaluate past government reform. In particular, we can assess whether past reforms support civil servants in doing interorganizational work, selecting cases of horizontal government from policy sectors associated with each period of reform.

The Canadian experience with collaborative government proves to be an excellent arena in which to study the behaviour of public actors. The diversity and abundance of existing collaborative arrangements in Canada allows for the study of

maximum variation in behavioural and structural network characteristics (Marshall and Rossman 2006). Of major⁶ collaborative initiatives alone in Canada, over fifty were active over 2007-2008 alone.

A second reason to situate this study within Canadian concerns the dearth of studies of network management in Canada. The paucity of empirical research in this latter area is disconcerting. Studies undertaken elsewhere have concluded that network management is difficult and demanding work that is also extremely volatile, often with greater consequences for policy than traditional bureaucratic management (Agranoff and McGuire 1998; Bruijn and Heuvelhof 1995; Goldsmith and Eggers 2004; Van Buuren and Klijn 2006). While there has been explicit recognition and affirmation of new and fundamentally different forms and processes of government in Canada (Coleman and Perl 1999; Howlett and Ramesh 2003; Lindquist 1996), an understanding of these new processes is found wanting, the implication being that public management theory now falls behind its practice (Agranoff and McGuire 2001; Goldsmith and Eggers 2004; McGuire 2002).

Finally, macro context matters to policy networks. Studies of Canadian political institutions indeed reveal that macro-structures matter to public policy outputs (see Franks 1987, Docherty 1997). A focus on Canada can illuminate the impact of such factors as globalization, federalism, multi-nations, and parliamentary-cabinet government as they impact networks and network behaviours. A focus on Canada also serves a normative and practical purpose, informing researchers and domestic

⁶ Major horizontal initiatives are defined by the Treasury Board Secretariat as those that have allocated been federal funding in excess of \$100 million over its life *and/or* fall under one of the government priorities *and/or* are publically visible.

practitioners understanding of what governments do and can do to realize their governance ambitions.

Four instances of collaborative government were chosen for case study analysis from the *Horizontal Results Database* produced by the Treasury Board Secretariat of Canada. They are (a) the Mackenzie Gas Project and induced oil and gas exploration and development activities in the Northwest Territories, (b) Team Canada Inc, (c) the Federal Initiative to Address HIV/AIDS in Canada, and (d) the Sector Council Program.

Theoretical replication demands that cases differ along variables considered important to the researcher while literal replication is concerned with the reliability of findings, in particular, demonstrating convincingly that a general phenomenon does exist (Yin 2003). As such, multiple cases were chosen and data collected from multiple individuals within each case.

It is important to stress that within case studies, individual cases are not sampling units from which inferences can be made and applied to all possible cases, but rather, separate pieces of evidence that inform the specification of theory. The generation of a theory from a case or from a set of cases cannot be assumed to apply to all other cases; only through further testing and analysis in other contexts can such conclusions be reached. Sampling logic behind statistical inference is fundamentally at odds with the case study approach, since researchers specifically employ the case study approach to offers context-laden analysis: this involves collection on such a large number of potentially important variables that sample sizes large enough (i.e. degrees of freedom) to allow for statistical inference would be impossible to obtain (Yin 2003). Sampling aimed at generalizations from case(s) to theory calls instead for the variables identified within theoretical propositions to be incorporated into case selection, so to

make possible comparisons between like and unlike cases (Bryman 1988; Marshall and Rossman 2006; Silverman 2005; Yin 2003).

In selecting these cases, I used two conditions for inclusion, informed by the study's theoretical framework and taking into account the largely exploratory purposes of this dissertation. First, all cases represent collaborative-type arrangements. I selected the theoretically informed cases from the Treasury Board of Canada's database of current horizontal initiatives with partnerships between at least one lead department and another organization representing a department, government, industry sector, or segment of civil society.

Because public servants involved in each initiative are also involved in intraorganizational work, a sufficient control mechanism was built into the study's design. In addition, public servants were invited to make comparisons between their inter- and intra-organizational work (see Appendix C). Furthermore, public servants with little experience with collaboration were also included in the interviews, along with regional public servants and central agency staff. Finally, the four horizontal initiatives that were selected offered a large degree of variation on the frequency and intensiveness of interorganizational work, such that a control case study was unnecessary. This point was confirmed when during the data-collection stage, a true control case was difficult to find. All substantive policy initiatives in the federal public service involve some degree of interorganizational work, comparable in intensiveness and frequency to the work involved in the least "horizontal" of the four initiatives that were finally selected. This is not surprising given Hall and O'Toole's (2000: 683) large-N study of public administration in the United States, which too, found that the great majority of federal programs exist in an institutional setting that is "multiorganizational and networked

rather than unitary and unambiguously hierarchical.” This led them to conclude that “intergovernmental and/or cross-sectoral involvement [are] more the rule than the exception.”

The second selection rule was that cases feature variation on network characteristics that stand to be important according to the theoretical propositions. A review of the policy literature suggests that the purpose and structure of a network will affect the kinds of challenges its members will face. Indeed, Agranoff's (2007) investigation of work within fourteen different networks finds that different networks engage in different degrees of collaboration. This work further suggests that some activities are more difficult to do collaboratively than others. In particular, information sharing is a relatively low-cost activity for members, while joint policy development entails higher costs for members in terms of risk and autonomy. This can further result in goal uncertainty or ambiguity (Koppenjan and Klijn 2004; Huxham and Vangen 2005). If rule contestation is a serious threat to network functioning, we would assume that networks that demand high levels of networking or entail institutional contradictions (such as, decisions with zero-sum consequences) for members will face greater challenges with networking.

Such an approach lends itself well to the Canadian context. As a result of a long history of public service reform, different policy sectors in Canada have experienced differing degrees of institutional reform. Networking takes place differently across policy sectors, in part due to the ideas associated with the distinct periods of past administrative reform. Horizontal government around natural resource development confronts a sector that has traditionally engaged in regulatory activity, an inheritance from a heavily command and control era of public administration. In the area of labour

market issues, contracting and corporatism have been a fundamental way of operating, and find their roots in the new public management ideas of the 1980s and early 1990s. International trade is an area affected by ideas of new public management. Unlike labour market issues, it was seen as a victim of organizational fragmentation and thus subject to prescriptions for ambitious, comprehensive, policy and program coordination in the late 1990s. Finally, some policy sectors were recently targeted for joint policy development, out of political interest in facilitating greater cooperation and collegiality between government and civil society. Across environmental policy, policy for women, and the public health sector, the federal government has expressed a desire to want to end antagonistic relations.

While collaborative government is occurring across policy fields, it is structured differently and structured around different types of activities as examined here: regulation, contracting, coordination, and policy development. To understand the challenges that federal civil servants face in doing interorganizational work, comparison must be made across the wide range of structures and purposes for which interorganizational work is undertaken, and with sensitivity to the institutional inheritances of past waves of administrative restructuring. Savoie (2000) has made the point that we still know very little about how best to structure government ("what works?"), despite nearly half a century of administrative reform and this lends further urgency to a study of this design. In aiming to understand the challenges involved in new ways of organizing government, we must be cognoscente of how past ways of organizing government continue to have implications for work in policy sectors. Collaborative government does not occur in the same way across policy sectors, the

result of how different policy sectors were uniquely organized during past waves of administrative reform.

This presents an interesting opportunity to actually address Savoie's observation and answer the question: are some ways of doing government work (regulating, contracting, coordinating, or policymaking), easier to do through collaboration?

Collaborative government in policy sectors featuring these different approaches to doing government work were chosen for this study. The first case, the Mackenzie Gas Project, deals with a command and control-type activity (regulation) and was chosen to capture the experience of collaboration in an area with traditional policy outputs. The Sector Council Program was selected as an instance of contractual and bi-partite work, which gained favour under the new public management. Run by Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, this program provides seed money, project funding and policy expertise to sector-based stakeholder partnerships (sector councils) in order to help promote labour mobility, adjustment, and skills development. This is in contrast to the multi-departmental initiative, Team Canada Inc, which operates in the policy area of international business development. This policy area has experienced fragmentation and reorganization, with program cuts in the 1990s amounting to \$292 million in Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada alone. It was targeted under the last wave of new public management as a policy area in need of greater consolidation and coordination. The fourth case, the Federal Initiative to Address HIV/AIDS in Canada, was chosen because of recent interest of the federal government in joint policy development and collegial engagement with civil society, a product of new governance ideas.

Table 2.3 Summary of Case Selection

THEORY		CASE SELECTION	
<i>Phase of Administrative Reform</i>	<i>Site of Government Activity Informing Reform</i>	<i>Policy Sector</i>	<i>Horizontal Initiative</i>
Traditional Public Administration	Regulation-based public outputs	Environmental Assessment in Oil and Gas Development	Mackenzie Gas Project
New Public Management <i>Part One</i>	Bilateral, <i>contract</i> -based government-stakeholder relations	Human Resource Issues	Sector Council Program
New Public Management <i>Part Two</i>	Consolidation of fragmented bureaucracy through departmental coordination	International Trade	Team Canada Inc
New Governance	New <i>joint decision-making</i> with stakeholders	HIV/AIDS and Public Health	Federal Initiative to Address HIV/AIDS in Canada

While other combinations of cases met the above criteria, these four initiatives were attractive because they provided the best fit with the case selection rules and in addition, represented opportunities for theoretical development on additional grounds. For one, Team Canada Inc was terminated in 2008, inviting a fuller exploration of the dependent variable: the challenges associated with interorganizational work. The initiative also featured, at one point in time, a membership of twenty-three federal organizations in contrast to the membership in the Sector Council Program, which is limited to one public agency. As this department engages with other organizations on a bilateral, case-by-case basis in the pursuit of its organizational goals, Sector Council Program is simultaneously the least complex and most “hierarchical” horizontal initiative. Few other federal horizontal initiatives in the Treasury Board Secretariat database featured such clear departmental ownership of an initiative. Only the Co-operatives Secretariat out of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada is similar to the Sector Council Program both in purpose and structure but the latter was the better fit because it

draws a department – Human Resources and Social Development Canada – into the study that is not a member of any of the other initiatives. While it would be interesting to investigate the challenges (both how they persist and/or differ) for a single department engaged in multiple networks, this study aims to explore variables at the individual, organizational, and network level, rather than privileging one (e.g. network impacts on one organization) over another (e.g. organizational impacts on one individual). Good reasons for this exist. Previous studies show that no one variable alone (institutions, processes, actors), accounts for very much of the effectiveness of policy networks (see Provan and Milward 1995; Meier and O’Toole 2001). Indeed, it is highly likely that these variables interact and that this interaction (actors in the context of institutions; processes in the context of particular actors) explains the greatest variance (see Meier and O’Toole 2008). As such, multiple networks, organizations, and participants were included in this study.

The Mackenzie Gas Project was also an ideal case as it not only meets the selection criteria, but is also a regional initiative and thus, might produce additional insights about intergovernmental collaboration. Guided by the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, it is one of the most formalized instances of collaboration in the federal government.

Data Sources and Collection

Because this research aims to integrate both structural and behavioural factors in a study of policy networks, the design for this dissertation incorporates multiple data collection methods, drawing from data sources that engage public actors on their perceptions, ideas, and experiences (interviews) as well as their activities and

interactions (interviews and documents). This approach allows for examination of both what public actors do and their understanding of why they do it. Studies restricted in scope to the *observation* of actors within networks will fall short of achieving a comprehensive understanding of agency because the cognitive maps and preference formations that inform actors' behaviours will go under-examined in such analyses. An individual's behaviour is largely the result of their interpretation of their context (Hay 2004; Kisby 2007). As such, this study draws primarily from in-depth interviews conducted with public actors involved within each instance of collaborative government selected for this study. The study also draws from a range of government, media, and non-public documents as they pertain to each collaborative initiative in order to compare actors' interpretations with their actual context. This included annual reports (e.g. RPPs), business plans, and other significant public statements of agency priorities, planning, and activities. Following Malloy's (2003) approach (cf. Mathur and Skelcher 2007), a point was made of discussing the relevant documents during the interviews.

Selection of Interview Subjects

This study is based on research interviews with federal public servants involved with the four selected instances of collaborative government. The inclusion criteria for participants in the study were (a) federal civil servants that were (b) directly involved in one or more of the four horizontal initiatives. These non-attributed interviews were supplemented by interviews with two central agency officials. For the Mackenzie Gas Project case, an interview was conducted with a public servant with the Government of the Northwest Territories, in addition to Yellowknife-based federal public servants. Appendix B includes a list of the participating agencies and departments as provided by

the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat's *Horizontal Results Database*. Based on department's *reports on plans and priorities* (RPPs) and *departmental performance reports* (DPRs), detailed information on horizontal initiative partners was collected, from which interview candidates were identified and contacted. Forty-five of seventy contacted public servants up to the level of director general agreed to and participated in an interview.

Data Analysis Technique

The data analysis technique employed in this study followed many of the strategies outlined in Yin's *Case Study Research: Method and Design*. This study relied on an early case study protocol (see Appendix A), the construction of a chain of evidence and a case study database. The main analytical technique employed to "make sense" of the data involved pattern-matching logic: constant comparisons made between excerpts from interviews and documents ("data points") and between hypotheses (based on theory) and results (based on the data points).

In order to conduct pattern-matching, each one-hour interview was transcribed and uploaded to QSR International's NVIVO qualitative research software program. Interviews were reviewed multiple times to identify themes, subsequently coded. NVivo software allows for the same passage to be coded on multiple themes (called, nodes) and for themes to be nested within each other. Thus, the parent categories of, "challenges to collaboration" and "reasons for collaboration", were made and within them, further themes developed. In total, 190 nodes were created and were linked to other nodes on evidence of causation contained within the data points.

The purpose of coding is to bring out terms and concepts of interest either in order to better compare data points within interviews and across interviews (Bloomberg and Volpe 2008). This process took multiple rounds of coding and of reading and re-reading the interview material. Initial codes were “free nodes” (lacking any hierarchy of terms or concepts) and were very specific (for example, one original code was “organization excluded from network due to lack of visibility”). These initial codes were then aggregated into larger categories of nested (hierarchical) codes: “lack of visibility” became a folder contained interview data points nested in a larger folder “exclusion” nested in a parent folder “challenges of collaboration”. Initial free nodes such as “tension between sectoral and generalist departments” (made 32 times across 23 interviews) and “tension across levels of government” (made 31 times across 18 interviews) also became grouped together (remaining separate subcategories) under the new parent category “challenges within relationships”.

Since the same data point can be coded multiple times, relationships between codes could also be quantified. “Difficulty with lead department” was mentioned in twenty-four interviews, altogether fifty-five times, and also occurred in passages tagged for “tension between sectoral and generalist departments” across fifteen interviews, cuing a closer consideration of the overlapping interview material, and the exploration of the thesis that the role of the lead department in horizontal initiatives results in tension between sectoral and generalist departments.

Content analysis was also conducted to determine the relative importance of terms and concepts by noting their frequencies. The challenges of interorganizational work were determined by the overlap between two inductively developed categories: “things important for collaboration” and “things difficult to achieve in collaboration”,

which were formed into a new inductively developed category, “challenges of collaboration”, under which each type of challenge remained a sub-category. *Motivation, contribution, openness, visibility, involvement of the ‘right’ people, morale, sense of ownership, clarity, common understanding, entrepreneurialism, and interorganizational awareness* were among the initial sub-categories. Similar sub-categories of challenges were made into larger sub-categories, based on cues from within the coded content. The result was four broad sub-categories of challenges – inclusion, commitment, collegiality, and agreement – which became associated within a matrix of three types of relationships – interdepartmental, hierarchical, and state-society – around which the dissertation was ultimately structured.

Validity and Reliability

Several decisions were taken to increase the validity and reliability of the study’s findings. Multiple cases, multiple interviews within each case, and multiple data sources (including interviews and documents) were used so that findings could be confirmed by more than one source. Transcription of interviews (with participant feedback), software data coding, pattern-matching approach, and presentation of raw data throughout the dissertation help to strengthen the study’s credibility and ensure that causal relations inferred from the observed relationships are valid ones. While findings cannot be assumed to apply to any other contexts, the disclosure of contextual information throughout the dissertation allows the reader to make strong judgements about settings in which the findings may or may not have some applicability.

Conclusion

This chapter presented the dissertation's research design. It introduced a framework of rule contestation to inform the research questions and overviewed the project's case selection. The chapter overviewed various data sources and collection methods, notably primary use of in-depth interviews and secondary use of documents to answer the research questions. It closed with a description of the data analysis technique and explained how issues of validity and reliability were addressed.

This dissertation now turns to the four cases of interest. Collaboration characterizes work within the Mackenzie Gas Project, the Federal Initiative to Address HIV/AIDS in Canada, the now defunct Team Canada Inc, and the Sector Council Program but how it takes place differs dramatically across the initiatives. Peculiarities punctuate each case as well. The Sector Council Program is a vertical initiative, yet a collaborative one, containing significant interorganizational work. The Mackenzie Gas Project features the most commitment from departments but the least collegial interdepartmental relations. Team Canada Inc is an initiative marked by both the most success and failure among the four cases. It once boasted twenty-three members, produced joint outputs that attracted the attention of foreign governments, and received numerous public service awards. Yet, it is the only initiative out of the four to have experienced the ultimate indicator of failure: termination. Finally, the Federal Initiative to Address HIV/AIDS in Canada was touted the first of its kind for its degree of societal engagement around policymaking, but it also amounts to the least ambitious and least collaborative initiative of the four, in terms of shared outputs. As it will become apparent, the intergovernmental and interorganizational work of federal public servants

is messy business and by no means the mundane, rule-bound, implementation stuff conjured up in popular images of public bureaucracy.

3 OVERVIEW OF CASE STUDIES

Team Canada Inc

In 1997, the Clerk of the Privy Council wrote a letter to the Deputy Ministers of Industry Canada, the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada asking them to develop a whole-of-government approach to the export services offered by the Government of Canada. International trade had until then been an organizational nightmare: no single organization had the responsibility for delivering services related to export development. The general mandate for international trade was divided between Industry Canada and the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT). Industry Canada had the mandate for borders-in trade, which included international trade centres that would assist businesses to become “export ready” and DFAIT had the mandate for borders-out trade, which is supported by its international posts.

Other “sectoral” departments – Heritage Canada, Fisheries and Oceans, and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada – also had borders-in and borders-out responsibilities for particular sectors complicating the international trade portfolio further. The result was not only duplication of products and services – one respondent noted that before Team Canada Inc, “at least eight different publications related to export start-up” existed – but as well, large gaps in services. The progression from borders-in services under Industry Canada to borders-out services under DFAIT was not a formally integrated one, and resulted in a lack of leadership from any department

on those aspects of the *export services continuum* that fell in the middle. Departments worked in silos. As one respondent put it:

No single department would claim responsibility for that. Industry [Canada] would say, "Oh it is not our responsibility." Everyone needs to have it done but it was no one's responsibility. That was really the *raison d'être* to have everyone coordinate their efforts.

While the organizational structure in government for international trade was not ideal, an obvious solution did not exist for dealing with it. A unique aspect of the policy area is its size, which carries multiple sectoral and non-sectoral policy implications. At the federal government level alone, twenty different agencies, crown corporations and departments have a responsibility in international trade, whether it be *sectoral* as in Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, *regional*, as in Western Economic Diversification, *functional* as in the Export Development Corporation, or *general/strategic* as in Industry Canada. Outside of the federal government household, there are other players: provincial, territorial, and municipal governments, foreign governments, and businesses and business associations, all of which require some degree of interaction for the international trade portfolio to be managed efficiently and effectively.

To address administrative problems with international business development (IBD), the Liberal party announced in the party's 1993 *Red Book* their intent to create a new trade agency for Canada, an objective later abandoned as financially unattractive. In its place the federal government announced the creation of Team Canada Inc (TCI) , a "virtual trade agency." It would have no legal status and would serve as a coordinating body of federal departments and agencies with a mandate and/or interest in export-readiness services for Canadian businesses (Team Canada Inc 2002). In its first three

years, Team Canada Inc operated with only three members (the initiating departments) but lack of funding necessitated the expansion of the program to other members:

Despite the fact that this organization was recommended by the Clerk of the Privy Council, there was no money that came with it. And that's why he went to three well funded departments initially and set, go forth and multiply. And they did in fact. Those three departments grew into 23 after three years.

At its largest, TCI stood at twenty-three members, taken from federal departments and agencies. However, in the final days of TCI, department participation declined to eight; director general-level attendance at interdepartmental meetings became delegated activities, and work began to turn towards how to dismantle TCI in a way that would ensure the continuation of services, programs, and important sites of coordination (Team Canada Inc 2007a, 2007b).

1997-1999: What's our Mandate?

Team Canada Inc had cryptic beginnings. On one hand, trade issues enjoyed a prominent place on the government agenda. Prime Minister Chrétien had initiated the *Team Canada Missions* in 1994, and its success prompted the government to set up a complementary agenda at home. The Speech from the Throne in February 1996 laid out the government's intentions to develop "new measures to enhance export development." Weeks later, then Minister of International Trade, Art Eggleton specified these plans in parliament, announcing the creation of what sounded like a new trade agency for Canada:

Canadians are well aware of the Prime Minister's highly successful "Team Canada" missions abroad ... These missions show just how much Canadians can achieve when we work together. Now we must borrow the same approach at home in order to increase the number of companies trading abroad. To this end we have built a domestic Team Canada, in partnership with relevant federal departments and agencies, the provinces and the private sector. Its mission is to help existing exporters find new markets and to ensure that all Canadian

exporters have access to the best possible intelligence about world markets. Over the next three months, all of the partners -- at the federal level, in the provinces and the private sector -- will be determining what sectors and what markets we should be keying in on.

The minister's speech laid out some specific tasks of the new agency: to attract companies with export potential, help them to gain access to existing government services, and thereby further their export capacity and involvement.

The announcement by Minister Eggleton alerted public servants at Industry Canada and DFAIT into action. According to one public servant, they immediately began looking for cues of what to do next. Did the announcement really mean the creation of a new trade agency? If so, how was that to be accomplished? The intent became clearer when the Clerk of the Privy Council wrote to the three deputy ministers asking them to develop an "integrated trade business plan... to be presented annually by the Minister of International Trade to the Treasury Board," thus, in essence, the development of a "virtual trade agency." From early discussions between the deputy ministers, the idea of a tightly coordinated approach to international business development through horizontal mechanisms, "Team Canada Inc," was born. The initiative was formally announced by International Trade Minister Sergio Marchi in October 1997, just a few months following the re-election of the Liberal government. Marchi set out the purpose of Team Canada Inc as twofold. On the policy side, it was to improve the effectiveness of government policies on international business development through an "integrated, results-oriented business plan." The program side had the aim of providing businesses with 24-hour "single window" access to information and other government tools related to international business development (DFAIT 1997).

Between the Clerk's letter in 1997 and 1999, the three deputy ministers and their staff worked together to develop Team Canada Inc's approach. The first two TCI staff were seconded from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. During this period, TCI's first initiative, the Export Source website and toll-free information service were launched. Industry Canada volunteered to house and run Export Source as its contribution to the horizontal initiative. By the end of its first year, ExportSource received a public service award and GTEC gold medal for its innovative horizontal service delivery.

By 1999 however, it became evident that if Team Canada Inc was going to deliver on its mandates, it would need the support of other departments and agencies. A key feature of Team Canada Inc was that while political support had (single handedly) driven the initiative into being, no funding had been made available to the departments and no new structures were created to support the initiative. It remained in its entirety a virtual agency. Each of the three deputy ministers approached their assistant deputy ministers, tasking them to go out into the federal household and draw in more members.

1999-2000: Expansion

It was decided that TCI would be divided into two tiers of members, an executive level which would contribute more funding and be more actively involved in the joint initiative, and a more general membership, comprised of supporting departments and agencies. Executive members would contribute \$150,000 annually to the horizontal initiative and general members would contribute \$50,000.

TCI saw significant activity in its first ten years of operation. A government-wide information guide on exporting was developed to replace the eight department-level publications existing previously. The first *Going Global* workshop series was also

created, in conjunction with the Forum for International Trade Training (FITT). TCI's membership grew significantly, peaking at twenty-three members in 2000.

Team Canada Inc Products and Activities

Export Services Continuum

As a way of mapping the federal government's existing responsibilities and services related to export development, TCI developed the *Export Services Continuum*, after conducting cross-Canada federal and provincial consultations. For many former TCI members interviewed, the continuum served as a foundation for their work as part of TCI. It distinguished the three stages of export development (Potential Exporter, Preparing Exporter, and Experienced Exporter) which correspond to six activities that government had been involved in (e.g. general information and skills development under Potential Exporter). Under each of the six activities was a listing of specific services offered by the government. These services ranged from general information (on markets and export development), to training programs, funding (for market development, financing for long-term foreign buyers), public enterprise (trade missions, fairs, related events), and more specialized information services.

ExportSource.ca and the Toll-free Export Information Service

The exportsource.ca website was established in 1997 to provide businesses with "the most comprehensive source of online export information." The website provided businesses with access to interactive tools and tutorials, informational guides (such as the Step-by-Step Guide to Exporting), and links to other resources and expertise existing at other levels of government or within universities or non-profit organizations. Export Diagnostic was a tool that would evaluate a business's "export readiness" and provide

feedback on how to become more “export ready.” The portal linked businesses to the trade database, TradeMap Canada, to export-related financing services available online through EDC, to information on the importing service, and provincial and regional export products and services as well.

The 1-888 Export Information Service was also launched in 1997, as a joint initiative between TCI and Canada Business (CB). It targeted small to medium enterprises (SMEs) in the first stage along the *Export Services Continuum*, those that are seeking general information on exporting as potential exporters. Information officers with Canada Business would respond to telephone inquiries, and if necessary, refer SMEs to the appropriate TCI partner. The toll-free telephone service was expanded in 2004 to allow for inquiries to be made through the ExportSource.ca website directly. As such SMEs could access this service by telephone, fax, in person, mail, e-mail, and website.

Step-by-Step Guide to Exporting and Roadmap to Exporting

Although more than ten information products were produced over TCI’s life, the most popular ones were also the initiative’s flagship publications: the Step-by-Step Guide to Exporting and the Roadmap to Exporting. Both publications were updated every few years and organized by the Export Services Continuum. The former publication outlined the government’s expertise on export development while the latter provided specific detailed information and guidance to SMEs on developing an export plan, establishing a target market, constructing a marketing strategy, selecting a method of market entry, working with shippers, financing exports, and taking advantage of e-business opportunities.

Going Global workshop series

Since the majority of TCI's clients were small to medium sized enterprises (SMEs), TCI wanted to be able to offer them an alternative to the "45-hour course at a local college." As such, they created a new series of half-day workshops, entitled, *Going Global workshops*, in conjunction with the Forum for International Trade Training (FITT), a sector council under HRSDC's Sector Council Program. It was revenue neutral for TCI (its only costs being curriculum development) in that FITT, as their partner, hired and paid for teachers and organized the program. In turn, TCI contributed \$30,000 to FITT to develop new workshop curriculums. In one year, various partners from development banks to municipal offices offered the course altogether over fifteen hundred times across Canada. FITT had a standard curriculum and instructor manual that it sold to partners for a minimal cost; those partners could then transform those courses however they liked, in some cases, generating a profit through registration fees. TCI considered this to be one of its most innovative and successful programs. It was able to leverage its funds within another department's initiative (here, the Sector Council Program). As one secretariat member explained:

FITT and Team Canada Inc became kind of joined at the hip so whenever FITT is doing an event, they are giving out our materials. They had their FITT skills courses; we had our joint Going Global courses; we had our publications; so when they were mailing out stuff to their new students, they'd be including our stuff and they become one of our really important partners.

TCI Partners

The idea to create a *TCI partners* program emerged from an exchange between TCI's secretariat and a business owner from Thunder Bay. The business owner had called the TCI secretariat after having seen the Export Source publication, to buy fifty

copies for an export seminar she was organizing in northern Ontario. When she found out that the publications were free, she was ecstatic:

She wanted to know how much they were and how much would shipping be and we immediately called her and said, well Stacey, these are available at no cost; we'll pay for shipping and by the way, here's three other things we can do for you and if you need a speaker, we can probably arrange that with one of our other partners.

Its services had been freely available to industry groups but in the absence of publicity and concept of membership, few event organizers had thought to approach TCI.

Following the incident, TCI developed a partnership program. It went out to industry events and signed up organizations to be partners. In return, partners received monthly e-newsletter promoting TCI initiatives; they also received coded access to a website where they could order more products, all at no cost (including shipping) and obtained license to use the TCI logo at their events.

Funding to the Regional Trade Networks

Ten Regional Trade Networks are co-lead by a Senior Trade Commissioner in each region and a provincial government representative. Together, they tailor TCI's aforementioned products and services to meet the needs of exporters and potential exporters in the regions.

2001-2003: Formalization

By 2000, membership of TCI had grown extensively, but there was a feeling that the initiative was beginning to lose some of its earlier focus. A survey of TCI members highlighted some concerns amongst members about the administrative burden of membership and insufficient internal communications. At a follow-up retreat, the directorate sought to regain members' commitment to the initiative. This exercise

seemed to be successful, if only temporarily. “Roadmap to Exporting” was re-published. Support to the Regional Trade Network was increased, and the TCI directorate was expanded to five staff members.

In 2001, a governance framework was also approved thereby formalizing the initiative. The framework outlined the roles, responsibilities, and relations between the TCI management board, executive committee, directorate, and working groups. Working groups were comprised of officials-level public servants representing member departments and agencies and reported to the TCI Directorate. The TCI Directorate was initially housed at Industry Canada but was moved to DFAIT in 2003 during a major reorganization of the trade portfolio. Six officials were staffed in the Directorate. The mechanism used for staffing was secondment from host department with salaries paid for through TCI membership fees. The Directorate reported to the Executive committee which was comprised on a volunteer basis of some members of the TCI Management Board. Long term members of the executive committee included DFAIT, Industry Canada, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Canadian Heritage, and Natural Resources Canada. Finally, the TCI Management Board was comprised of director general level staff from each member organization and reported to the Deputy Ministerial Committee on International Business Development (IBD).

2004-2007: Attempts at Renewal

By 2004, challenges that had previously emerged for TCI had re-emerged and re-intensified. Attendance of senior-level officials was declining, as was membership (dwindling to fourteen members in 2005) and interest in the initiative overall. The last meeting of the deputy ministers had occurred over a year prior. One clear pressure was

coming from the Government of Canada's new program rationalization exercise, the Expenditure Review Program. The Expenditure Review Committee was created in December 2003 as part of a pro-active strategy to counter negative public perception of government as the Sponsorship Scandal unfolded.⁷ The committee was mandated to review all government program expenditures to ensure a) "value for money" for Canadians, b) re-allocation of resources within departments to high level priorities, and c) better program delivery. The Expenditure Review Program amounted to five policy tests and five implementation tests that were remarkably reminiscent of the 1993 Program Review. Decline in TCI membership has been attributed in part to the financial constraints associated with the government's implementation of Expenditure Review Program. Departments that discontinued their membership either cited new fiscal constraints as an obstacle to securing discretionary funding, or a disjuncture between the department's mandate and the activities to which joint funds were being allocated under TCI.

As a result of declining membership, TCI began to struggle to secure stable funding for its year-to-year operations. Since the initiative had no direct funding (there had been from time to time, funding for particular services, such as the Government Online Initiative and Brand Canada but this funding had since run out), fluctuations in

⁷ The sponsorship scandal emerged in February 2004, when Canada's Auditor General revealed that senior members of the Liberal party had directed \$100 million of a \$250 million fund to advertising and communication agencies associated with the Liberal Party of Canada. This episode of government indiscretion implicated elected officials, bureaucrats, and political staff, and staggeringly brought to light the difficulty of reconciling new public management with the Westminster model regarding government accountability and the perversions of ministerial accountability. In this case, no one was actually held accountable for the misuse of public funds amounting to illegal activity, within the sponsorship program administered by Public Works and Government Services.

membership severely limited TCI's ability to maintain the same level of products and services to Canadian exporters from year to year.

With the membership down to 16 in 2004, the initiative was forced to shut down some of its programs, including Brand Canada and the Program for Export Market Development (Team Canada Inc 2004). In one month (April) alone, three departments – Transport Canada, Indian and Northern Affairs, and the Business Development Bank of Canada – terminated their membership, resulting in an immediate shortfall of \$150,000 for the initiative (Team Canada Inc 2004b). The Government of Canada's international policy statement citing "new global supply chains" exacerbated TCI's funding challenges further. A horizontal initiative dedicated solely to exports began to look a little old and outdated in the context of SMEs in the business of a whole range of international development activities: exporting, importing, investment, and innovation. As a result, TCI became a priority of neither budget-strapped departments, nor a supply-chain oriented federal government. The minutes for the January 2005 meeting of the Executive Committee paint a somber picture of TCI's future:

The "worst case scenario" assumes a \$1 million budget based on contributions from 14 members (including 3 executive members). This scenario will have a severe impact on what TCI can deliver and may impede the value it provides to some of its members (this could result in a further decline in membership) and to its clients. Under this scenario, few new tools would be developed; a reduced level of promotion would take place and the Regional Trade Networks would be hardest hit as all of their direct funding would be eliminated (Team Canada Inc 2005).

In November 2004, TCI undertook a "visioning" exercise, hoping to establish a better way forward, both in terms of focus and funding. The aim of the exercise was to revisit TCI's existing mandate, determine whether it should be revised, and develop options for how TCI should be funded in the future. Three working sessions were held

with TCI's Executive Committee and Management Board and findings from the consultations were presented to both structures separately the following spring, with their recommendations carried up to the Deputy Minister Committee Meeting on International Business Development. By spring of 2005, another member, the National Research Council, had left the initiative, bringing membership down to 15 federal bodies. That April, three options were presented to (and subsequently, rejected by) the Executive Committee and Management Board. The first option was the status quo: keep TCI focused on export preparedness and fund all initiatives through membership fees. The second option was to shift the focus towards strategic issues: special international business development projects would be jointly identified, delivered and funded by TCI members but TCI overall would have lower membership fees as its core products and services would now be funded through Industry Canada or ITCanada's A-base. The third option was a twist on the second one: special IBD projects would be jointly identified, delivered and funded by TCI members; TCI would maintain accountability for core products and services, but these services would also be evolved to better reflect changing government priorities as they relate to IBD. Finally, TCI would be funded through a combination of a host department's A-base, membership fees, and user-fees for specific value-added products and services to clients.

By October 2005, another proposal had been drafted to revitalize TCI. Drawing from the previous options, TCI would re-orient itself towards international commerce broadly, initiating programs and services strategically. To this end, the TCI Management Board would be reconceived as an interdepartmental international commerce advisory board. The existing export products and services would still be offered to Canadian businesses. As for funding, government departments and agencies

“mandated” in international commerce would contribute \$50,000 annually, \$10,000 to support the operation of the advisory board, and \$40,000 to cover the costs of service delivery. Government departments and agencies “implicated” in international commerce would contribute only \$10,000 annually, all of which would go towards funding the operation of the advisory board. Finally, \$100,000 would be collected annually from departments and agencies with a regional economic development mandate, all of which would be allocated to the operation and activities of the Regional Trade Networks.

None of these proposals managed to capture the interest of the deputy ministers or ministers within the member departments and as time went by, the membership became difficult to continue to sustain. Funding for TCI flattened out. TCI members waited to see what the political actors were doing (an election, reorganization of the trade portfolio, and ministerial announcement of the Global Commerce Strategy had all occurred during TCI’s crisis period), including what the new Global Commerce Strategy would entail and how TCI might be able to reorient itself to attract funding under the priority. However, minutes from both the executive committee and management board reflect a bit frustration on the part of working level civil servants; each meeting would pass with the update that no update was possible. As the ministers and deputy ministers stalled on their meetings, working level officials had very little to report back on strategic direction of government, much less the position of their own department, citing delays of the bosses above them in stating priorities or budget allocations (Team Canada Inc 2006).

By the end of 2006, it became clear that TCI would have to be ended as the declining membership (to 11 organizations October 17) had made moot any ongoing

efforts to attempt to revitalize the initiative. As such, the executive committee and management board turned their last efforts to winding the initiative down while least effecting the clients they served and the partnerships (such as with the provinces through the Regional Trade Networks) they had developed over the years. Two recent initiatives, International Commerce Interdepartmental Strategic Group (ICISF) and Government On-Line Trade Service (GOT), were identified to take over portions of TCI's activities and were agreed to by TCI's governance structures. The Government On-Line Trade Service (renamed, OTIS, for Online Trade and Investment Services), would take over the majority of TCI's products while ICISF would be the avenue for policy-oriented members to pursue a common international business strategy.

In this regard, the so-called demise of TCI was not a sensational one. Services, for the most part, continue to this day. What many past members of the initiative lament is the failure of the transition period to produce an active body to take up the policy coordination aim of previous TCI:

I do think it is a shame that Team Canada Inc was ended, despite that the fact that there might be new things in place. There was and still is a void.

As this official explained, the problem was the time lapse. Team Canada Inc was supposed to wind down with the other two initiatives immediately taking up its activity, but this did not happen. Both initiatives were delayed. In 2008, the on-line initiative was still in the approvals process and even less progress had occurred around the strategic policy initiative. TCI's former secretariat manager admitted having to "run around" personally, to secure new homes for each of TCI's services. TCI's export source website now runs out of Industry Canada again; other tools have also been parcelled back down to the departmental level. The level of energy, excitement,

entrepreneurialism, and collaboration in the development of new tools and ideas has been lost.

Many accounts exist for why TCI eventually ended. It got too big; it never successfully achieved central government funding; its services became irrelevant over time or at least, failed to adapt to changing circumstances and needs of clients in international business development. One overarching explanation seems to be that it was never going to survive the changing course of politics in Canada. Other horizontal programs have survived changes in government, indicating that perhaps there was something unique about TCI increased its political vulnerability. If it had been a less sensational program and less affiliated with Chrétien's trade missions that shared the same name, it may have enjoyed a longer history.

When the Conservatives come to power and if they were given two choices, one to improve an existing program that oh by the way was founded by the Liberals or create something entirely new with their own mark on it, what will they choose? They'll choose something new. However, there is a whole lot of momentum and credibility lost. And that's really what's sad. It was known; it was respected. My goodness, I mean, I've already spoken to a dozen international delegations from Peru, Costa Rica, France, all over the world, explaining our approach and they wanted to model things they were doing after us!

The problem here is not only that changes in government directly result in changes in public policy but as well, that in the dismantling and reconstruction of a horizontal initiative (under a different leadership structure, member composition, and title) a certain energy and collegiality can be lost.

Mackenzie Gas Project

In May 1977, Thomas Berger held hearings on the possibility of the construction of a pipeline through the Mackenzie Valley. Those hearings – and Berger's subsequent

decision – effectively shut down the possibility of a pipeline until all aboriginal rights issues had been addressed and land claims been settled. By the late 1990s, producers were returning to the north. There was significant pressure to try and find more secure oil and gas based resources in North America rather than in the Middle East, Africa, or Russia, and land claim settlements to date raised the possibility that such an activity might be feasible in the near future. An senior official from Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) recalls:

New activity was being generated and with the significance of the Parsons Lake, Taglu, and Niglintgak, Imperial Oil came forward and said we want to get our gas to market. They came to Northern Oil and Gas and said, “We’re keen to get our gas to market. We are going to come in with an application and we want to be seriously entertained.”

Imperial Oil Limited (IOL) had approached the Northern Program and the Northern Oil and Gas within INAC to say that they had made significant discoveries in the North, in particular, three lucrative oil fields and that they wanted to build a pipeline through the Mackenzie Valley in order to get their gas to market. They were looking at the feasibility of developing onshore gas and had three major considerations to entertain with the federal government: a) the cost, b) the environmental assessment process (on which they needed some clarity) and c) Northern Aboriginal support, understanding that those who would be most affected by the project needed to have some say in it.

If industry was indeed serious about developing a pipeline, INAC needed to get the attention of the rest of government, particularly those departments that would become *responsible authorities* under the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act, if the proponents went ahead with a project application. As such, INAC began contacting those other federal departments and agencies that would be involved in a possible environmental assessment: Industry Canada, Fisheries and Oceans, Environment

Canada, Transport Canada, Parks Canada, and Health Canada. They also notified the central agencies (Treasury Board, Finance, The Privy Council Office) which alerted the political level to engage them on this file. As a director from INAC commented:

It was an uphill battle to get everyone's attention that indeed this was going to happen and it subsequently did happen, and IOL [Imperial Oil Limited] did file an application and then the federal household had to mobilize around that.

Working with those other departments came with significant capacity challenges. The Berger report had effectively shutdown all oil and gas activities in Canada's north. This included development of a pipeline infrastructure and all exploratory activities. As a result, capacity within the federal government for everything from environmental assessment regulation, monitoring, and any assessments of energy potential within the north, was cut back.

While there was not a particular organization with a clear lead responsibility for northern development, INAC has a mandate in northern affairs including economic development in the north and contains an oil and gas group responsible for exploration and development. As such, the first contact between the federal government and the proponents was through INAC's Northern Affairs program. INAC took the lead in interacting with the proponents, understanding the nature of the project, and gauging what their intentions were. When it became quite clear that the project would involve all the federal departments that issue permits, as well as the territorial government, and Aboriginal groups, an interdepartmental team was formed to develop a plan for how government was going to coordinate its various mandates around it. Northern Natural Resources Canada, Foreign Affairs, and INAC were the core departments involved, and Environment Canada, Fisheries and Oceans and Transportation Canada were also brought in. Officials at INAC's Northern Affairs took the plan up to their assistant

deputy minister (ADM), which continued on up to the deputy minister (DM) and minister.

When we first started talking with IOL, IOL had about 300 employees working on the project on the application and design of the project etc., and we had a staff of roughly 5 of us. So you can imagine how it was the elephant and mouse scenario where industry came in and wanted things to sort of move along very quickly, decisions made at the drop of the hat, and you had five of us trying to not only assess the project and try and get a sense of the scale of this project, the scope of it, what the implications were, to trying to get federal departments on side and the politicians on side. So capacity, that was a huge issue.

Early on, the departments worked together on a number of memorandums to cabinet in order to secure funding for the development of a common approach to assessing a proposed natural gas pipeline project. With the funding that they obtained, the federal departments collaborated with the Northern Boards and Territorial Government to produce in June 2002, the *Cooperation Plan*. The plan detailed the collaborative approach that the applicable boards and agencies would take to responding to proposals for pipeline development in the Northwest Territories.

It is a “made-in-the-North” approach developed to coordinate the review process, reduce duplication and enhance public participation in the environmental assessment and regulatory review of the MGP (Industry Canada 2009).

From the beginning, the proponents had stated their desire for greater clarity from government on the environmental assessment and regulatory affairs. In turn, the interdepartmental team identified the need for very senior level support to coordinate the environmental assessment regulation process given the multiple jurisdictions it implicated. To this end, in 2001, Prime Minister Jean Chrétien set up a Reference Group of Ministers on Energy Issues. The Canadian reference group issued a report that gave the federal government “the okay” to the environmental assessment and regulatory subgroup of the interdepartmental committee to engage with the proponents, the

Northern boards and the territorial government to outline a multi-jurisdictional process for this project. The product of their interactions was the Cooperation Plan.

The Cooperation Plan set out to clarify the processes that the various agencies and boards with environmental impact assessment (EIA) and regulatory functions would follow in evaluating a proposal for pipeline development in the Northwest Territories. A key aspect of the plan is the establishment of a joint EIA panel and separate but coordinated regulatory process amongst the relevant agencies and boards. Opportunities for public participation would be a feature of both processes and clarified in a later plan. Finally, the proponents would be encouraged (but not bound) to submit a Preliminary Information Package (PIP) and relevant licence, permit, and authorization applications which would be evaluated by the agencies before deciding whether or not to recommend that the project be referred to the Joint (EIA) Review Panel coordinated with regulatory panel hearings (Cooperation Plan 2002).

The following year, June 2003, the proponents released their Preliminary Information Package, which contained detailed plans for their proposed field development and pipeline construction, along with information about engagement with local communities. In April 2004, the regulatory agencies completed their review of the Preliminary Information Package and application, and referred the project to the Joint Review Panel for environmental impact assessment. In October 2004, the proponents formally filed their applications for a Mackenzie gathering system and Mackenzie Valley pipeline with the National Energy Board formally triggering the anticipated government environmental and regulatory review.

Up until then, the federal interdepartmental team had been co-led by INAC and NRCan. Together, the two departments called meetings, disseminated information to

departments, and managed the committee's work, based on input from the other nine departments (Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Transport Canada, Environment Canada, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, the National Energy Board, the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency and the Privy Council Office). The proponents would from time to time attend the meetings and provide the committee with information to assist their own planning on the project. In general however, there was little, if any interactions between the federal government and proponents, First Nations, and other stakeholders. The formality of environmental assessment, and the establishment of a Joint Review Panel consisting of seven politically appointed independent experts, resulted in a process that heavily insulated the bureaucratic network from stakeholder contact. An official from Health Canada explained:

Because it was a formalized Joint Review Panel process, a very public process, we didn't have very many meetings with industry. There was a couple just government-industry meetings and they were more between the responsible authorities, like the department of Fisheries and Oceans and the proponents. There weren't many meetings. Mostly we prepared our work as government, as industry separately, and then we met at the hearings where we presented and debated and what not, in the public forum, in front of the Joint Review Panel.

Asked whether there had ever been a situation in which government and non-government representatives were around the table, one of INAC's secretariat members also responded:

Not in this initiative. Well, there are meetings with the proponents who are non-governments, but not so much environmental groups or NGOs or anything like that. The environmental assessment is pretty arms length. It's not something where we are working out with the proponents how we are going to respond to the environmental assessment; that's independent. Departments are there to provide their expertise.

By the end of 2004 however, the informal mechanism for interdepartmental coordination was deemed inadequate. The formal Joint Review Panel process had just been triggered by the formal application made by the Proponents. The process had moved from the “preparation stage” and “feasibility stage” outlined in the Cooperative Plan to what the Proponents considered the “project development stage” (see Appendix D for an overview of the regulatory process). The magnitude of the proposed project was unprecedented. Implemented, it would amount to the largest single private-sector investment in infrastructure in Canada’s history. The amount of information that the relevant agencies and boards would have to process as interveners to the Joint Review Panel was just staggering: 60,000 pages submitted by the proponents detailed a \$7 billion project that would involve 13,000 workers at the height of construction. The decision was made to create a more formal coordination structure and in 2005, the Federal Project Coordination Secretariat was established under a formal terms of reference. The impact of this structure is worth noting. As one public servant interviewed noted:

The Federal Project Coordination Secretariat was formally given the mandate to work interdepartmentally, which was a bit different from INAC as a lead and from having INAC and NRCan as co-leads... [Previously] you had departments working together, bringing their mandates to the table, the knowledge and understanding of what would happen. Establishing a project team in 05 really took it out of that venue, so that it was no longer individual departments coming to the table deciding what to do. You actually had an organization tasked with formally being responsible for coordinating other federal departments in the government’s response.

The Joint Review Panel (JRP) commenced in February 2006. Its review focused on the potential environmental and socio-economic impacts associated with the proponents’ proposed project. The Federal Minister of Environment, chair of the Mackenzie Valley

Environmental Impact Review Board, and the Chair of the Inuvialuit Game Council made an agreement in August 2004 to give authorization to a Joint Review Panel to coordinate the review process in the case of the proposed Mackenzie Gas Project (MGP). Over nine months, the JRP heard from interveners and held public hearings. The proponent and government experts were given the opportunity to convey their own research and analyses to the public with respect to expected environmental and socio-economic effects of the project. The Government of Canada supported the participation of societal groups through a \$1.5 million *Participant Funding Program*. It also established a further \$500-million MGP Impact Fund which would support regional efforts to offset the negative socio-economic impacts on northern communities of the project should it be allowed to proceed. Altogether, the JRP heard from 101 interveners, and numerous others through community hearings held over twenty-six days between July 13th and November 16th, 2006 in Yellowknife, Paulatuk, Holman, Tuktoyaktuk, Inuvik, White Horse, Aklavik, and Sachs Harbour (Joint Review Panel 2005).

A more recent activity of the Mackenzie Gas Project was the transfer of the Federal Project Coordination Secretariat to Industry Canada, a move that was made in response to the earlier shift of Minister Jim Prentice from the Indian and Northern Affairs portfolio to the trade one. It has since been renamed, the Mackenzie Gas Project Office, although it retains many of its previous staff.

Eight years since the federal departments began working together to fulfill their mandates around a potential pipeline project in the Mackenzie Valley, the bulk of their work is now complete, with the government's policy response to the JRP outstanding (see Appendix D). This will demand of the network's members more of the same: vertical and horizontal engagement within a short time frame. A new feature of

the interorganizational process however, will be societal engagement, if the federal government deems it to be necessary. All of this will depend upon what exactly is in the JRP's report. In 2008, the departments had already begun to prepare for the JRP's report, mapping out the federal government's response process, setting up committee structures, dividing up tasks, and identifying involvements at each level of decision making.

Recent and unexpected events have brought the MGP's work somewhat to a halt. In December 2008, the Joint Review Panel announced that it would not be able to release its decision in March of 2009 as originally expected. Instead, its decision would come in December 2009, to the dismay of the proponents as well as federal and territorial authorities. On January 19, 2009, in a public announcement, Jim Prentice as Minister of the Environment, made a financial offer to the proponents of the Mackenzie Gas Project, proposing to contribute to infrastructure and pre-construction costs and share in both the risks and returns of the project. This announcement has been interpreted as a political move to compensate the project's proponents for the lengthy review process, as the country entered a period of economic downturn. The reaction among civil society groups, the Pembina Institute and Alternatives North, was that such a financial offer while federal environmental assessment is still underway constituted a conflict of interest, particularly for the National Energy Board, which must ultimately decide whether to approve the project. Reports released in early 2009 publically revealed that costs of the review panel have tripled to \$6 billion, with the review board's overall costs standing at \$19 billion. Controversy has also surrounded the lofty \$750,000 paid out to the panel's chair, as well as \$500,000 salary of the panel's other members. The federal government has since begun developing measures to streamline its environmental

assessment process and reduce the number of environmental assessments it conducts altogether (Globe and Mail 2009; Prentice 2009). In early 2009, Minister Prentice also asserted that the Joint Review Panel was an inheritance from the former Liberal Government that they were since stuck with, and that legal advice was being sought on how to speed up the work (Vanderklippe 2009). All of this indicates that there is likely to be strong political involvement in swiftly moving the federal departments' subsequent work forward.

While the work of the Mackenzie Gas Project is unfinished, its activity over the last eight years has been substantial: the process of gaining the attention of departments and politicians, the development of the cooperation plan, three phases of institutional reform, written and oral submissions to the Joint Review Panel, preparation for the Joint Review Panel's report, and adjustment to the changing political priorities and policy processes, amounts to years of interorganizational work.

The Federal Initiative to Address HIV/AIDS in Canada

The Canadian government's initial response to HIV/AIDS grew out of informal interactions that developed among community-based organizations founded by Canada's gay population, the health care system, and the federal government. Early recollections of the relationships between these aspects of state and society depict the interactions as largely disjointed and at times combative and antagonistic. As such, a purpose of a formal strategy was to develop more collegial relations and an atmosphere of trust that would lead to information sharing and partnerships around actual programs and services.

The National AIDS Strategy (NAS) established in 1990, was an immediate success in providing fractions of society with a direct or indirect interest in an HIV/AIDS response with a common focus and common purpose to mobilize around (Young 2000). In Phase I of NAS, the federal government contributed \$37.3 million per year for three years to the areas of research, surveillance, community development, and health care. In practise however, this phase was mostly dedicated to learning about a disease that was still relatively new but in urgent need of some response, however unplanned and uncoordinated (Getting Ahead 2003). Phase II of the initiative was far more of a capacity-building exercise and lasted from 1993 to 1997. During this period, the federal government increased its contribution to \$42.4 million per year, in large part because of new infections and the increased number of individuals living with HIV/AIDS in Canada. Phase II also reflected shifting priorities. In absolute terms, funding was reduced for education, international activities and program administration but increased for community development, research, and health care.

By the end of the 20st century, it was also clear that individuals living with HIV/AIDS no longer represented a homogeneous community (of haemophiliacs and men who have sex with men). Since the HIV/AIDS community had grown increasingly diverse with two strategies already under its belt, the federal government engaged in some self-reflection (Young 2000). In the summer of 1997 the Federal Minister of Health, Allan Rock agreed to the creation a national stakeholders group and an extensive consultation process to inform a subsequent approach to HIV/AIDS. The government made the public announcement that it would be developing a new strategy on HIV/AIDS, but that this strategy would be developed as a partnership between a national advisory committee of stakeholders and a governmental group representing

health-related departments (Health Canada and Correctional Services Canada). As one public servant put it, the directions Minister Rock gave to the stakeholders and the federal bureaucracy was “work together and bring me one plan.”

Out of extensive stakeholder consultations, the Canadian Strategy on HIV/AIDS (CSHA) was developed, and formally announced in May of 1998. In many regards, the third strategy was not unique. It involved a federal commitment of \$42.4 per year, which was no different from federal funding under Phase II of NAS. Accounting for inflation and an increase in the number of individuals living with HIV/AIDS, the third instalment actually amounted to less funding than both phases I and II of NAS (Taking Stock 2001). Like the previous strategies, research and community development also remained the most significant aspect of the approach. Funding for prevention was even further reduced, continuing the trend established since the initial NAS. International work re-emerged in the CSHA, but the funds allocated to support it (at \$300,000 per year) were minimal.

What was new and significant about the 1997/98 strategy was its designation as an ongoing long-term initiative with indefinite funding, its strategic focus on particular communities that the federal government has a fiduciary responsibility for (i.e. Aboriginal individuals, and individuals in corrections facilities), and the commitment of funds specifically for surveillance, evaluation, monitoring, and reporting. The need for (and related focus on) a long-term response to HIV/AIDS represents a fundamental change in the orientation of governments and community organizations. Until then, HIV/AIDS had not been understood as a disease with an evolving and ever-changing impact on communities, with social, economic, and political vulnerabilities alongside biological ones. The disease had spread from one population to another and had rapidly

re-appeared in populations from which it had been previously been eliminated. This was taken as evidence that any future strategy must be developed with a view to ongoing preventative efforts beyond the biological alone.

The most significant change in the 1997-1998 strategy came not in the form of policy but rather, process. CSHA resulted from a comprehensive and unprecedented stakeholder consultative process. For the first time, provinces and territories were included in the development of a national HIV/AIDS strategy (Minister of Health 1998). Five rounds of multi-sectoral consultation meetings were attended by 250 participants; focus groups involved 50 different participants; fifty-eight briefs were submitted to the national stakeholder's group (Getting Ahead 2003). In 1990 and again in 1994, consultations had taken place in the development of both phases of NAS, but neither policy had featured a comparably long and inclusive process of initial consultation. Federal government documents at the time project an excitement about the consultations and an unwavering belief in the innovativeness of the approach:

The new Canadian Strategy on HIV/AIDS is the result of extensive and unprecedented consultations with those Canadians who know this disease best. With the help of community partners and provinces and territories, we designed a strategy based on what we heard, one with clear direction, yet flexible enough to address emerging issues as they arise (Minister of Health, 1998).

The [1997] consultation process was a major breakthrough in public policy development. For the first time, stakeholder groups led a process to gather public input on a health and social issue of national and international importance. Instead of imposing policy from the top down, government acted as a facilitator and a listener. As a result, the new Canadian Strategy on HIV/AIDS is a true partnership initiative and the beginning of a new era in HIV/AIDS programming (Health Canada 1998).

What all three consultations did have in common however was a focus on the allocation among competing priorities of an already established program budget. Since the size of the pie was not up for discussion, the consultations were "intense" and "distasteful"

according to participants interviewed for reports commissioned in 2000 and 2003. Participants in the 1997 consultation felt forced to compete, priority to priority, with each other for a share of a funding pot considered to be largely inadequate to begin with (Taking Stock 2000: 5; Getting Ahead 2003: 5). In a funding assessment (“Taking Stock”) commissioned by the Ministerial Council for HIV/AIDS in 2000, the consultants criticized the post-budget consultation process, emphasizing that:

Without [clear objectives], neither the government nor the community can determine what funding is needed. It is necessary to know what you expect to achieve before you can determine what budget is needed or is adequate to achieve it (Taking Stock 2000: 32).

The consultants also emphasized that consultation on funding adequacy is particularly important but historically lacking in public policy responses to HIV/AIDS:

HIV/AIDS is still poorly understood and consequently there is not a clear sense of what level of investment is required – or is adequate – to prevent its spread, to provide care and treatment, or to find a cure. This inability to define adequacy is by no means unique to HIV/AIDS. It also characterizes the larger debate about health care spending in Canada. Neither Canadians nor their governments have engaged in a thorough and informed discussion about what amount of spending would be adequate to achieve their public health goals (Taking Stock 2000: 29).

While the 1997 consultation may have been contentious and even flawed, it nonetheless solidified as convention, a partnership-based approach to priority setting around national and governmental HIV/AIDS policy in Canada. Stakeholders would not only participate in programming, they would also *co-lead* direction setting. As such, phase III of Canada’s response to HIV/AIDS was actually its first strategy to be “owned” by governments *and* stakeholders, rather than just the federal government alone. Despite a closed door on budgeting, the open door on agenda setting drew stakeholders more intimately into the policy process than stakeholders enjoyed in other policy arenas. National and community organizations became better organized as “a new maturity

characteriz[ed] their relationship with Health Canada” (Getting Ahead 2003: 5). Based on inclusion and ownership as well as recommendations from the national stakeholders group, Health Canada created the Ministerial Council on HIV/AIDS to advise the Minister of Health on pan-Canadian aspects of HIV/AIDS (Annual Report 2001).

On October 29th, 2000, the Canadian Strategy on HIV/AIDS first held what it referred to as a direction-setting meeting. The meeting at Gray Rocks Inn in Mont Tremblanc, Quebec holds significance because it represents a break from past approaches that centred generically on HIV/AIDS rather than on the *people* living with and those vulnerable to being infected with HIV/AIDS: persons from HIV-endemic countries, prison inmates, injection drug users, youth, women, and Aboriginal people. This meeting marked the move away from a language of risk towards a language of *vulnerability*, in keeping with the approach of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV and AIDS:

To be vulnerable in the context of HIV/AIDS means to have little or no control over one’s risk of acquiring HIV infection or, for those already infected with or affected by HIV, to have little or no access to appropriate care or support. Vulnerability is the net result of the interplay among many factors, both personal (including biological) and societal; it can be increased by a range of cultural, demographic, legal, economic and political factors.

Understanding HIV/AIDS in terms of *vulnerability* allowed the Gray Rocks meeting to connect HIV/AIDS to social security, housing, labour, immigration, justice, and corrections, in addition to the traditionally associated fields of health and public health. Such a conceptualization demanded a much more comprehensive approach involving more government and non-state actors.

The legacy of the Gray Rocks meeting came in October 2005 in the form of *Leading Together* (2005-2010) the “blueprint” for coordinated action on HIV/AIDS in

Canada that involves the federal government, provincial and territorial governments, community groups, practitioners, researchers, and individuals. Stakeholders in Canada, with support from the Canadian government, developed *Leading Together*, a document setting out goals, mandates, key strategies, desired outcomes and targets for particular groups, including governments, to deliver on. The federal government's response to *Leading Together* is also the government's fourth national strategy on HIV/AIDS, the Federal Initiative to Address HIV/AIDS in Canada. It began in January 2005 and represents the first significant increase in investment into HIV/AIDS in Canada, with \$55.2 million funds committed in 2005-2006. This is set to increase to \$84.4 million in 2008-2009 and maintained at that level for each year thereafter.

The structure of the federal government's fourth national strategy on HIV/AIDS (hereafter, the HIV/AIDS FI) is unique among the policy networks examined in this chapter in that its membership is organized around departmental branches rather than departments themselves. While four departments are involved in the initiative, they do so through *responsibility centres*. Responsibility centres make up the membership of the HIV/AIDS FI. One responsibility centre is drawn from Correctional Services Canada and another from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research. Two responsibility centres are located within Health Canada and five responsibility centres are within the Public Health Agency of Canada, with four of those centres located within the agency's Centre for Communicable Diseases and Infection Control. Together, the departments share priorities and discuss potential areas for collaboration through the responsibility centre committee. This represents a novel mechanism within the HIV/AIDS strategy, since previous strategies did not emphasize or provide high-level mechanisms for policy coordination. As one PHAC manager noted:

Previously, people got their money and they did their work. One of the shifts that we are working on collectively is how can we create synergies by working more horizontally. I mean, that's what a horizontal initiative is. So one of the purposes and valued added of the RC committee is to bring those key players together to talk about their joint shared interests. But they don't bring some of the individual nitty-gritty operational pieces to the table.

At the most basic level, the responsibility centre committee acts as a venue for information sharing. At a secondary level, the committee allows members to identify areas for joint action. Finally, at the highest level, it seeks to produce opportunities for coordinated activity. In this case, departments can synchronize their work (e.g. the announcement of a new program) with that of another department (e.g. the public release of a major study).

In practice however, the responsibility centre committee has yet to function at the level of coordinated activity. One official stated, "it may not be possible just yet, but it is the movement towards that" that matters and that is occurring. For the most part, officials within the initiative admitted that the majority of committee activities were committed to information sharing and the identification of common areas at best. As more than half of the responsibility centres reside within the Public Health Agency of Canada, most HIV/AIDS FI work occurs *intraorganizationally*.

This is not to say that the work that takes place under the initiative is unimportant or unexceptional. For one, public servants faced challenges in doing interorganizational work that were similar to the challenges that those in other interorganizational initiatives faced. Second, despite the initiative's limited activities, participation was considered extremely beneficial to those involved. Working across government allowed organizations to more fully understand the public health portfolio as it exists across government and increased the possibility for higher-level

collaboration. Numerous programs and activities are conducted under the initiative – funding to clinical trials, surveillance systems (of vulnerable populations) – even if they are developed and implemented vertically. Third, the limited interorganizational work of the HIV/AIDS network nonetheless amounted to activities that were distinctly different from departmental ones. Further, significant interorganizational work does take place around reporting. While responsibility centres for the most part carry out their work separately, their accountability is quite complex and involves reporting back to their department as well as to the initiative and its lead body. Finally, there is evidence that the development of joint initiatives is underway and will continue as the program matures. The HIV Vaccine Initiative, though separate from the HIV/AIDS FI, involves many of the same public servants and thereby draws members together into joint action that can subsequently inform their engagement with one another around the HIV/AIDS FI. As a result, Correctional Services Canada (CSC) sees opportunities for joint action with INAC:

We actually really haven't had really much connection with INAC, but here is an example of where you think, "Oh my gosh! Why wouldn't we work with them?" because they are dealing with off reserve individuals and we are dealing with Aboriginals who are naturally off reserve because they are in prison.

Unfortunately, initiating interorganizational work can be a slow process. While INAC and CSC officials produced a document out of the latest exercise to try to identify potential ways for collaboration, CSC's official admitted during an interview that he had not yet received it and had missed one of the recent working level meetings due to illness, so there has been some delay on that process. CSC is also working currently to draw PHAC's interest in funding research around the in-mate population through its community-based research program. The HIV/AIDS FI is still young, the youngest

amongst the four horizontal initiatives; with time, higher level horizontal activity may develop.

Sector Council Program

In the 1960s, the federal government decided that it would become more involved in labour market issues. It created the Department of Manpower and Immigration to consolidate the various elements of human resourcing in one setting.

J.T. Montague (1966) wrote of the federal government's decision:

There can be little criticism of a move toward overall co-ordination of manpower policy... but if taken at face value, overall manpower policy must be fiscal-monetary-industry-production-employment-education-humane-oriented.

From early on then, human resourcing was seen as a bundle of messy issues, ill suited to any one actor, much less one department to address, necessitating a partnership approach. The department of Manpower held within its portfolio a mandate in job placement, employment services, technical and vocational training, and immigration policy. Partnering in this sector came early. In 1966, French Canadian and trade unionist, Jean Marchand, was appointed to the Cabinet of Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson, as Minister of Manpower and Immigration.

Marchand had been actively involved in the Quebec labour movement and was particularly sympathetic to workers upon receiving his cabinet post. This was important since no comprehensive program existed at the time for laid off workers. Marchand came to the post of Minister of Manpower with significant experience. He had been organizer for several federations (pulp and paper, asbestos mining), served as President of the Confederation of National Trade Unions, and had sat on such notable structures as the Royal Commission of Enquiry on Bilingualism and Biculturalism and

the Economic Council of Quebec (McDonald 1966: 491). Marchand's experience matched his political ambition. Not only did Marchand feel that a better way existed for people facing lay-off but that this better way must not only include workers but be driven and delivered by them. The idea that any labour market public policy should be "labour driven" would continue under later evolutions of policy, including the Sector Council Program. Marchand created the *Man Power Consultative Service* within the Department of Manpower and Immigration to address labour issues resulting from large-scale economic restructuring. According to one interview participant,

The program was like firemen putting out fires. Where there was a big layoff, these guys, being specialists, would go in, talk to unions, talk to workers, and get something going. Working together, they would roll out adjustment measures for each laid off individual. The whole point is this was voluntary. It was joint. Nobody had absolute power.

Indeed, the labour adjustment committees struck were composed of representatives from the labour and management ranks of companies in an industry facing a labour market crisis. The federal government participated but only as an *ex officio* member: it had voice, and funding, but no vote (Rochow 2001). The Manpower Consultative Service would provide fifty percent of the cost of the committee and another fifty percent for worker relocation costs, if necessary. Together government, labour, and business representatives would determine what the issues were for the industry, what the impact on skills and training would be, and develop a transition plan involving retraining and worker compensation, tailored for each individual worker affected.

In 1963, the Man Power Consultative Service was renamed the Industrial Adjustment Service (IAS). Like the Man Power Consultative Service, it took the form of a partnership between unions, government and business to address the economic needs of workers during mass layoffs. The program survived a first instance of reorganization

in 1977, in which the Ministry of Immigration and Employment replaced the Ministry of Man Power and Immigration. It did not survive the transformation into the Ministry of Human Resources Development under Kim Campbell's 1993 short-lived Progressive Conservative government. By that time however, a new initiative was in place.

A key aspect of both the Man Power Consultative Service and the IAS were their *ex ante* measures for addressing labour issues resulting from economic restructuring. Labour adjustment is inherently reactionary; responding to closures, downsizing, and displacement necessitates a "firefighting" type of response. Over time, the federal government began to broaden its approach to addressing labour market issues, eventually supporting the development of sector councils. HRSDC defines a sector council as "a national consensus-based partnership between business, labour and education stakeholders, in an economic sector, that identifies and addresses human resources and skills issues in a collective, collaborative and sustained manner."

Two new ideas account for the movement towards the establishment of sector councils. One, attention turned toward more active means of addressing labour market issues, such as helping companies to *avoid* going into bankruptcy and promoting their expansion. The more companies that "stayed afloat", the less workers that there would be on (un)employment insurance (UI/EI) and welfare. As such, a portion of the UI/EI funds was redirected to labour market resource for human resource planning. One HRSDC official referred to this as a sort of *EI part 2*:

The EI part 1 is how do we get the money we collect off of people's pay checks and how do we use that to support them when they are unemployed? But the part 2 is, how do we use it in a proactive way to try to minimize the impact, minimize the occurrence of unemployment and non-continuity in employment?

The Task Force on Labour Market Development in 1981 and the Economic Council of Canada's *In Short Supply* in 1982 had both lamented the lack of adequate training opportunities and labour market information produced by the private sector to support an *EI part 2* type of approach. This finding eventually led to the development of federal programs to facilitate better human resource planning in the private sector, including sector studies, and sector councils. Labour adjustment studies were conducted for the steel industry in the early 1980s, resulting in the creation of the Canadian Steel Trade and Employment Congress in 1984, one of the first sector-council-like organizations established jointly by labour and management to develop programs for unemployed steel workers (Fletcher 1998). Similar labour market studies and sector-like structures were created in the automotive and electrical and electronics sectors.

The second factor contributing to the development of sector studies and later, sector councils, was the realization on the part of governments and stakeholders that the most appropriate unit of analysis for addressing labour market issues was the level between firm and industry: *sector*. Labour market problems were often not attributable to workers (supply, training, skill set) or companies (expansion strategy, human resourcing policy) but rather, to a combination of a particular region, city, town, and subset of an industry, such as the "shirt manufacturers of Eastern Quebec." Problems were structural rather than local. To address labour market issues on a new scale, the approach of government had to change, shifting attention from individual companies to entire sectors (often with regional significance). The "firefighting" mentality (go in, do the work, get out) worked well for individual companies but was impractical for sectors, which could take months, even years to fully "map out" to diagnose problems. Such a long affair would require more permanent structures than the temporary firefighting

committees. A non-profit organization composed of industry, labour, and education representatives would need to be formed for human resource challenges to be addressed on an ongoing basis.

Structures already existed within the federal government's human resources department to support this kind of development. The IAS resulted in the establishment of "firefighting" labour-management committees, such as the Canadian Steel Trade and Employment Congress of 1986, and the Sector Studies Directorate has been conducting long-term preventative *sector studies* to generate labour market information since 1982 (Fletcher 1998: 38). The work in both areas (firefighting structures and long-term policy development) combined, would produce *sector councils*.

In 1989, the federal government created the Labour Force Development Strategy to promote private sector investments in training. It provided financial support for sector studies, for the development of occupational standards, and for the establishment of sector councils. In 1992, Brian Mulroney's Progressive Conservative government further set the wheels in motion for the creation of sector councils through the five-year Sectoral Partnership Initiative, with the goal of establishing fifty-five sector councils. The sector councils were to undertake activities to identify (through a sector study/diagnostic) and subsequently address (through IAS-type interventions) national, long-term human-resourcing issues arising in each sector. The funding of training programs was a key activity of the early sector councils.

By the 1993 election that sent the Progressive Conservatives out of government (and into only two seats in the legislature), many of the authorities for the initiative had been put in place. Chrétien's Liberal government formally implemented the program

such that by the end of 1998, twenty councils were established. As of 2008, thirty-four sector councils were in operation.

Of the seventy-odd officials that are involved in the Sector Council Program at current, the majority of them do so through direct engagement with sector councils, negotiating and managing contracts. The remaining ten officials are involved in the program more generally, serving the governance role and supporting the councils through the development of information tools. Both types of work involve horizontal government; sector analysts work with stakeholders in little contact with the “federal household”, while program managers work mostly with other departments in the goal of “making the Sector Council Program not only an HRSDC program but more a government of Canada program” as one manager put it. As another previous manager with the program explained,

When I came into the job, there was a comment by an assistant deputy minister who had been here for about 18 months, that the Sector Council Program was the department’s best kept secret. And I guess part of my mandate was, to change that.

The Sector Council Program endeavoured to become a government of Canada platform because of the external shocks it faced and continues to face because of devolution of labour market issues to the provinces since the mid-1990s. The Sector Council Program witnessed its jurisdiction – and therefore justification for existence – shrink exceptionally with the devolution of training to the provinces, and has since sought to leverage its resources against the activities of other departments.

Significant transformations have occurred in the provision of human resource-based public policy over the twenty years of the Sector Council Program’s existence. It began in 1995, when then Prime Minister Jean Chrétien decided to devolve labour

market training to the provinces. The 1996 Employment Insurance Act was amended and between 1996 and 2000, Labour Market Development Agreements (LMDA) were signed between the federal government and each province. They stipulated that the federal government would no longer be involved in the purchase of training, which had occurred under the Sector Council Program. This put pressure on the program to evolve its mandate away from providing training to providing information around training, something it was successful in achieving. The program is now oriented towards providing advice and informational tools developed by the program and linking sector councils in with initiatives within other departments' programs. One example is Industry Canada's *technology roadmaps*, which examine the impacts that new technologies will have on the sector three to five years down the road. The program also now provides funding to the councils to conduct their own diagnostic and develop a business plan for their sector.

Conclusion

Table 3-1 below summarizes the composition, structure, history, and function of the four horizontal initiatives. As can be seen, all four initiatives differ widely in their membership, network initiators, origins, funding, activities, lifespan, and stakeholder involvement. The network features outlined here have had dramatic implications for the nature of network activity and in particular, the challenges that public servants have faced while operating within them. This is not to say that there are not also similarities between the initiatives as well. As will be seen, many challenges that public servants face in interorganizational work are also common to members across the four initiatives, and result from contestation between actors over the rules of collaboration. This indicates that macro-level variables also affect the challenges of interorganizational work

for public servants. Similar and dissimilar challenges, the role of rule contestation in producing them, and the implications for the work of public servants, will be the subject of subsequent chapters.

Table 3.1 Summary of Case Studies

	TCI	MGP	SCP	HIV/AIDS FI
# Departments	23	7	1	4
Initiator	Clerk of the Privy Council	Industry	Bureaucrats	Minister Stakeholders
Origin	Clerk of Privy Council	INAC	HRSDC	Minister of Health
Structure of Lead	Rotational	Permanent	Permanent	Permanent
Location of Lead	DFAIT	INAC	HRSDC	PHAC
Level	Working, ADM	Working, ADM	Working	Working, ADM
Joint Activity	Strategic Policy Delivery	Strategic Policy	Delivery	Information-Sharing Reporting
Funding 2006/7	\$0.2 million	\$55.6 million	\$22.7 million	\$63.2 million
Stakeholder Involvement	Feedback	Consultation	Partnership	Decision-Making
Lifespan	1997-2008	2004-2009	1998-ongoing	2005-ongoing

4 MANY HATS

Relations between Administrative Actors

Introduction

The four horizontal initiatives examined in this dissertation feature interorganizational work involving many different types of actors: federal public servants, the central focus of this study, as well as political actors, representatives from other domestic governments, individuals and groups from civil society, and members of industrial or labour organizations. While the nature of interorganizational work cannot be entirely reduced to which types of actors interact with one other, civil servants' relationships with other civil servants, stakeholders, and political masters hold unique challenges. As Ian Peach (2004) has put it, horizontal government "actually entails three separate tasks: improving the coordination of government policies across government departments, improving the coordination of different levels of government and bringing government and citizens together in policy development, through deliberation, and policy implementation." The key interorganizational challenges for public servants vary with the unique power differentials within each type of relationship. Among civil servants, there are power differentials between civil servants from generalist departments with central network positions and civil servants from sectoral or regional departments with peripheral network positions. Between civil servants and stakeholders, power differentials stem from the former's inside government privilege, which at times, can actually amount to a burden, as will be seen in chapter five. Between civil servants and

political masters, power differentials stem from political and hierarchical authority. The three chapters that follow will explore each of these relationships individually, with general challenges and overall sources of rule contestation to be discussed in chapter seven.

Across the case studies, the most important challenges to interorganizational work involving other federal agencies were commitment and inclusion. Within Team Canada Inc (TCI), problems stemmed from inadequate political commitment, as well as poor organizational design. Because the initiative lacked central government funding, it became dependent on membership dues (and thus, an inclusive membership) to develop its products and services. The decision to pursue the two agendas of joint service delivery and joint policy development within the same network however, compromised departments' commitment. That is, the goal of joint service delivery required an inclusive membership, while the joint policy development agenda necessitated an exclusive one. When the joint service delivery goal took precedent, achievement of joint policy development became unattainable, much to the dismay of some members.

The Mackenzie Gas Project (MGP) had the single goal of joint policy development and enjoyed substantial central government funding, setting it apart from TCI. However, the absence of organizational clarity left members of the network frustrated by interactions that did not result in their preferred policy outputs. The lack of clarity around the role of leadership resulted in a crisis of substantive inclusion for some members, and compromised collegiality within the network.

Inclusion was also an issue for members of the Federal Initiative to Address HIV/AIDS in Canada (HIV/AIDS FI), but it was overcome as a result of political leadership and public management. For the Sector Council Program (SCP),

entrepreneurial management and political resources allowed its staff to make linkages with other departments’ programs, thereby increasing the impact of the program itself.

Altogether, these case studies reveal a number of factors that affect the collaborative relations between administrative actors. Political support, including financial resources, goes far in minimizing the degree of conflict that will occur between agencies and departments in committing to and achieving agreement around a policy issue. The structure of network leadership and the organization of a department itself also impact inclusion in a network. Finally, the purpose of a network – to share information, develop expertise, produce joint products, and/or adopt strategic policy – affects the intensity of the challenges that administrative actors will face in interdepartmental work. This finding is supportive of Michael Agranoff’s (2007) work, which lends theoretical prominence to four types of policy networks: informational, developmental, outreach, and action. Agranoff categorizes these networks according to the depth and scope of interdependency: how much is shared (information, resources, authority) and what is jointly produced (new information, products, policies). Table 4.1 summarizes this chapter’s points.

Table 4.1 Key Challenges of Interorganizational Work among Civil Servants

	Horizontal Initiative			
	MGP	SCP	TCI	HIV
Level of conflict	High	Low	Moderate	Low
Key Challenges	Agreement Collegiality Inclusion	Inclusion	Commitment	Inclusion
Source of Challenge	Rigid, conflicting mandates; lack of clear roles	Poor inter-organizational awareness	Size; multiple mandates; lack of funding	Poor inter-organizational awareness

Team Canada Inc: Political Commitment

The problem of commitment amongst administrative actors in networks was most evident in Team Canada Inc. Tensions between actors came from many sources and affected various features of the network as well. The Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT), a key organization within the network, was not well-received by the other organizations nor the department's own secretariat staff. There were also tensions between the TCI secretariat and the TCI membership, as well as between TCI members themselves. Together, these conflicts caused serious problems for the functioning of the TCI initiative: the value of the network was not always evident; this in turn led to multiple crises of commitment; network leaders in turn expended significant energy trying to save the initiative. At times, they felt conflicted between the interests of their department and that of other network members for whom in practice they were supposed to represent.

The tension between organizations in the TCI initiative stemmed from the diverging cultures, interests, investments, and mandates held by the various participants in the initiative. In 1997, Industry Canada, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, and the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade were approached by the Clerk of the Privy to form a virtual trade agency – a horizontal initiative – which grew to twenty-three members. One purpose of the virtual agency was to consolidate efforts amongst the various departments and agencies that had some mandate in international trade, in order to better support small to medium sized enterprises in export development.

The initiative functioned well in the beginning, owing in part to the leadership of the secretariat at DFAIT and to the dazzling array of new products and services that the

partnership offered its members. However, a clear division developed over time between members of the network who viewed trade as somewhat central to (in the case of Industry Canada) or entirely central to (in the case of DFAIT) their department's mandate, and those for which trade formed an important part of their mandate, but only as it pertained to a particular region or sector, as was the case for Western Economic Diversification and Canadian Heritage.

DFAIT's non-secretariat reputation as a network bully worsened tensions associated with differences in organizational mandates. As one official put it "DFAIT always feels they hold the umbrella when it's raining out." Sectoral departments resented being portrayed (at best) and treated (at worst) as somehow less central and important to the network due to their sectoral mandate. A director from Canadian Heritage shared:

Yes we were a specialist department but trade is trade. We always found it awkward when DFAIT says "well, we do this for a living" and we are looking around going, "we also do this for a living." It may be sector specific but we still do this for a living.

Two officials *from* DFAIT admitted:

Though DFAIT has the lead on international trade, their reputation around town isn't super positive when it comes to being a good partner. They are seen as being a bit arrogant, full of themselves, not really listening to others and doing it the way they want to do it anyway.

This department that I work for, they are of a completely different mentality that they are going to do it on their own. They are a bunch of prima donnas. Coming from a department that was inclusive in its management style, this department is like, "we are going to do it our way and if you don't like it, take the highway."

A 2009 centennial tribute document chronicling the department's history also tells.

Entitled, "Punching above Our Weight: The History of the Department..." it narrates of

a department that has fought to establish ownership of the trade portfolio in order to maintain a central position in the departmental structure of government.

DFAIT's desire for special ownership of TCI was not without reason. DFAIT's general mandate for export development made it a critical member of the initiative. Though members from other departments varied in their emphasis on sectoral interests, and in some cases pushed for generic, big-picture, framing, it was natural for DFAIT to play this role, lacking the institutional mandate to represent the best interests of any particular clientele. Tied to this "natural mandate" was a structural and political mandate. When the Clerk of the Privy Council wrote to the three departments to develop the partnership, to DFAIT the Clerk was asking it to play the central role. In 2003, when Industry Canada and DFAIT were reorganized with DFAIT to take over all matters of generic international trade from Industry Canada, the TCI secretariat moved to DFAIT as well, consolidating further its *de facto* leadership within the initiative.

Though the housing of the TCI secretariat within a department was a decision of administrative ease, members of the secretariat themselves confessed discomfort with the arrangement. Their salaries were paid for by the collection of TCI membership dues, but their formal accountability remained through their department. One TCI secretariat member recalls being approached by their department to sit on a TCI committee as a departmental representative and turning it down. He explained: "I really can't do that, because my salary was paid for by the TCI members. I can't really justify spending how many hours of my time when I am not paid by this department." While this individual recalls "ruffling a few feathers this way," he contended it was important to be able to leave your departmental hat at the door and wear a team hat as a secretariat member, even if it got you into trouble for "not being departmental enough," which it often did.

Tensions between sectoral and non-sectoral members of TCI, as well as between secretariat and non-secretariat DFAIT staff did not disrupt or impede the operations and achievements of the initiative in the early years. However, when the network was faced with external shocks, it became vulnerable to collapse because of these tensions. The structure of the network itself intensified this vulnerability. Without core funding from central government, TCI relied on financial contributions from the A-bases of its own members and as a former secretariat member lamented, “the only time you really hear that there was a problem is when you are going around town collecting money and a department can’t justify giving you their \$50,000 dollar membership dues.”

Ever since TCI membership peaked in 2001, the initiative had struggled with an ambiguous and contentious mandate. Some departments had expressed interest in investment, cooperation agreements, and other policies that were beyond the scope of the export development framework of Team Canada Inc. The Clerk’s initial letter to the three convening departments referred specifically to coordinated export development. Without either new political direction or political approval for a new mandate, TCI’s members could not massage the initiative’s purpose to encapsulate other aspects of trade that might strengthen participation and commitment.

However, even within the confines of an “export development” mandate, consensus was difficult to achieve, because different members desired differing levels of integration altogether. As a basic level, TCI initiative was to function as a coordination mechanism, to “complement what other departments do, so that the cumulative impact is self-reinforcing,” remarked one respondent. This entailed exchanging information about what each department was doing so that the federal government could appear coordinated and competent at trade shows abroad.

To this end, TCI performed well. It produced numerous information products used by departments with different clienteles. These information products were flexible and comprehensive: they contained general information to support SMEs become export-ready but devoted additional sections to each organization's clientele, allowing departments to tailor the information to their support base. These products not only won TCI numerous public service awards; they were exported to other political jurisdictions: the U.S., the UN Commission for Trade and Development, the Government of Croatia, and the Government of Chile. The products satisfied the various departments' needs and were received well by client groups, based on feedback surveys.

What TCI struggled with was the achievement of a higher level of integration around policy coherence, which had been the second purpose of the initiative. As a retired director general involved with TCI recalls,

We wanted to go beyond coordination. We wanted to achieve a unified policy. A big umbrella set of priorities and strategies that would be unifying our efforts. This is a much more ambitious objective. And as it turned out, it was almost impossible to achieve.

Coordination was deemed impossible because each department had unique client bases. Remarked an Industry Canada official, "the agriculture department has farmers; the fishery department has fishermen; we have industrialists." Because sectoral divisions in the development of *program delivery* had not produced zero-sum options, they did not pose a challenge to joint action. However, developing strategic unified policy – stipulating priority sectors – is inherently zero sum and directly tied to the budgeting process. One interview participant from Industry Canada summarized well, the sectoral divisions that manifested in discussions of strategy policy development:

An overarching, unifying strategy, that's very hard to achieve. What do we mean by international development? Foreign investment? Should we include that? Should we include trade policy? Or just trade development? Just helping Canadian businesses become successful exporters, or should we try to coordinate policy? And what do we mean by policy? Do we mean trade policy? Foreign relations policy? Defence? Immigration? So as you can see, we could go very far in terms of bringing more and more elements into what we call international development business. Or we could restrict ourselves to the smallest common denominator. And I must say during the three years that I was working with Team Canada, we were always pulling. The discussion always went on and there was never total agreement.

A narrow, unchanging political mandate, the absence of stable, central funding, and a wide membership produced an unsurprisingly unstable horizontal initiative. Twenty-three departments with varying commitments to and mandates in trade, convened to achieve actionable outcomes over ten years; the initiative's lifespan might have lengthened if stable and sustained funding had been in place. According to a former member, "there had to be funding available from the centre, not going around with the cup every year trying to collect money, because it's dysfunctional. The model worked despite a really dysfunctional financial model." As other TCI members recalled, the absence of funding for the initiative was the result of bad timing. An MC had been prepared during a period of fiscal restraint and despite success at the working level in agreeing to priority sectors, Treasury Board did not fund the proposal.

Had the initiative obtained central government funding, it might have escaped perverse incentives for attracting wide membership. Ultimately, Team Canada Inc relied on its membership for its funding and the larger the membership grew, the less possible a common mandate became. The funding TCI needed to produce products to secure support and thus, survival, tied it to an ever-increasing membership that also weakened its policy mandate. TCI featured *two* purposes, program coordination and policy coherence, and the logic informing the first (inclusion = funding = GOC trade

products), undermined the attainment of the second (exclusion = agreement = GOC trade strategy).

In sum, collaboration around TCI produced at least two major challenges for its members. For one, the *value* of network engagement was difficult to articulate, due to the presence of a large number of sectoral interests and the absence of central government funding. On the one hand, the network needed to focus on *the common* to facilitate effective decision-making processes for obtaining agreement, but also provide benefits clear to *the particular*. The sectoral and non-sectoral nature of network participants exacerbated this challenge. In turn, commitment to the network was difficult to maintain, and efforts to maintain participation through multiple visioning exercises on the part of critical members from 2004 onwards, sapped energy that could have been put toward addressing the substantive policy issues within the network. The high demands placed on nurturing the policy process in the case of TCI came at the expense of the policy issues. The implication is composition of the network in terms of sectoral and non-sectoral departments affects what the departments can achieve. It suggests that program coordination and policy coherence functions should be pursued in separate networks with different memberships, the former benefiting from a wide membership, while the latter benefiting from a narrow membership.

It is difficult to couple different activities within a network because the activities themselves may be mutually exclusive, informed by countervailing logics. In particular, it is difficult for public servants to collaborate for policy coordination due to the absence of an institutional incentive structure that would allow departmental staff and senior civil servants to engage in horizontal work. As one public servant involved with TCI commented, "If you try to take away some of a minister's authorities in the name of

horizontal coordination, then it leaves a very grey zone of responsibility. We talk a lot about horizontal file management, but the hardware in government – What are the ministerial accountabilities? What is its financial administration act? – they are all vertical.”

In order to achieve an overarching federal government international business development policy, vertically integrated ministerial accountabilities may need to be set aside. Since ministerial accountability in Canada is designed to be both individual, and collective, reconciliation is possible (Aucoin and Jarvis 2005). At the very least, tensions between the interests of Cabinet/prime minister and the minister of a particular department have always existed in Canada and is not a new feature of the political landscape, as a result of horizontal government. If anything, horizontal government makes this already existing tension more pronounced.

Several other jurisdictions have boasted success with horizontal government as a result of new administrative measures. In Alberta, performance measures tie seventy-five percent of senior civil servants’ bonus pay to performance on horizontal initiatives (Peach 2004).⁸ In the United Kingdom, the performance of permanent secretaries is too, measured against cross-departmental responsibilities which are written directly into their contracts and performance pay is also tied to these initiatives. This came with the explicit statement by Prime Minister, Tony Blair, that “senior management would be judged, above all, on its efforts to increase the integration of policymaking and delivery across departmental lines” (Peach 2004: 21). The treasury also keeps a pool of funds

⁸ Though it may be worth noting that Premier of Alberta Ed Stelmach announced on March 18, 2009 that this system will be suspended in 2010 in order to reduce the province’s deficit during the economic downturn.

available to departments for interorganizational projects, thereby eliminating the zero-sum allocation of a department's funds between vertical and horizontal commitments.

Mackenzie Gas Project: Agreement and Collegiality

Unlike the case of TCI, the Mackenzie Gas Project did not encounter commitment problems as a result of sectoral and non-sectoral mandates. Two reasons exist. For one, MGP lacked a clear network leader with an all-encompassing mandate in the network's policy area, comparable to DFAIT and its central role in international business development under TCI. In northern oil and gas development, no one department has an overarching mandate. More significant, MGP was not, in practical terms, a voluntary initiative. Members of the network were functionally mandated to participate: from a procedural (to say nothing of the substantive) perspective, they could not meet their regulatory mandates within the strict timeline stipulated by their governing acts, alone.

The result is sectoral and non-sectoral mandates in the case of MGP produced a problem of agreement, rather than commitment, for the network. This is because mandates that compelled departments to collaborate (regulatory, in nature) were both rigid *and* conflicting. Departments viewed their mandates as nonflexible (and therefore, non-concessional) and as a result, there was little room for agreement. When parties cannot agree and no party is willing (here, able) to give up and go it alone (or go it less formally or in bilateral interactions), the resulting irresolvable conflict can cause network members to develop negative feelings towards collaboration. This can impact their desire to want to do interorganizational work in the future. It can also put enormous pressures on lead bodies to actively steer the network and thus, take on the position of network manager (rather than mediator). As we shall see, network management

attempted by the MGP secretariat ended up being difficult and controversial work that further alienated members of the network. This supports the theory presented in chapter two which presents network management as the irreconcilable pursuit of network participation with network mediation simultaneously, which compromises the credibility of central network actors.

In order to illuminate the agreement problems and network management issues that members of MGP faced, this section will examine tensions existing among members that stem from three distinct sources. All three tensions turn on the perceived *centrality* of agencies and departments to the network: regional and HQ staff, secretariat and non-secretariat members, and federal and responsible authorities.

Regional and National Postings

Among the three sources of tension between network members, geographic positions were the least pronounced. A regional staff member from Transportation Canada went as far as to say that it did not make a difference whether it was regional or headquarter staff that attended consultation groups that they were a participant in. Others disagreed. An Environment Canada official in Yellowknife recalled an incident in which a decision had been taken in Ottawa to wind down a pilot project. When the officials' regional unit found out about this particular decision, they suggested to their Ottawa staff that the member of parliament of the Northwest Territories in Ottawa be notified. The response from Ottawa, according to the Yellowknife official, was that "the Minister will decide who to speak to." For Yellowknife staff, this was frustrating, because the nature of collaboration in the region necessitated that she be contacted:

Everybody knows her as Ethel. She was personally involved with the file and somebody is going to pick up the phone or bump into her at the airport and they

are going to talk to her and she's going to be walking in and tearing strips off somebody if you haven't communicated to her.

The problem here is regional civil servants did not feel that Ottawa-based staff understood what it meant to work interorganizationally in the region. Perceived differences in organizational culture – here within a single department – produced an animosity between public servants. Interorganizational work in MGP was predominantly informal, especially in the region, working level or not. The same Yellowknife stationed civil servant from Environment Canada later commented:

I curled on a curling team; it wasn't uncommon for the Minister of Justice for the GNWT to come in as a spare. I bump into the Premier at the grocery store. Not to say that you might not go to a Senators game and see one or two cabinet ministers but the likelihood of actually speaking to them or bumping into them shoulder to shoulder at the curling rink is totally different. If my colleague heads off for lunch today and walks down the main drag in Yellowknife, she may bump into two or three colleagues and do complete business for a lunch hour.

According to the interview participants, this difference in organizational culture stems from the issue of scale. In the regions, a small number of staffs are working on the same issues that in Ottawa would involve a much larger number of people. As one individual put it, "regional people are often juggling balls." Regional staffs perceive that they are managing multiple projects at the same time and therefore cannot devote the same amount of time to any one initiative, as would staff in Ottawa. There is no time for the level of formalization that occurs in the national capital region. All of these factors combine to encourage informal collaboration over formal collaboration in the regions. This leads one civil servant to conclude that, "you can have better working relations in the regions interdepartmentally than happens when it goes outside." Speaking with an official from the Government of the Northwest Territories gives the impression that the disconnect between Ottawa and Yellowknife around MGP is the result of two factors –

level of work and location of work – both of which affect an individual’s proximity to politics:

We don’t have good rapport between senior people. It’s part history, part attitude. INAC at the senior level doesn’t really engage with GNWT departments. They will put forward items in the public that are completely undiscussed. Take section 35, duty to consult. Because they devolved wildlife, they say that we should be consulting, but they never asked us. It goes back to politics; they are still busy being governed by Ottawa and the political ramifications of decisions made there.

While conflict between network levels will be dealt with in more detail in chapter six and chapter seven, the case of the Mackenzie Gas Project reveals that challenges within collaboration can arise as a result of regional-federal tensions. The issue is not a federal-provincial one but a more general and pervasive issue of proximity to Ottawa: to politics, to key decision makers, to what Donald Savoie (2008a) has referred to as “the prime minister and his court.”

Federal and Responsible Authorities

Membership in the Mackenzie Gas Project is determined by the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, which triggers particular responsibilities for federal bodies that meet the definition of a *responsible authority* or (expert) *federal authority*. All departments and agency of the government of Canada are, by definition, federal authorities. When used within MGP however, the term denotes an *expert federal authority*: a department or agency that is obliged under section 12(3) of the Act “to make available any specialist or expert information or knowledge that it possesses with respect to a project.”

Responsible authorities have an additional role to play in environmental assessment. As federal authorities, they are obliged to provide their expertise as it

relates to the project but an additional duty gives them their name: responsible authorities are federal authorities mandated through the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act to conduct environmental assessment, to determine whether to issue permits. Federal authorities involved with MGP are Natural Resources Canada (NRCan), Parks Canada, Industry Canada, and Health Canada while responsible authorities include Environment Canada, Transportation Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada (FOC), and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC).

The distinction between federal and responsible authorities is a significant one. Responsible authorities have decision-making power, while federal authorities enjoy a voice, but no formal vote. Federal authorities are called upon by responsible authorities to provide technical expertise in their particular areas. NRCan does not have any permit-granting responsibilities around oil and gas development (unlike Transportation Canada or INAC) but it does have expertise in permafrost and experience in operating geodetic surveys and these two proficiencies (among others) necessitate its involvement in the project. The provision of advice granted to NRCan as a federal authority, does not come with formal influence over decisions. In the case of MGP, the lack of formal influence also translated into a lack of informal influence as well. An official from one federal authority admitted that the impact of being a federal but not responsible authority limited their influence in interdepartmental work, including work at the informal level:

We give advice to the RAs [responsible authorities] and to the panel, but it is up to them whether or not they take our advice. At the end of the environmental assessment we do not take a decision, so we don't have any way to implement or enforce any [of our] recommendations. Unlike the RAs, we don't have a permit to give related to the MGP, so we don't have any way to ensure mitigation or monitoring. We can suggest to the RA that certain mitigation or monitoring is important, but then it is up to the RA to decide whether to go ahead with that. In

terms of the MGP working groups specifically, the difference lay in the fact that we were not a decision maker. So, when my department had comments to provide to the panel, they had to be approved by the RAs, especially INAC who was the lead. My department still had a hand in the day to day work of the working group, but at the end of the day we could only give advice.

Some responsible authorities were also concerned with the power implications of the distinction between the two roles, particularly as they manifested in informal working groups where differences in formal roles need not matter. Environment Canada was a vocal responsible authority, often the sole visible dissenter in working group discussions, over environmental concerns they felt other members inadequately respected and addressed. Two of its officials noted that when they would raise issues in the meetings, other departments would stand back to avoid confrontation, effectively, letting Environment Canada “throw the punches” on their behalf. Then, following the meeting, Environment Canada’s officials might find out that there had been far greater support around the table for their concern, but because of forceful personalities, and the perception that the role of a federal authority is less important than the role of a responsible authority, those other departments opted to remain silent.

I think it is the perception that if you are a regulator, you have the stick, the force of legislation and if you are a federal authority, you are just a voice, you are advice that people can take or leave. So if it is something controversial, then, they can just leave it.

To some degree, federal authorities admitted that they were less motivated (certainly less mandated) to look at the project comprehensively. Whereas responsible authorities must address overarching issues in environmental assessment (i.e. cumulative effects, sustainability) federal authorities need not. They are involved in the initiative because they have technical expertise to share in a specific domain. The scope of their contribution is therefore more limited at the formal level of decision-making.

However, such role distinctions need not hold at the working group level. As an Environment Canada official put it, “if you don’t have the technical expertise, it doesn’t matter whether you have the permitting authority. You need the technical expertise. But it was easy for some other departments to roll over those departments because they weren’t ‘a regulator.’” The interpretation of federal authority as a voice less important and less central to the initiative, prevented comprehensive deliberations at the working level.

Leading and Being Led

The lead structure for the Mackenzie Gas Project has gone through numerous phases of reorganization. It began with informal leadership out of the Northern Oil and Gas branch of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (incidentally, the place of first engagement in the federal government, by the proponents), and transformed into a more formal and focused function as a result of the creation of the federal project coordination secretariat at INAC, in 2004. Following the move of INAC Minister, Jim Prentice to Industry Canada in 2008, the secretariat transferred over to Industry Canada as well, marking the third evolution of leadership around MGP.⁹

The secretariat coordinates the activities of the federal and responsible authorities around environmental assessment. It enjoys lead responsibility for the project and serves as the direct link with the proponents. The rationale for its creation

⁹ Minister Prentice has since moved from the Industry portfolio to that of Environment Canada. The situation is now a complicated one: the original lead department, INAC (which boasts 70% of the regulatory responsibility around MGP), no longer holds the MGP secretariat nor the minister responsible for oil and gas pipelines. Industry Canada, a MGP member with no regulatory responsibility around MGP and no longer headed by the minister responsible for oil and gas pipelines, continues to house the MGP secretariat. Finally, the minister responsible for oil and gas pipelines is now also the Minister of Environment.

was three-fold. First, the federal government did not have the capacity to prepare for both an environmental assessment and joint panel consultation around a major project while coordinating itself at the same time. MGP needed a separate body dedicated solely to coordination. Second, industry wanted single-window access to the federal household so to avoid the complication of having to approach multiple departments and receive different messages. This was certainly not in the best interests of the departments or the federal government. Finally, MPG's legislated timelines necessitated a body that could move things along more expediently than if the departments went about fulfilling their legislative requirements independently, with only informal coordination. A senior official from INAC explained:

Industry wanted a body that oversaw the overall coordination to basically crack the whip, to say, listen, you got to do this government and you have got to do it within reasonable time, and you've got certain departments that may be dragging their heels or it is taking a long time for decisions to be made, so we need a body that is going to pull the household together and make it perform.

The secretariat created in INAC was charged to undertake the ambitious coordination exercise. Its role during the "intervener" stage of the Joint Review Panel process was to coordinate responses and not the content of those responses. This meant ensuring departments filed submissions on time, everyone knew what everyone else was doing, and all potential policy issues that had arisen during the hearings were adequately discussed by senior levels of government and responded to by the federal government.

Though interview participants from MGP's secretariat stressed that their role as a central actor in the network was a procedural one, interview respondents from other departments felt that the secretariat had engaged in substantive management of policy content. Officials from Transportation Canada and Environment Canada went as far as to suggest that the role played by the secretariat in the initiative was one not of process

steering at all, but rather, of policy steering:

Obviously whoever holds the pen, in the recommendations being drafted, has the power. I mean, the tone of everything about the document will be slanted towards the sway of who owns the pen.

I would say, the records of decisions may have reflected a certain point of view, but one not necessary shared by all members of the group. You had leadership who seemed to think they had an ultimate veto, and at times, it appeared, ulterior motives that we weren't always aware of. So often, I would suggest, the committees were dysfunctional.

The need for expedience around the work of the Joint Review Panel may have drawn MGP's lead body into playing a more intrusive role in the network than it had intended. The legislative requirements for submission of documents were both strict and short, and remained in place despite the unique size of the project. This put considerable pressure on MGP's secretariat to lead assertively, if not, aggressively, to ensure timelines were respected. In addition, INAC maintains that more than 70% of the regulatory responsibilities around the project fall on the department. All of this together combines to increase the likelihood that INAC, as network leader would do so not as a more passive network mediator but rather as an active network manager, depicted in figure 1.2 and table 2.1. Speaking to the anticipated upcoming release of recommendations from the Joint Review Panel, one member of the secretariat explained:

While MGP members' frustration with INAC was partly personal, (the result of how the secretariat chose to behave) it was also partly structural, similar to the tension that emerged within TCI between generalists and specialists. Lead organizations tend to be generalists, and this is a source of conflict for member departments that have more particularistic interests. An official from MGP's secretariat described the challenges the secretariat faced as the lead organization for an initiative that draws particularistic

interests. For MGP's secretariat, these challenges drew the secretariat away from a strictly process-oriented role to a policy-framing position:

We have to be less specialist in any particular area and more generalist, and just more aware of the project as a whole. For the most part, the departments are just providing their expertise in their area but we also have to make sure that the Government of Canada is represented. Somebody could say well, in order to really monitor the situation, we would need 500,000 monitors across the Northwest Territories. Well, could we really do that? So we have to say, well, can we really do that? What is realistic? What is actually needed? Being the Coordination Secretariat, we would be keeping an eye on that.

The challenge of collaboration in the presence of sectoral interests compelled MGP's secretariat in its "lead" capacity to play the role of a *network manager* rather than a *network mediator*. The difficulty faced in network management not faced in network mediation, is the former attempts to reconcile (purposively muddle, even) interest in policy with interest in process. It is difficult for a network manager to retain credibility within the network. As Fernandez and Gould (1994) found in their study of U.S. health policy, an actor's structural power (as a central actor managing the policy process) derives from their maintaining neutrality towards substantive issues. While Fernandez and Gould based conclusions on American data of the behaviour of civil servants, Malloy's (2003) study suggests a trade off between the structural position of broker and ideational position of participant exists for civil servants in Canada. Nonetheless, this hypothesis needs further study to confirm its exact operation in the domestic context.¹⁰

In the absence of an actual *Government of Canada* (GOC) administrative body to coordinate departments, initiatives rely on (procedure oriented) lead bodies housed in

¹⁰ There may be reason to believe that the phenomenon is even stronger in Canada, given differences between Westminster parliamentary institutions and the U.S. presidential system. Canadian MPs enjoy considerably greater autonomy from stakeholder groups and this is in part due to their diminished policy influence (see Docherty 1997; Franks 1987). The result is that non-state actors who seek influence with the executive branch cannot rely on individual MPs as their brokers. Canadian civil servants may therefore find themselves in brokerage positions more often than their American counterparts.

(policy oriented) participant departments to perform the coordination function. This causes tension between network members, pronounced in those horizontal initiatives with heavily sectoral memberships such as MGP and TCI.

A difference between MGP and TCI that mediated this tension however was the level of commitment of their members. Members of MGP could not air their frustrations with network leadership by leaving the initiative or even threatening to leave the initiative, as members of TCI could and did. As such, conflict between network members was stronger and more intensive in MGP. Shared an official from Environment Canada:

What I would suggest is that on this file, those leads have seen, or assumed, that they had a control function versus a coordination/facilitation function. Environment Canada might do it if it had been that lead too, but [the secretariat] would put their particular interests forward, I would say, attempting to successfully override other departments' views. There have been extreme amounts of frustration.

In sum, MGP's secretariat has struggled to maintain credibility in the eyes of other departments in part because of a general structurally embedded bias (to which all departmentally housed lead bodies are vulnerable). This is exacerbated by the sectoral composition of MGP membership combined with the nature of the policy issues MGP deals with: a large proposal for oil and gas development necessitating definitive, legislated action by multiple departments within a short and firm timeline. Together, these factors compelled MGP's secretariat into an active *network manager* strategy, steering policy issues as much as the policy process, in order to ensure that the government of Canada perspective was maintained and legislated mandates met.

The network management position played by the MGP secretariat became additionally frustrating for federal organizations when irreconcilable issues at the

working level had to be punted up the chain of command to the ADM-level. *Lead* bodies often connect administrative and political networks, bringing issues of conflict at the working level up to the attention of political networks. Consequently, organizational biases at the working level spill into the political network:

When there are issues, they are raised to the ADMs committee, but often not with a lot of the context. A series of briefing notes were developed for the ADM committee, and it was extremely frustrating because, we kept submitting comments, and the comments, for the most part, seemed to be ignored in the revised versions. While I recognize there is a difference of opinion, maybe the option for the briefing notes should be to lay out the two differing opinions. That wasn't happening, either. So again, it seemed to have a very specific series of messages, that we did not feel we could agree to, and as a result, I would say, there are lingering trust issues, with the authors of those notes, that continue to this day and probably will last until the completion of the project.

This institutionalized bias caused members of the network to feel excluded, despite their best efforts to participate. Levels of trust between members, which serve to lubricate the relations between interdependent members of the network, have lessened over time.

Combined with the diminishing morale that comes with failed efforts to inform collective decision-making, lack of trust in lead actors not only limits the potential of the network to achieve common objectives, it can contaminate future interdepartmental exercises by eroding the potential for network agreement in mandated networks, and reducing participation and commitment in more voluntary networks.

Clarity regarding the roles and responsibilities of lead organizations would have reduced some of the tension between the lead department and network. To this end, the evolutions of reorganization of MGP leadership exacerbated the problem: the transfer of the secretariat from INAC to Industry Canada reduced the clarity of roles and responsibilities of network members further, creating the environment for rule ambiguity:

I think one of the things we are struggling with right now in the transfer to Industry is to really know what the mandate is. Minister Prentice is “responsible for northern pipelines now.” But what does that mean? When I read the order in council that put in place the transfer, the comments are so broad that they don’t mean anything. It appears to pretty much gives them cart blanche to do whatever they think their mandate is.

The recent switch over to the Industry Canada, many of us still haven’t figured out how that works. At least I haven’t. I think we’ve been pushing to try to get more clarification, terms of reference and such on this coordination mechanism, on whether it’s coordinating or control, and I think that is still in process. We didn’t really have that kind of documentation with INAC. So we are having to put a lot of input in because of what we experienced with INAC in trying to figure out how we fit into this new system and what it really means.

Leadership within the HIV/ AIDS network points to the importance of leadership style and concerted efforts on the part of network leads to disentangle process and policy influence. Commented a member of HIV/ AIDS’s lead organization housed in PHAC:

I think we had a certain credibility and a certain trust, because we didn’t present ourselves as having a vested interest, except in a positive outcome for the group. I think there was a certain trust that the process was being managed in a way that respected everyone’s interest. You can’t disregard or disadvantage anybody. You have to have open lines of communication; you have to be seen to be sharing information, openly; you have to have everyone’s interest at heart, and if people give you feedback you have to honour that; and they have to see themselves and their feedback reflected in subsequent versions of draft documents and you have to be prepared to have those bilateral discussions if in fact, what they think they need or need to be doing is not maybe the best approach; you have to be able to be straight forward with them about that.

Individuals in lead organizations must maintain a degree of neutrality in their personal interactions and develop attitudes and interactions that build their credibility, a case that will be developed in detail in chapter four. At this point however, it is suffice to say that clarity and transparency facilitate credibility of lead organizations.

HIV/AIDS FI: Organization and Inclusion

Because interorganizational work in the Federal Initiative to Address HIV/ AIDS in Canada was limited to information sharing and coordinated action (rather than joint

action), conflict stemming from position in the network – though it existed – was less prominent and less disruptive compared to MGP and TCI. Correctional Services Canada (CSC) and the Canadian Institute for Health Research (CIHR) faced unique interorganizational challenges as a result of their varied engagements with the network. CSC's primary struggle was with inclusion. CIHR's struggle was similar, but it resulted from different factors and was overcome differently than CSC. Whereas CSC's attainment of recognition was the result of administrative reorganization and concerted efforts to facilitate group learning, CIHR's triumph stemmed from administrative reorganization as well as the serendipitous backing it was able to obtain from the political network.

Correctional Services Canada

It is fair to say that the Public Health Division at Correctional Services Canada is a lonely player in government and in the HIV/AIDS FI. For one, it is the only operational (direct service delivery) department in the initiative. It is also one of the smallest players, receiving \$3.587 million of the \$90 million devoted to the initiative. While these characteristics affect its ability to engage with the network, they were neither prohibitive nor the most significant factors affecting CSC's involvement. What makes CSC a unique participant in the HIV/AIDS FI is its uncomfortable place at the intersection of security and public health. CSC's members of the HIV/AIDS FI are not fully understood by the "security" people within their own department, nor the "health" and "public health" officials outside of their organization.

Divided loyalties exist for many other departments and agencies, however, the intensity and intimacy of this particular discord for CSC is unparalleled. While many

organizations encounter difficulty reconciling their advocacy of a particular client group with their corporate responsibility within government, CSC is unique in that it is a security centred correctional agency containing a health division. To departments, *including their own*, officials in the health branch at CSC are uncertain they belong anywhere. They are perceived as neither health-centred enough (due to their operational focus on the inmate population) to qualify as a credible actor within public health networks, and neither corrections-centred enough (due to their sectoral focus on public health) to qualify as a central actor within the world of security and within their department's own intra-organizational discussions. As two CSC officials explained:

[Within Corrections], we are not simply another area of operations. We are a service area. But we are different. It is not geared towards addressing criminogenic needs... It's a matter of a part within corrections viewing health and health outcomes as a contributor to re-integration as the same time as [those] outward [see] that our sort of investment in public health is an overall contribution to society and to the health of the Canadian community.

Health is not high up on the agenda for the department, however for us, it is number one.

It is possible to see how these tensions might play out in an area such as harm reduction. Among actors in the policy community for Vancouver's safe-injection program, *Insite*, health and public health professionals are lined up in support of the pilot program, while many (though not all, the Vancouver Police Department being a notable exception) actors involved with security have been somewhat opposed to such measures. In order to have a standing within its own security-centred department for harm-reduction measures within the prison setting (e.g. Methadone Maintenance Treatment) CSC's public health branch must work with external health organizations with which it has previously had no engagement. The problem is CSC has traditionally struggled to gain a standing with public health counterparts in other departments:

The idea, for years in terms of horizontal partnership was that we weren't the first person someone would want to invite to the dance. It's because of the nature of our clientele, really of the work that we do. It does not necessarily engage the interest of others and when it does, it does tend to be situated of course in public safety.

The stigma of CSC stems from what public health officials at CSC perceive as the lack of sympathy among public health officials in other departments, for the health of inmates vis-à-vis other vulnerable populations. One way that CSC public health officials have been able to overcome the stigma of their client base which previously limited their full inclusion in the public health community, is to re-frame public health and correctional services issues and emphasize the common interests and mandates.

What we have found is that we need to ensure that those who gaze at corrections are aware that our efforts in the area of infectious diseases are a direct contribution to public safety. They are not separated. Health is not a criminogenic factor. The majority [of inmates] are serving fixed sentences. They will be leaving our custody, returning to the community.

As such, non-CSC public health officials do not have to feel the same sympathy for inmates that CSC public health officials do, in order to support CSC's public health work but they need to be convinced that addressing the HIV/AIDS epidemic among inmates will have positive repercussions for society more widely. Reframing issues has indeed become the strategy of CSC's public health branch.

Recent reorganization has also elevated the visibility and prominence of public health within corrections and within the federal government, making it easier for the branch to interact with public health officials elsewhere. Originally, public health at CSC had been housed within the Correctional Operations and Programs Sector, led by the assistant deputy minister. Seeking to organize the department to better facilitate interorganizational partnership and collaboration, four new director general positions were created in September 2007, to "take a wider view of CSC's responsibility in

government” stated one CSC official. One of the new director general run sectors became a functionally distinct health services branch, directly under the assistant deputy minister for headquarters. An official from the new branch justified the move as such:

It just was no longer appropriate under law. The health of an individual under corrections law needs to be taken into account in every decision that is made. If there is no voice of health at the senior level of decision makers in corrections, it’s difficult to fully meet that responsibility under the law.

As such, reorganization at CSC has served to raise the visibility of health services within CSC and strengthened the health branch’s capacity to link in with health-oriented peers operating within other departments. It has presented the branch with a significant challenge as well. Better linked in with the public health network, and more visible and vocal at the most senior level within the department itself, health-oriented corrections officials now see their health and security worlds colliding more forcefully. The implication is reorganization to promote partnership contains a self-fulfilling property: visibility within corrections necessitates better integration with external health groups, if that internal prominence is to be transformed into influence:

We’ve acknowledged in recent years that we have a public health responsibility to address the epidemic and disease within our prison walls. We also have needed to find other support. It’s very difficult to drive change within correctional services. We have looked to a much closer alliance with the public health agency because we have to market our programs within the corrections community as well.

CSC’s public health workers now enjoy a substantive seat at the interorganizational HIV/AIDS table. They owe this as much to their department’s own desire to elevate public health through reorganization, as they do to their own interorganizational efforts to educate others in the public health community about the intersections of their mandates. A tour of correction facilities in 2007, initiated by one of the CSC interview participants, was effective in demonstrating to PHAC, the challenges

and issues CSC faced in health care delivery. Finally, the changing locus of the HIV/AIDS epidemic – from men who have sex with men to injection drug users – made the experience and knowledge of CSC more relevant in the context of public health. The rise of HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis C infection amongst Canada's prison population, Aboriginals, and women, and their labelling as *vulnerable populations* in the most recent evolution of HIV/AIDS policy in Canada, necessitated that CSC become more intimately involved in the public health community around HIV/AIDS.

Canadian Institutes for Health Research

Like CSC, the Canadian Institutes for Health Research (CIHR) is a unique member of the HIV/AIDS federal initiative. It too is a member of the initiative through one of its composing sectors (the Institute of Infection and Immunity), rather than a general public health mandate. It is also the only research institute in the network. Unlike CSC, however, these characteristics came as a blessing for the organization in interorganizational discussions. The difference between the experience of CIHR and CSC is strong political support existed for the activities of the CIHR, and significantly less support (if not, opposition) existed for that of CSC.

Within CIHR, the Institute of Infection and Immunity was given the mandate to work with the other federal partners to fulfill the organization's commitment as set out by the federal initiative's Treasury Board submission. The institute receives separate funding through the initiative for running the grants and awards program, as well as associated staffing positions. The Institute's core responsibility is to develop, fund, and report back on request for applications (RFAs) in four key areas: the biomedical clinical stream, the health services and population stream, the clinical trial network, and the

community based research program.

As a new organization, CIHR did not have the experience or visibility to obtain credibility as a public health actor in the eyes of the larger players, the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) and Health Canada. More importantly, it lacked the institutional arrangement to feed into interorganizational structures. For departments like Health Canada or its recently hived off counterpart, PHAC, the institutional structures had been put in place over many years and both were established public health actors. When the government identified an issue as a political priority, they were well positioned, strategically and organizationally, to exploit the opportunity for funding. According to a CIHR official, when the government announced its intention to create a mental health commission in 2003, CIHR had to scramble to create a corresponding mental health portfolio, because one simply did not exist at the time. In general, CIHR has had limited capacity to participate interdepartmentally due to its lack of organizational fit and maturity:

Four or five years ago when CIHR was new, we never got invited to the relevant meetings; and when we got there, we didn't know what we were doing because we didn't really have a policy shop; but now we get involved right away because we are known to be a part of the health portfolio.

Not only did CIHR slowly become known within the bureaucracy, but with the growing emphasis on results in both inter- and intra-departmental work, it also caught the favour of the political world. An HIV/AIDS FI representative from CIHR reported that his organization was much better received by Stephen Harper's Conservative government, which he owes to the results-orientation of research compared with policy development or stakeholder funding:

Research is more tangible. You know what you are getting. "What are you going to do with the money CIHR, if you get a million dollars?" "Well we will

fund ten researchers at universities that you can do announcements at.” What’s Health Canada going to say? “We’ll create some policy.” Does that sound very sexy? And Public Health Agency would say, “we’ll give it away in awards without really peer reviewing it.” I mean, I am dumbing it down. But the reason why I think centre likes us is because we have a 6% admin cost, so for every dollar we get out, 94% goes to research. They like that.

The implication for the HIV/AIDS FI is CIHR has opted to avoid the conventional bargaining strategies that the other organizations have employed in interorganizational meetings around the initiative. This particular CIHR official described the aftermath of a (successful) joint memorandum to cabinet as such: “somehow, at the centre, finance gives you an envelope and then you all fight over it.” CIHR was often challenged by the other departments to justify funding for research. However, it was able to use its standing with the political network to secure favourable outcomes within the bureaucratic network, bypassing the approval or support of the other line departments and agencies:

I’m not going to say I’m powerless and a nobody but come on; let’s be realistic. Who is in charge? You’ve got your DGs, your ADMs, your deputy ministers and your ministers. But there are people that are really strong at the centre – Privy Council Office, Treasury Board, and Finance. I didn’t care what any of my colleagues from other line departments say. Often the guy from finance is the key person in the room.

CIHR’s official in the HIV/AIDS FI employed a unique strategy: he contacted the central agencies policy analysts attending an interdepartmental meeting *beforehand*, in order to run CIHR’s ideas by them, obtain feedback, and negotiate a position or proposal that each analyst from the agencies would expressively agree to support. As a result, CIHR’s official had buy-in from those he considered the most (if not, only) important people around the table (aside from internal senior managers), before the meeting even took place.

The strategy shared by the official from CIHR is an interesting although also, risky one. Disengagement can offend officials from other line departments, affecting future relations. This did not seem to be the case, as CIHR remained internally consistent in its practise of disengagement. CIHR's official not only circumvented the network in the pursuit of his department's mandate but also chose to remain silent on the ambitions of other departments. Not expecting approval from other line departments while also not stepping on the toes of other departments in their pursuit (with central agencies) of their own objectives, CIHR was able to benefit from a joint initiative, without actually having to join in. Not only does the role that CIHR played in the HIV/AIDS network speak to the theoretical validity of the *network abstainer*, it demonstrates that abstention can be advantageous for organizations that seek nonetheless to benefit from interorganizational work. Network abstention is an attractive strategy in the face of strong political backing for an organization in an initiative demanding modest actual joint action to begin with. Departments applied collectively for funding under federal government's announcement of an HIV/AIDS strategy but managed their initiatives separately. Coordination and information sharing comprised the majority of the initiative's other activity.

The Sector Council Program: Bilateral Collaboration and Inclusion

The Sector Council Program is unique amongst the horizontal initiatives: it lacks a formal level of collaboration, and takes place predominantly through the activities of Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC). It thus qualifies as the least horizontal initiative examined in this study. That stated, officials with the program have chosen to engage with other departments to amplify the effect of the program and

the resources that the department has at its disposal through the initiative. The Sector Council Program is an excellent example of horizontal government driven by public servants, rather than political actors (as in TCI) or stakeholders (as in MGP).

Despite these differences, officials within the Sector Council Program face many of the same obstacles in their work as did those within the other three initiatives. It can be difficult to get commitment from other departments to work with the Sector Council Program and it can be difficult to get included in the work of other departments that have human resource dimensions. While the Sector Council Program is an HRSDC initiative, human resource issues affect and are affected by the activities of other departments. For this reason, the Sector Council Program has sought to establish itself as a government of Canada platform. By raising its visibility within the federal government, it is able to engage other departments to think about human resource issues and the sectors that the program supports.

One instance in which HRSDC struggled to gain inclusion was in the area of air transportation. Over the years, the regulatory framework under which Transport Canada operated changed, and these changes had impacts for resources and skills development in that industry. Because Transport Canada lacked a human resource mandate, human resource implications were not considered before, nor addressed following regulatory reform. HRSDC's Sector Council Program had to approach Transport Canada, engage them on the issue of human resources and skills development and persuade them to consider the impacts in the pursuit of their departmental mandate. As a result, HRSDC and Transport Canada now comprise an action group, and the Aviation Maintenance Sector Council, as one HRSDC official reported, is depended upon more today by Transportation Canada than it is by HRSDC. In turn,

HRSDC funds projects to develop or adjust the skills of workers against new regulations for the industry.

Another instance in which HRSDC was able to overcome the inclusion problem relates to the Asia-Pacific Gateway Skills Table (APGST). A skills table (the APGST being the first of its kind) is a temporary sector council created to address regional human resource issues with national significance. The APGST was established through a joint memorandum to Cabinet, signed by the Minister of Human Resources and the Minister of Transportation Canada. HRSDC was able to achieve the skills table as a result of strong interorganizational awareness and political sensitivity. Prior to the initiative, Transportation Canada, Industry Canada, and International Trade Canada had been developing an initiative for physical infrastructure of the pacific gateway including investments in the Canadian Pacific rail line between Vancouver and Manitoba and a new intermodal facility in Prince George. HRSDC had not been involved in the initiative but felt that it affected their mandate. Gleaning from the Speech from the Throne, budget announcements and policy statements that a pacific gateway initiative was developing, HRSDC approached Transport Canada and Industry Canada requesting a standing at their next meeting to demonstrate why human resource issues needed to form a part of their overall strategy. Because much of the work around the project had already been underway, HRSDC faced some resistance that might have avoided had they been able to get in earlier. As one HRSDC official stated, "It's inevitable that people get a bit of tunnel vision; initially you want to build the whole grand thing and then reality sets in and you say, 'well what's doable is this.'" In particular, the initiative had restricted its focus to physical infrastructure projects with monies already allocated. This made it difficult for the departments to want to consider

issues beyond the scope of the project. Because the Sector Council Program enjoyed generous funding from the federal government, it was able to insert itself into the Pacific gateway initiative nonetheless, bringing its own project funding to the table. One HRSDC official explained: “If we say, we’re not asking for more money; we have the program money; we just want to make sure there’s coherence of investment, there’s a lot of receptivity to that.”

In sum, despite HRSDC’s sole “ownership” of the Sector Council Program, its officials nonetheless faced the same challenges encountered by officials involved in initiatives owned jointly by many federal bodies. Its ability to overcome these challenges was due to the financial resources it drew from the federal government, and the program’s own bureaucratic leadership. Managers for the Sector Council Program unapologetically hire individuals that they believe have an “entrepreneurial bent” to them and who have “process skills” to raise the visibility of the program and establish links into other departments. As a result of a particular type of recruitment and middle-management leadership, members of the program refer to interorganizational work as just the way they do things:

We talk to colleagues across departments; we look at the RPPs of the departments; when we get phone calls like “We are doing a forestry strategy and want to put an MC together” – there is always an interdepartmental committee when a memorandum to cabinet is being prepared – we go to the meeting and say, “okay, have you thought of the skills impact or the HR impact of your plan?” and they say, “no we haven’t so how should we go about this?” We say, “well maybe you should put a part of your annex to cover a skills issue, an HR issue, a sector council, and get funding out of that...”

An insight provided by HRSDC’s experience with the Sector Council Program is even outside of formal horizontal initiatives such as MGP, TCI and the HIV/AIDS FI, the work of federal public servants can become heavily interdepartmental. This is because

vertical and horizontal initiatives have impacts for the vertical and horizontal initiatives of other departments. Vertical initiatives in the federal government are becoming horizontal as departments link in with the activities of other departments to draw in additional funding and better achieve their departmental mandate. This was the case when HRSDC worked with Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) to see the issue of human resources included in the latter's memorandums to cabinet. When HRSDC received a copy of NRCan's cabinet document, it convinced the department to add a human resources component to their forestry sector strategy; with the additional money that NRCan drew in, HRSDC put together a forestry sector council. In the words of an HRSDC official, "it can go really far, this cooperation. We can get extra resources."

Conclusion

The challenges of interdepartmental collaboration seems to turn on a few issues: whether collaboration is politically mandated, the nature of political interest in the network and in particular members of the network, the organization of departments, the organization of administrative leadership and the types of decisions that are taken or made within the network.

TCI faced a participation and commitment problem due to the absence of central agency funding for its activities, which was exacerbated by the organization of international trade in government along sectoral lines. Departments struggled to establish common interests while at the same time, extracting particularistic benefits for their clients; tensions between DFAIT and other departments arose; and the need to contribute funding each year eventually led to many members dropping off. Strategic policy direction (supported by a small membership) and joint service delivery

(supported by a large membership) were difficult to reconcile. Members central to the network (Agriculture, DFAIT, and Industry Canada) relied upon members less central to the network for a critical mass, but this critical mass simultaneously diluted focus around a common aim. This left central members exhausted from the energies committed to making collaboration work, and less central members frustrated with the lack of ownership and benefit that the network was supposed to provide them. Changes in political interest over time exacerbated these tensions, leading to termination of the formality of interaction around international business development.

MGP did not face participation or commitment problems like TCI because of legislative requirements that mandated the departments to work together, as well as a successful joint memorandum to cabinet that drew \$225 million dollars of central government funding into the network. Conflict within MGP however arose as a result of the lack of clarity of the roles and responsibilities of its lead body, exacerbated by its re-organization three times over the years, the rigidity of its members' mandates and need for expedience around them. For some member departments, there are lingering trust issues related to the mediate-versus-participate component of the secretariat's role as network manager in the initiative. TCI's leadership came in the form of a rotating chair, whereas in MGP, the lead organization was a more permanent body, housed in one of the member organizations, which called into question its policy-neutrality. Lack of clarity regarding what federal versus responsible authorities can contribute at the working level further complicated interactions between the organizations.

HIV/AIDS experienced little interagency conflict due to (to the dismay of some) the limitation of the initiative's activities to information sharing, coordination, and reporting. In comparison, MGP and TCI demanded high levels of commitment and

engagement in order to produce joint actionable outcomes.

The public health portfolio is also distributed more narrowly across the federal departments than is international development or northern oil and gas development, the result of both how the federal administration has been historically structured around these issues as well as how actors have opted to frame them. Inclusion was, however, an obstacle for two departments involved with HIV/AIDS at different points in time, resulting in some tension between administrative actors. For Correctional Services Canada, exclusion resulted from the internal organization of the department, which limited external visibility of its public health mandate, along with both the department's lack of experience with collaboration, and the network's lack of understanding of the department's potential contribution to addressing HIV/AIDS in Canada. CIHR's involvement, limited at first due to its lack of experience and poor organization around political priorities for interorganizational work, became enhanced by later political support for its activity. This allowed the department to opt out of interorganizational bargaining - and thus conflict - altogether within the network while reaping the benefits of the network in terms of funding through joint Treasury Board submissions.

Finally, the Sector Council Program faced the least amount of interagency conflict. However, this was not due to its vertical integration but rather, to managerial leadership and recruitment practices combined with significant funding from the Treasury Board, which made it much easier for Sector Council staff to gain entry into other departments' initiatives.

Taken together, a few lessons are learned about interorganizational work in government. First, the internal organization of departments matter to horizontal government, determining who is visible, has expertise, and deserves inclusion in the

network. This was the experience for CIHR and CSC in the HIV/AIDS network.

The establishment of clear roles and responsibilities, particularly of lead organizations is important to the development of trust between members of the network and credibility of the lead organization. Lead organizations are vulnerable to accusations of bias due to their boundary-spanning role within the network, particularly in initiatives that feature many sectoral members and simultaneously have large expectations (i.e. short timeline, joint action as purpose, and significant scope), which further pressure lead organizations to practice network management. Having a rotational lead organization, as did TCI, may minimize this conflict around network leadership, but it is unlikely to resolve the issue if some network members come to interorganizational work with a reputation for dominance and unilateralism. Animosity towards DFAIT in TCI and INAC in MGP indicate that decisions about which body leads and whether that body should be a “generalist” department, must be given careful consideration; the unequal distribution of power in policy networks can pose a serious threat to democratic governance, resulting in procedural and substantive exclusion of some network members. Indeed, this is a major finding of Greenaway et al (2007: 734) in their study of the 1997 relocation of a public hospital under a private funding initiative in Britain.

The nature of work within the network is also a strong indicator of the types of challenges that its members (including lead organizations) will face in interorganizational work. Activities such as information sharing, coordination, and reporting, demand fewer departmental compromises and result in less jurisdictional conflict, than activities such as joint delivery and strategic policy direction, which can be unavoidably zero-sum.

The overall framing of a policy issue not only constrains the nature of participation but also affects what is achievable through collaboration. Invoking a broad notion of public health would have warranted the involvement of all departments with any mandate affecting *the determinants of health*, and this would have necessitated a much more inclusive membership (e.g. the Canadian Housing Corporation) than the one that exists under the current HIV/AIDS strategy in Canada. Since the network's activities were limited to information sharing and some coordination, this may not have been fatal to network functioning in HIV/AIDS as it was for Team Canada Inc. Team Canada Inc suffered from a broad notion of "international development" in an ambitious initiative, warranted only by the absence of central government funding.

This is in contrast to the Sector Council Program, which departed from the TCI model; it was neither highly formalized, nor involved all departments with human resource development issues, much less simultaneously. Its success (now in its fifteenth year of existence) speaks to the attributes of financially supported vertical initiatives that engage informally and bilaterally in collaboration, with its management left to officials.

5 PUNCTUATED WORLDS

Relations between Administrative and Societal Actors

Introduction

The changing nature of state-society relations in Canada has in part, prompted this study. Scholars have for some time attempted to conceptualize these relations. At a general level, the state has been engaging more with societal groups, affecting both the breadth and scope of non-state influence over policy making (Walker 1983, Cairns and Williams 1985, Pross 1992). In the 1990s, however, scholars began to desert ambitions to understand the state in the aggregate, as it became clearer that fragmentation of state and society necessitated more nuanced analyses. Interest moved away from the macro-level and towards the meso (or sectoral) level where Coleman and Skogstad (1990) persuasively contended that the greatest and most meaningful variation in state-society relations lay.

This is not to say that macro-level factors – in Canada: a federal system, parliamentary government, strict party discipline, the size of legislature, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms – do not impact the relationship between government and society but rather, that their affect is mediated by variance along other dimensions at the sectoral level (Coleman and Skogstad 1990: 19). Thus, based on macro-level factors, while we would expect state-society relations in Canada to reflect “pressure group politics”, any deviations we find at the sectoral level must be the result of some mediating factors that vary across particular policy issues addressed by their policy

communities. These mediating factors include, characteristics of the policy (distributive, redistributive, or regulatory), the autonomy of the state to formulate preferences independent of society, the capacity of the state to carry out decision-making and implementation, and finally, the organization of societal interests including their degree of representativeness, integration, policy expertise, financial resources, and autonomy (Howlett and Ramesh 2003).

These factors are in turn affected by the broader political system and society, including changing values, ideas, and institutions. When these things change, as they do over time, it can affect the relationships between state and societal actors in a given sector. As Coleman and Skogstad (1990) have suggested, relationships that are normally characterized by *pressure pluralism* can momentarily become *state directed*, as governments intervene with procedural instruments to strengthen or foster new interest associations in order to gain legitimacy for their policy preferences (see Pal 1993; Burt 1990). Other pressure pluralism relationships, spurred by an external crisis, have become more formalized, in the face of a state with good capacity and autonomy, leading to a corporatist network. In contrast, relationships in which societal actors once enjoyed *concertation* with the state, have transformed into pressure group politics as the result of new ideas and actors pressing for access to the policy process.

When relationships need to change, as Coleman and Skogstad demonstrate they do, how do state and societal actors adjust? It is not difficult to see how this might be challenging work; cultures are sticky and slow to evolve, even in the face of formal structural changes. This can lead to contestation between old rules and new rules, or between ambiguously held new rules. Further to that, does adjustment or failure to adjust affect the performance of policy networks?

Changing political and policy processes have indeed placed demands on the relationship between state and societal actors. New structures for interaction necessitate changing relations between actors and this produces challenges for both stakeholders and civil servants related to power and influence. This chapter will examine the relationship between administrative and societal actors within the Sector Council Program and the Federal Initiative to Address HIV/AIDS, highlighting the importance of political leadership and a particular professional skill set at the officials level to the productiveness of bureaucratic-society collaboration.

The challenge for administrative actors is to adjust their behaviour to promote long-term collegial relations in support of collaboration-based decision-making. They will have to allow for flexibility in the behaviour of stakeholders and in their relations with them. Thus, while collegiality is the equilibrium of bureaucratic-stakeholder relations in collaborative government, it will inevitably be punctuated by brief periods of conflict that stem from rigid institutional boundaries. In particular, departmental mandates may compel bureaucrats to play multiple conflicting roles in their relations with stakeholder groups (Malloy 2003). The government's formal approvals processes can also lead to political decisions that conflict with collaborative agreements produced at the working level. When this occurs, it diminishes the influence that stakeholders have through bureaucratic collaboration vis-à-vis advocacy work and lobby activities directed at policymakers. Stakeholders need to be able to resort to non-collegial tactics at different stages of the policy process, because they are inside actors in informal bureaucratic networks, but outside actors in political networks where actual decisions get made.

Table 5.1 Key Challenges in Interorganizational Work within Bureaucratic-Stakeholder Relations

	Horizontal Initiative	
	HIV/AIDS FI	SCP
Level of conflict	High	Low
Key Challenges	Inclusion Agreement Collegiality	Inclusion
Source of Challenge	Conflated roles of civil servants (collaborator and decision-maker)	Conflicting roles of civil servants (collaborator and regulator)

HIV/AIDS FI: From Antagonism to Collaboration

HIV/AIDS policy has a long history of stakeholder involvement and has always been a stakeholder driven issue. As one respondent from PHAC explained, when HIV/AIDS first emerged in the 1980s as an epidemic, the lack of responsiveness of governments compelled community groups to adopt an activist approach in their relations with the federal government:

People were dying. Governments were slow to respond. Individuals in the community were disturbed, anxious, fearful. There was a sense of urgency in the community to address and develop a response to this epidemic. So, the strategies that were adopted then were what we refer to as advocacy and activist work. We go into government and we demand certain things. We march, we picket, we send letters, that sort of stuff. It was in your face; it was confrontational.

Over the last couple decades, the federal government has engaged with the HIV/AIDS community but that engagement has always taken the form of consultation followed by a policy response. In the most recent HIV/AIDS strategy, the federal government funded the participation of various fractions of society in the development of pan-Canadian strategic approaches to HIV/AIDS policy. When the stakeholder community approached the federal government in 1997 calling upon it to develop a new plan for

Canada, instead of turning to the bureaucracy to develop a policy proposal, Minister of Health, Allan Rock made the public announcement that the public-health bodies of the federal government were to work *with* the stakeholder community to submit *one* plan to government. As one PHAC official recalled:

A lot of people in the past have said “government, you fix it. It is your responsibility.” Government is now saying “No, we are going to work in partnership with a number of people who have an interest in this issue and we all have something to add.”

As Allan Rock himself stated, “A Canadian strategy cannot be designed by the federal government alone. All Canadians have a role to play (Minister of Health 1998).” To this end, the federal government convened members of the HIV/AIDS community together to develop a single plan and this resulted in the documents *Leading Together* and *the Canadian HIV Vaccines Plan* both of which set out high-level goals and objectives for public health actors to guide their work. While the collaborative exercises were federally funded, PHAC officials emphasized they were not government documents, an important feature of the process for gaining cooperation and ownership from stakeholders:

The government does not own *Leading Together*. We don’t own the document; no one owns the document and that is the value of this document; it’s not a report card; it’s a set of guidelines, it’s a set of objectives, and the way it is laid out, if you are involved in any aspect of HIV/AIDS, the document provides the guidelines.

The Canadian HIV Vaccines Plan is not just a plan for government; it includes all of the stakeholders, who would ultimately have a role in the initiative. It was extremely collaborative. We were a partner but we were not the leader; we were not the owner. And the report is not a government report. In a sense we functioned as the secretariat and funder but it’s not our document.

While the health minister’s call for collaboration produced a new process for policymaking around HIV/AIDS, it has not translated into stable, collegial relations

between the bureaucracy and stakeholders. The collaborative engagement of communities groups that marks the most recent policy process to HIV/AIDS in Canada continues to bump up against antagonistic relations that have historically developed between state and society actors in this sector. In particular, state-society relations around HIV/AIDS have taken the form of *pressure-pluralism*: interest groups lobby government to take action, and governments responds (however insufficient) through new policies.

As one director general from PHAC confessed, it is difficult to cultivate a collaborative environment in the current era when there were lingering issues around power present. HIV/AIDS stakeholders have come to understand bureaucrats as power-holders:

Stakeholders perceive that we have the power; that government has the power because government is controlling the decisions, the policy decisions and priorities, which translates into money. And the interest groups are trying to influence it, because they are not in a decision-maker.

There is also conflict between the two groups as a result of different institutional cultures and associated roles and responsibilities, which translate into divergent practices, beliefs, and languages used by the two groups. An official from Health Canada echoed the sentiments widely shared by PHAC staff:

It is sometimes difficult to collaborate because you are coming from different mindsets, I've got this surveillance hat on and they've got the community advocacy role and sometimes you sit in meeting with them and you know you probably want the same things but we're talking two different languages and can't seem to get there with our different perspectives.

It is difficult to see how collaboration can take place in the absence of a new facilitating culture. Collaboration invites stakeholders to share decision-making power with public agencies, not formally in making decisions (bureaucrats are not formal decision-makers

either), but informally in making recommendations. However, this requires significant change in the way public servants and stakeholders interact and while the minister's call for new structures helps to facilitate collegiality, it is by no means sufficient.

Negotiating New Relationships

The problem that civil servants encountered in attempting to collaborate with stakeholders around HIV/AIDS was that the previous relationship (in which the federal administration did not share informal decision-making space and stakeholders resorted to pressure-group tactics) was not compatible with collaborative processes *but* continued to inform their interactions.

Reasons for the incompatibility between antagonistic relationships and collaborative structures are nuanced. In order for public servants to share decision-making space with stakeholders, public servants feel that stakeholders must provide input beyond their particularistic interests. One PHAC official made the point that,

It's easy for interest groups to say, "on an ethical basis or moral basis...", or "this is what we need to do from a human rights perspective..." but when you are developing public policy, there are other responsibilities that go with that. We have to say, listen, sure, but you just can't come at this from a human rights perspective; we need to look at economic considerations, we need to look at international implications.

The rationale here is simple though not self-evident: with authority comes accountability (or at least, responsibility). To be a decision-maker, stakeholders must take ownership of all aspects of the policies they participate in making. While their primary interest may be in health outcomes for a particular group, for collaboration to work, they must also take an interest in and responsibility for all the economic, political, and social dimensions of the issues as well. Otherwise the balance of power shifts unevenly towards societal groups, who enjoy direct influence over (informal) decisions without

the burden of accountability. One of the interview participants from PHAC summarized this well in saying:

Now, the challenge is this. The government is saying we are willing to work collaboratively with you, in partnership. If the government has articulated this approach and is willing to work in partnership, I would think that this would require a change in tactics from civil society, a change in language from them. You no longer have to picket; you no longer have to be doing confrontational stuff. You have something to contribute. By whining all the time, you contribute nothing. Your role is to provide strategic policy advice. Now we are providing you with the resources so that you are in a better position to provide substantive evidence-based advice to the department, to the agency, to the minister, etc.

For civil servants in the HIV/AIDS network, collaboration is valued not because of the diverse interests that groups hold but rather, the ideas and expertise they possess.

While those ideas and expertise may be interest-driven, it is not the interests (and their advocacy) per se that are important. All member parties have interests in both the general (e.g. public health) and the particular (e.g. funding for AIDS research); the general interest and the expertise and ideas that derive from the particular interest are expressed, but not the particularistic interest itself. Implicit in the act of inviting stakeholders to the decision-making table is members already agree on a problem and the need for a solution. It is action-oriented work that is of value to bureaucratic-stakeholder collaboration.

According to bureaucrats at PHAC, political leadership was fundamental to the initial change in behaviour of both the bureaucrats and stakeholders. In practice, it allowed the previous power differential to become somewhat equalized. For the public servants, they were compelled to “listen differently”: “you listen with ‘I’m going to have to make this work’, versus, going in with your position, and supporting your position.” The political leadership also empowered the stakeholders to own not only

their inputs into the policy process, but to own the proposed policy itself, *the outputs*, as a joint decision-maker, reducing the potential for conflict between the bureaucracy and stakeholder. Simply put, it compelled stakeholders into reciprocal authority and responsibility. Putting non-governmental partners in the same position that department representatives often find themselves in, having to mull over and reconcile all the various, at times conflicting, dimensions of policy options, only works to fuse the organizational cultures of the two environments (in essence, rule alignment), allowing for greater sympathy and understanding of the other. Indeed, the majority of respondents indicated that working with provincial governments was somewhat less difficult than working with non-state actors because of the common understanding that came from having similar obstacles and organizational cultures.

In some respect, the political mandate for administration-stakeholder collaboration made the work of public servants and stakeholders more difficult and in particular, delivered more power to one over the other in the relationship. For federal public health officials, the issue is, the formal accountability of the public service to the minister of the department did not exist for the affected societal groups. Combining this with the reality that the disparity in resources and expertise between the government bureaucracy and societal groups has diminished over time, societal groups can have an upper hand in the exercise of collaborative government where they are intelligent, articulate, resourceful, and authorized by the minister to have equal input in decisions. No child is ignorant of the fact that it is both unfair and unequal when a parent announces she will have to share equally her toys with the neighbour's kid. Such a parental mandate prompts the fears of exploitation from the neighbour's kid, along the lines of, *if I can't have ALL the toys, I'll tell. I'll tell* is just as relevant to the situation in

which public servants feel placed when mandated by their superiors to work with external groups:

They [stakeholders] know the political game. They can call the ministers up any time they want. So really, the stakeholders have the upper hand. They could call the minister's office and say, that "so-and-so, she is just being a real bitch. She's being really difficult to deal with and she's not listening to us." You always worry about that because you are there to support the minister, the democratic principle of the public service.

On the other hand, the political mandate to collaborate also limited the ambitions of stakeholders by partially transferring the burden that public servants previously carried for reconciling particular and general interests, to the peak organizations. Referring to the need to consider all the dimensions of public policy, one official remarked:

Government, we always have to do that; that's why we can't make a decision, because we have to consider so many variables, so we are comfortable in that. But for stakeholders to be put in that situation... not everyone is comfortable because you have your constituents to answer to. If it was Mothers Against Drunk Driving saying, "it's going to cost \$3 billion dollars to do this, maybe we have to come up with another plan?" they would have all of their constituencies saying, "no, you go for the Cadillac."

This sacrifice (of the pursuit of particularistic interests) that stakeholders have to make (and have to justify to their constituents) in order to gain a seat at the decision making table has not always paid off for stakeholders. For this reason, collaboration marks the *structure* for state-society relations around HIV/ AIDS today, but does not invariably translate into collegial *relations*. In discussing collaboration with members of the HIV/ AIDS federal initiative, I discovered that interactions could not always be collaborative because of the formal processes of decision-making that inherently limit the information that societal actors have access to and therefore, their full participation in decision-making.

The paradox is the HIV/AIDS federal initiative gives privileged stakeholders equal access to the informal mechanisms of power, but it does not change the fact that stakeholders are *stake* holders, not *decision* holders. They have a vested interest in the outcome but they do not make the formal decisions. When the work of political networks does not amount to a rubber stamp on the work of officials-level networks, this represents a real threat to the collaborative relationship. When political outcomes do not align with the consensus established through administrative-societal collaboration, stakeholders can revert to the role of an advocacy group. “They may bitch and complain and be pissed off at us, and write us nasty letters” says one official for the HIV/AIDS federal initiative. “They are often pissed off at us because they think that we are government. We often become the messenger, you know, the bad guy who stands in for whoever made the decision, and we obviously don’t make the decision, right?” says another.

When policy proposals sent up the hierarchy of government are different on the way back down, stakeholders become, justifiably upset. Having accepted a muzzle on advocacy in exchange for direct influence in officials-level policymaking, stakeholders expect their sacrifice to translate into real influence, as per their notion of the *payoff rules* of collaboration, outlined in table 2.1. When it does not, they may wonder what the point was of abandoning advocacy if officials-level policymaking does not actually inform the actual decision at the political-level. This raises the question, are governments asking too much when they expect stakeholders to take a collegial seat at the imaginary decision-making table? The answer is yes, if the contention of some scholars (e.g. Fischer 2006) is accepted, namely that “the state cannot initiate genuine empowerment because state orchestration always will be instrumental to state interests

(Bogason and Musso 2006:7).” This notion of “state interests” however, does not quite fit with existing understandings of policy processes, which present decision-making as a process more complex and involved than the steering of a ship by a single, monolithic policy maker (see Kingdon 1995; Teisman 2000; Howlett 2007). One thing is certain: the greater the unpredictability of political decision-making and the less integrated departments become due to unravelling departmental loyalties, the more challenging collaboration with stakeholders will be, and the more likely such exercises will be riddled with longer and more frequent periods of stakeholder antagonism, negating collaboration altogether. Fortunately, public servants involved with the HIV/ AIDS FI have developed several mechanisms to cope with these relationship perturbations.

Skills and Coping Mechanisms

Because the policy process is not a static one, and there are points in time when non-state actors stop being collaborators and become outsiders again, public servants need to be able to maintain their relationship with non-state actors, even as it goes through temporary but sharp periods of antagonism characteristic of pressure-group politics. The virtues identified by public servants involved in the HIV/ AIDS FI are to communicate clarity of roles, responsibilities, and policy processes, exercise patience (and tolerance) during periods of antagonism, and at times even, help channel that antagonism into productive realms. Finally, public servants should develop inter and intraorganizational awareness in order to practice *parallel policy development*: collaboration with stakeholders, other departments, and departmental seniors simultaneously, synchronizing veto points that would otherwise fall in linear rounds.

At the individual level, public servants within the HIV/AIDS network utilized their knowledge of the policy process to transform pressure-based relations with stakeholder groups back into collaboration ones when decisions needed to go through multiple stages and therefore, several veto points. Process knowledge was important to collaborative relations because stakeholders often lacked an understanding of the structures and processes of government, *the rules of the game*. For the most part, to the HIV/AIDS stakeholder community, public servants within one department were undifferentiated from actors at the political level and within other departments. An official from CIHR recalls attending a vaccine initiative consultation, which many AIDS advocacy groups had also attended. According to this official, advocacy groups had been a bit upset because in launching the new vaccine initiative, monies had been taken away from the original HIV/AIDS federal initiative. While the decision to create the new vaccine initiative and transfer funding to it had been a political decision that some bureaucrats were just as miffed by, the advocacy groups' frustrations and complaints fell on the very bureaucrats that were in attendance:

These advocacy groups were like "You've taken the money away. Why, why are you doing this?" But we didn't do anything. We are just doing our job here. A widespread understanding of the difference between a political decision and what government does? It does not exist.

Misunderstandings about the role of government and the culture and institutions in which public servants must operate can result in souring of relations between bureaucrats and stakeholders and these misunderstandings can happen often. Public servants in the HIV/AIDS FI expressed extreme frustration with the lack of understanding that non-governmental actors had of government processes. Time was the major agitator. Non-governmental partners frequently wanted to know why it was

taking so long to hear back from senior bureaucrats, and ultimately, from the Treasury Board or Privy Council Office or Finance. In other cases, non-governmental partners would be waiting for the line departments themselves to gain consensus around an issue and proceed to action. According to the bureaucrats, this was aggravating for non-government groups. When it happened, old relationships (attitudes, positions, and tones) emerged. At worst, it caused stakeholders to no longer find credible or trustworthy, their allies in the public service. At best, stakeholders were less likely to act collegially with public servants in the future. Because public servants in the HIV/AIDS FI depended on stakeholders for legitimacy, expertise, implementation, and therefore effectiveness, this was detrimental to their work.

As such, an important skill for bureaucrats to have in collaboration with stakeholders was an ability to understand and communicate well, the structure, processes, and boundaries of government. To transform the antagonistic relationship between public servants and stakeholders into a collegial one, (or to prevent a collegial one from breaking down), bureaucrats can, as one PHAC official put it, help stakeholders understand who makes decisions, both “who they should be lobbying and meeting with” – politicians – “and who they should be inviting to their annual general meeting” – bureaucrats. Public servants also need to be clear about (and patient when explaining) the constraints in which they are operating.

If I say, it’s going to take us about a year and a half to move this through the various legislative approval processes, civil society would say, why is it going to take you so long? I have to sit down and explain to them that it has to go this step of approval; it has to go to Cabinet; it has to go to PCO; it has to go to Treasury Board; it has to be voted on in the House and that’s going to take a whole legislative agenda to get that through and we’re lucky if we are going to get that through by the end of the year. They say, “Government is taking too long and is wasteful.” Civil society does not understand the complexity of government bureaucracies and part of our job here is to be patient enough to

explain to them how these approval processes work, and we are getting better at that.

In explaining government processes to stakeholders, public servants also need to exercise patience and learn not to take things personally. This is particularly true during episodes of pressure-pluralism politics. Some would even go as far as to say that public servants should help stakeholders to channel that antagonism further.

This marks the second strategy that public servants developed to cope with antagonism in their relationship with stakeholder groups, which entailed actually embracing it. The rationale for some members of the HIV/AIDS FI was that policymaking could at times be better influenced from outside of the bureaucracy. Public health officials that shared with stakeholders a personal interest in and passion for the substantive issues around HIV/AIDS explained that they saw it as their role as public servants to support and facilitate stakeholders in developing an *outside initiation* strategy for policy influence when inside strategies (collaboration) failed. Some bureaucrats in the HIV/AIDS federal initiative went as far as to express esteem for and gratefulness to what they considered the “irate stakeholder.” The notion that “that’s their role” (to be angry with us), and “we owe a lot to them for it” (in terms of affecting public policy) because “not everything can be achieved from inside” was shared by some members of the HIV/AIDS FI:

The most successful bureaucrat in terms of moving these kinds of things forward is [one] who understands how to harness and work with the communities that can advocate from outside government and how to compliment that with the work inside government. It absolutely, achieves the best result. Because you simply cannot do it within government. Certain kinds of things have to be done through a political process.

We would never have achieved what we have in HIV/AIDS without an incredibly strong community out there that advocates and knocks on politicians doors and makes sure there is money and makes sure there is commitment, and

makes sure that ministers are on board, every year, every decade, every step of the way. We could not have done it. We would not have done it. We would not be where we are.

As Donald Savoie (2003, 2008a) has explained, bureaucratic loyalties can be drawn downward to the client groups (and often are, at the working level). It has become less possible to negotiate entry into the world of politics through (the lower echelons of) the bureaucracy under a larger, more centralized government. As a result, lower level bureaucrats can feel that their influence over policy may be better secured through the support that they can provide to client groups to knock on the doors of the powers that be. As such, the value of the bureaucracy in the absence of a standing with PMO may be less its function as a gateway to politics as it is its function as a depository of knowledge about the policy process (“the rules of the game”) and the policy issues, which utilized in combination with stakeholders’ outside “privilege”, can be an effective alternative route to impacting public policy.

That’s part of the role of a good bureaucrat, is to make sure that those folks [stakeholders] know who makes decisions, who they should be writing letters to. And I think when you work together effectively with stakeholder communities, not others in government, that’s a big part of how you can be effective.

In sum, antagonism that has arisen as a result of inconsistencies between decisions taken in informal working level networks and formal political networks has led some members of the HIV/AIDS network to seek fulfillment as public servants by supporting stakeholders in impacting policy from outside government. Instead of aiming to minimize antagonism, this strategy is to harness it.

The third and final strategy that emerged from the interviews deviates from activities described above to either minimize or utilize antagonism; instead, this strategy is about preventing antagonism altogether. That is, antagonism was avoided altogether

by public servants who could successfully employ the practice of parallel policy development, along the lines of Kingdon's *policy entrepreneur*. Policy entrepreneurs search for policy windows – a fleeting moment in which a problem has gained recognition and a politically feasible solution exists to address it – in order to push issues onto the government agenda for action. They are continually testing the waters, hovering around each “stream” of policymaking (politics, problems, solutions), trying to find something that fits.

This picture of a meddling policy craftsman applied to some civil servants that collaborated with stakeholders under the HIV/AIDS FI. Collaborative government did not take place serially or linearly, something which Kingdon also rejects of the process of agenda-setting. Public servants did not seek out political approval, then departmental approval, then client approval, or any other order. The notion of *order* did not apply. As officials reported, approaching stakeholders first, and proceeding to approval from the political realm after a clear consensus has been reached at the working level around a policy proposal, would have been dangerous, because negative political reception damages the morale of departments and stakeholders alike, and loosens commitment to future rounds of collaboration.

You need the political okay about the scope because otherwise, as the bureaucracy, you are creating all these expectations with stakeholders. Say it gets up to the political level and they say, “What the heck are you doing? This does not support the government’s agenda.” And that is not a nice place to be. Then you have got stakeholders not happy and the bureaucracy not happy.

Approaching the political realm for approval first however, would also have damaged bureaucratic-stakeholder relations. Stakeholders would have felt left out, and been less likely to take ownership in the absence of early engagement.

Parallel policy development demands of public servants high levels of inter- and

intra- organizational awareness including political awareness. A challenge however, is the difficulty civil servants encounter in getting informal messages up and down the hierarchy of government, a point that chapter six and seven will discuss. When public servants are successful in receiving and sending messages, there is still also the possibility that political minds may change during the formal approvals processes. As a director general from PHAC commented:

Sometimes, you have got everything cooked, but when it goes through the cabinet process, well that's a whole different process; a lot can change and you can't say anything until it comes out the other end. So what you hope is that you've done a good job so that it doesn't change, but you never know.

The complexity of government, including layers of accountabilities and veto points can make parallel collaboration an impossible science, an unstable craft, and an ugly art.

Despite the challenges that collaboration with stakeholders presented for officials within the HIV/AIDS network, it was nonetheless considered to be valuable work resulting in a better product and better (implementation) process:

At the end of the day, when you've got something, it is so solid; it is so solid and easy to implement - it is the way you all dream of public policy - interests groups are really at the table and influencing it; they understand why compromises were made, and they have to be [because] their role is to explain that to their constituents.

It does take a lot of work. Things would go a lot faster if I was the only one doing this, but it wouldn't be as good as it could be because without the input of the people who really know about STIs, then it wouldn't be as good as it could be. So that is the kind of tradeoff. By involving all these different partners, it does slow things up, that's the reality of it but it will be a better product for it.

Public servants were adamant that collaboration - the time and energy it takes to do and the unique skill set it demands - is worth it. While challenges exist in evolving relationships to support new collaborative structures, they are surmountable. In the case of the Sector Council Program, obstacles to collegiality are even fewer.

Sector Council Program: From Corporatism to Collaboration

Officials within the Sector Council Program were also sensitive to the potential for antagonism in their relationships with stakeholders. The experience of the Sector Council Program deviates from that of the HIV/AIDS network however, in that its officials encountered little hostility in their work with stakeholders.

HRSDC was successful in developing a strategy for stakeholder engagement that stabilized and institutionalized their relationship. This strategy included letting stakeholders lead, rewarding and thereby institutionalizing stakeholder investments in networking, and providing clarity about roles and responsibilities, including clear periods in which bureaucrats would momentarily take over leadership. It is important to note however, that though sector council staff was able to avoid antagonistic relations with stakeholders, there were also fewer pressures on the program vis-à-vis the HIV/AIDS network which had the effect of simultaneously reducing the demands on HRSDC staff to move potentially antagonistic relations to more productive ones.

Reconciling Conflicting Roles

Though a collegial culture already existed between government officials and stakeholders when the Sector Council Program was developed, this did not mean that the relationship was impervious to conflict. In fact, it is in this respect – sustaining collegiality – that HRSDC staff faced the same challenges faced by government members of the HIV/AIDS network. HIV/AIDS officials had the additional challenge of *building* collegial relationships; HRSDC staff had to merely *maintain* those relationships already developed.

Sector council staff encountered difficulty maintaining collegial relations with stakeholders due to its dual roles of funder and regulator. Program staffs are advocates in government for stakeholders facing labour issues while also gatekeepers of public interest, ensuring the sector councils it finances are worthy of public funds. Though different from the main challenge faced by officials within the HIV/AIDS network, the implication for the relationship is the same: HRSDC officials enjoy good relations with stakeholder groups, but, periodically, those relations risk becoming antagonistic as a result of HRSDC's associated role as government regulator. Each year, the program assesses its sector councils and must decide whether to continue to support and/or fund them. When an industry group wants to form a sector council, the program too, must decide whether it will support it in doing so. These decisions draw sector council officials into a different type of relationship with stakeholders and one that is more vulnerable to antagonism. One Sector Council Program member recalls an incident of antagonism experienced by colleagues in the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO). The Fish Harvester's Council had been around for a long time and DFO was having difficulty in its relationship with the council, because, in the words of the HRSDC official "they tended to advocate a lot and lobby quite a bit and they were not really friendly to DFO." It was difficult for both HRSDC and DFO to work with the group, but at the same time, they were an important council to DFO. DFO wanted to keep the council, and HRSDC was more than willing to let it go. However, because of DFO's desire to see the council improved, HRSDC helped the department to put the council on a different track, and get it to change the way it engaged with the federal government.

So how did we change this council? We challenged them. Stop being advocates.

Stop lobbying. Try to focus on the following issues. In fact they've turned themselves around now.

A "tough love" approach that Sector Council Program staff deemed successful would not have worked well in the case of the HIV/AIDS network. In general, the Sector Council Program's experience working with stakeholders was far less antagonistic than that of the HIV/AIDS network. Two major reasons exist. One, sector council staff were able to employ strategies to avoid potential antagonism. In particular, the program emphasises early engagement, personal skill (maintaining credibility as a government official) and transparent and objective processes in its regulatory role. More significant, antagonism was not historically entrenched in the administrative-stakeholder relations of the Sector Council Program as it was for the HIV/AIDS FI.

Skills and Coping Mechanisms

Within the Sector Council Program, HRSDC staff emphasized the importance of stakeholder ownership of policy solutions to labour market issues for their sector.

Overtime, the department has moved from direct intervention to address labour market issues in the economy to providing funding to sectors to chart their own policy course, making the Sector Council Program an *industry driven* initiative.

We'll put the money, but we'll ask the community -whoever the stakeholder is - to manage it, and own it. And the ownership is really important. We don't want to own it. Because what we don't want to happen down the road is that we own the recommendations too. They have to own the recommendations, so that it is not, "I'm from the federal government, I'm here to help you." It's them coming and saying this is what we as a community need to do. I think that leads to greater success.

The need to "get in early" was shared by public servants across departments, initiatives, and collaboration partners but was prominent in interviews with sector council staff. Engaging stakeholders in the policy process early on increased the chances

that they would take ownership of the policy, rather than merely see their contribution as an input into a government-owned policy. Early engagement can facilitate the more productive relations between stakeholders and bureaucrats, avoiding the antagonism inherent in pressure-pluralism politics. When the federal government was in the preliminary stages of research for sector studies, even though there was no guarantee that a sector council would be formed, they engaged industry groups, trade associations, and unions nonetheless. This extended the time it took to produce the study, but by the time it was completed, a partnership and a willingness to work together had already formed, not only between the bureaucrats and stakeholders but between the non-state actors themselves as well. Because sector councils call upon *labour* and *business* to work together to address labour-market issues for their sector, collegial relations are important to this initiative.

This is a lesson learned from the Sector Council Program: if you want buy-in and subsequent action from these groups, you had better involve them right at the beginning, and slowly over time, people will come out with their own agendas, different views of what you're trying to do, and consensus is reached on where you want to go. It builds partnerships among the people at the table so when you get to the end of the process, they are all set to go and saying "Oh I am committed and I'm going to do my part."

Getting in early was important because consensus-building can take a long time.

Engaging actors late or rushing them through collaboration can undermine productive interactions (Berry et al. 2008). The temptation exists for stakeholders to abandon collegiality and resort to familiar lobby-tactics when collaboration does not have a lengthy history in the policy field.

Sector council staff employed other practices at the individual level to address (and even, prevent) punctuations of antagonism in an otherwise collaborative relationship with stakeholder groups. The need to explain to non-state actors how

approval processes work is tied to having credibility, a point that came up often in the interviews with respect to the boundary-spanning role of sector council staff between councils and government. Credibility is important to boundary-spanners because they lack the authoritative mechanism for action that stems from hierarchical integration. It becomes difficult to motivate people for whom you have little to no authority over. In order to maintain a standing with a stakeholder, HRSDC public servants had to establish and sustain personal *credibility*. Taken together, credibility was understood by respondents as the intersection of perceived policy expertise (knowledge of policy issues and knowledge of the policy process) and perceived trustworthiness. Thus, a person can be trustworthy but not credible, if they lack any expertise that others consider valuable. For highly technical issues, expertise is important. As one respondent commented, “If you don’t understand what you are talking about, you’ll just be talking in the wind. No one would believe you, you wouldn’t be credible and you wouldn’t be able to inspire action.” Equally, a person can have extensive policy expertise and still fail to be credible if prior experience (or no experience at all) suggests that the individual lacks character, transparency, is otherwise unreliable, is not to be trusted.

For the analysts involved with the Sector Council Program, credibility stemming from knowledge of both the policy process and the specific issues facing that industry was critical to working collegially with stakeholders:

You need to be able to talk to [industry], or to appear a bit knowledgeable about what’s going on, what the issues facing the industry are. So you need to do your homework before you deal with these people. If they find out that you don’t know anything about the industry, you might lose your credibility. You need to show that you have some understanding of what’s going on and you need to show that you understand what their role is.

An Industry Canada official also stressed the importance of credibility. As a senior

analyst in the chemicals sector, he had been working with the chemicals industry and with Environment Canada to develop greenhouse gas regulations. His obligation as a government of Canada public servant was to support measures that would meet environmental objectives set out by the government but his departmental mandate to act as an advocate for industry called on to him to secure the vitality and viability of the chemicals industry. In pursuing both mandates, he became an intermediary between the chemicals industry and the government: “we deliver government policy, our spin on government policy out to industry and vice-versa. It’s a two way street.” This is tricky work. On the one hand, you cannot publically criticize a department such as Environment Canada, in order to protect industry, since you both answer ultimately to the same prime minister. However, you cannot abandon your departmental mandate to act as an advocate for an industry that is likely to suffer under another department’s actions.

What do you do? Ambiguity – sending different messages to different actors – seems at great odds with the character called upon by boundary-spanners within the Sector Council Program and in the HIV/ AIDS network as discussed above. Departments and stakeholders with which boundary-spanners interacted were reported to desire working with public servants who they perceived as reliable even if they did not always vouch in their court. Increased instances of networking may have forced actors to relax their expectations *for results* from individuals in boundary-spanning roles, and focus instead on expectations *for process*, which involve transparency and reliability and which are at odds with ambiguity in interaction:

I have been in this industry for a long time. I’ve got some recognition as being a knowledgeable person and I use that recognition to support Environment Canada when I can. They look for information on industry and they come to me

because they know that I am knowledgeable and have been in this area for a long time, so they use me as a resource for developing some of their own thinking around regulation. Likewise with industry associations that we deal on these kinds of files. They know that they've got somebody in Industry Canada that knows their sector, that is going to promote their sector to the best possible; and we've not going to win in every battle; we are going to lose some arguments to Environment Canada and other regulators, but at least industry is comfortable knowing that they have somebody putting up a good fight on their behalf, to the best that they can anyway. So what we have is our credibility and our industry knowledge, to bring to the table, and if we are in a sector that we don't have that, I think our position is weakened and we probably have less influence.

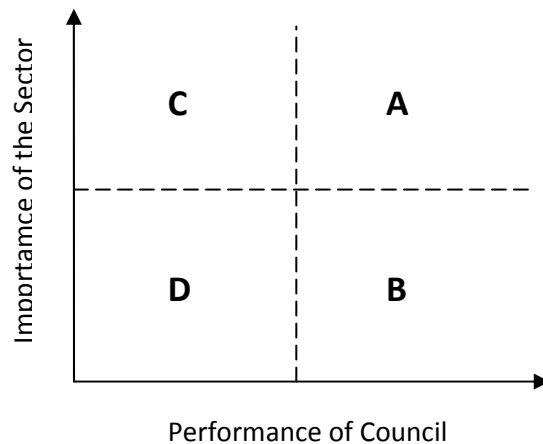
The ambiguity critical to the boundary spanning public servants interviewed by Malloy does not find much support here amongst public servants who collaborate with non-state actors. Ambiguity can inhibit collaboration, because it diminishes transparency and leads to confusion around roles and responsibilities, which as the previous chapter demonstrated, are critical to relationships between administrative actors. The finding applies here too, to relations between administrative and societal actors. Knowing what you are getting into and knowing how to act and how to expect others to act will go far in preventing conflict within a network. Chapter seven will return to this point, exploring rule contestation broadly as it occurred across the four initiatives.

A Lesson in Transparency: The Scorecard Initiative

The Sector Council Program was able to reconcile its regulator role with its advocate role through the adoption of predictable and transparent processes that clarified the relationship between the program and the sector councils, even as that relationship had to change throughout its duration. One of its most successful initiatives to this end was the *scorecard system* developed to ensure systematic and fair assessment of the sector councils on a yearly basis. Sector councils are given two criteria that they

will be assessed against in the year following: the performance of the sector council and the importance of industry in which it exists. Council performance is assessed on its representativeness, responsiveness, quality of the diagnostic work, connectedness and financial management. Industry importance is determined by the sector's size ("is it big enough for us to pay attention to?") and difficulties it faces ("how much trouble is it in?"). As one manager added "every industry that's mentioned in a budget or a Speech from the Throne gets extra points; then we know that it is important to someone." After measuring these two criteria – stakeholder performance and industry environment – a decision is made whether to continue funding the council.

Figure 5.1 Evaluating Stakeholders in the Sector Council Program



Councils that fall in category A – they perform well and they are important to the economy – receive funding for four years and get most if not all of the projects they submit, approved and funded. If a council is in quadrant B – performing well but are not as important to the economy – they also receive funding but only for three years, and only core funding, so that some but not all of their projects will get funded. A council that falls in quadrant C is important but is not doing very well. This may

because they are too young and inexperienced or encountering other difficulties in doing interorganizational work. These councils get less funding but more “face time” with analysts from the Sector Council Program, with the hopes that given the right information and direction from the program, they can be moved in a year’s time from quadrant C to quadrant A. This may involve working with them to produce a better sector study. Finally, councils neither important to the economy (lacking political salience and economic vulnerability as a sector) nor well performing lose funding altogether.

Having a tool to justify the tough decisions it must make towards its collaborators has allowed HRSDC officials to avoid conflict in their shifting relationship – from collaborator to evaluator – with stakeholder groups. As one official remarked:

Having something like that and being very transparent to councils, they know exactly where they stand. With the score card, we say, “Well, here’s our read of the council’s performance.” They agree or disagree and we negotiate that.

Strong lines of communication between the council and program, as well as the transparency of the scorecard against which councils are assessed, allow their relationship between the two to remain a collegial one. As an HRSDC official remarked, “transparency is how you build partnerships. You start hiding stuff from one another and it’s not going to go far. Or not long.”

While the relationship with stakeholders was a collegial one, it did not result in *concertation*: government officials did not relinquish their evaluation or regulatory function to appease clients. In fact, the opposite was possible due to transparency and credibility. Officials with the program shared that they were comfortable enough in their relationship with stakeholders to make decisions that the later may not like.

We’ve had councils in which we’ve had to say, “Look guys, you are 80%

unionized and you have one person among the unions on the board.” We don’t look for parity or anything but partners should not exclude each other. So we have an industry that right now that wants a council and we said no because they said “we want a council but no unions.” And unions said “if you have a council in that industry, we’d like to be there.” And the industry is 60% unionized, so it’s not going to happen unless the minister comes out and says make it happen.

Special Stakeholders: Working with Provinces

HRSDC’s relationship, through the Sector Council Program, with provincial departments is also an interesting one and deserves some degree of consideration here. While the provincial governments did not come up often during the interviews – even, in the case of the Sector Council Program – it is clear that the relationship between the two orders of government represent a unique relationship in the context of collaborative government. In some respects, provincial governments are like stakeholders, albeit, special stakeholders, particularly in areas that favour the federal government as jurisdictional gatekeeper. Like their counterparts in non-governmental organizations, provincial governments do not make a clear distinction between departments when engaging with the federal government. This makes collaboration challenging, because it requires departments to have high levels of interorganizational awareness in their interactions with provincial actors. It means that actions on the part of one department can have implications for other departments in their personal relationships with the provinces:

When you deal with provinces, they don’t see you as you’re HRDSC and you're Citizenship and Immigration; they see you as the federal government; you have to know. They expect you to be well informed; they will not engage you on something that is outside of your purview but they expect you to be informed, because when Citizenship and Immigration coughs and spurts out \$100 million dollars to Ontario, B.C. wants to know about it, and you’re going to talk to them about giving them \$10 million dollars. It’s the bottom line in a lot of ways.

In other ways, provincial governments are like any other federal department. Provincial

counterparts do not hold the same expectations for collaboration that stakeholders do, particularly around the timeliness of action. As the structure of the provincial bureaucracy and political apparatus loosely mirrors that of federal government, collaboration between the two can be no different from collaboration between federal bodies, particularly where those conversations occur between headquarters and regional arms of the government of Canada:

For the most part, our federal partners don't have HR development as their core activity, so they don't feel fairly threatened by the federal presence or federal role in that area. And at the working level, provincial partners don't either. But at the more policy level, they definitely have a high degree of sensitivity. Anything that looks like the federal government is trying to exert undue influence, or take on more than it was intended to do in the Constitution.

As a result, federal public servants that engage with provincial staff have greater sensitivity to and knowledge of jurisdictional boundaries. As long as federal public servants maintain a federal perspective, provincial counterparts are unlikely to respond antagonistically.

Conclusion

While this examination of the Sector Council Program reveals several mechanisms that public servants can employ to support collegial relations with stakeholders, these mechanisms alone would have been far from sufficient to prevent the problems that were encountered in the HIV/AIDS network. Several of these coping mechanisms were the same, if not similar. This indicates the level of collegiality that a network can achieve is only partially dependent on the skills that public servants and their organizations employ. Major differences existed in the activities and structures of the two instances of collaborative government and allowed civil servants in the Sector

Council Program to experience less antagonism in their work with stakeholders than civil servants in the HIV/AIDS network.

The first major difference is the two networks feature different issues and types of stakeholders. HRSDC stakeholders are drawn from labour and business groups, while HIV/AIDS stakeholders are predominantly drawn from a disparate (although, increasingly well organized) advocacy community. While both stakeholder communities are dependent on the federal government to achieve their respective aims (here, in human resource development and addressing HIV/AIDS), this dependency is greater for the HIV/AIDS stakeholder community as a result of the scope of the problem they aim to address vis-à-vis their autonomy and capacity as a stakeholder community to address it. The diversity of interests the HIV/AIDS community represents along with reduced financial capacity and diminished authority to coerce membership weakens the community's ability to address HIV/AIDS in the absence of government involvement (see Olson 1971). Social justice issues around HIV/AIDS have not, historically, enjoyed significant political attention, and so, its stakeholder community has focused on getting onto the government agenda through advocacy work. In contrast, labour market issues have enjoyed a better standing with governments, given their broad affect on society and direct affect on the economy (see Soroka 2002). Since there exists a natural site (employment) for societal organizational around it, the stakeholder community is better organized and longer developed than that around HIV/AIDS.

This relates to the second significant difference between the networks for human resource development and HIV/AIDS. While the policy process for HIV/AIDS in Canada has been historically antagonistic, the Sector Council Program grew out of classically corporatist relations dating back to the government's Manpower Consultative

Service created in the 1960s. The relationship between stakeholders and government officials has changed somewhat over the years, moving further towards industry-ownership, but the experience of bringing societal actors to the table to participate in the resolution of issues facing its members is not new in the area of human resource development. Since industry groups are used to coming to the table with government actors, the demands on both government and society to adopt collegiality with one another are reduced. The relationship has always been there.

Third, the Sector Council Program did not have to deal with the same interdepartmental and administrative-political challenges that officials in the HIV/AIDS network faced. On the first point, the Sector Council Program is a vertical initiative that at best draws HRSDC into trilateral interactions with other departments. On the second point, the Sector Council Program's activities are directed entirely towards joint program delivery and so, did not necessitate the involvement of the political level through the formal approvals process. In contrast, the Federal Initiative to Address HIV/AIDS in Canada involves multiple departments working with stakeholders, to make public policy, and implicates political masters more than program delivery. Differences in the way authority structures play out within the two lead departments (PHAC for HIV/AIDS and HRSDC for SCP) have also had an impact on the degree of autonomy and flexibility that working level staff have to make decisions in their interactions with stakeholders. In particular, Sector Council staff boast a high degree of control over their work, while officials from PHAC confided the very opposite. In the words of one PHAC official:

This is the most bureaucratic place I have ever worked in. Everything is seventeen approvals down the line. The whole purpose [of the creation of PHAC] was to get away from the bureaucracy of Health Canada. The reality is

that it never happened. And there's also this tremendous desire among senior managers that the place look good and there be no appearance of incompetence outside so that has lead to excessive levels of bureaucracy, that anything might get said or spoken, is vetted through the communications, multiple, multiple levels of approval. In other words, we have good censorship.

This is different from the language used by managers of the Sector Council Program, who described themselves as *entrepreneurs* and sought to hire analysts with similar qualities:

When I was looking to recruit people, I was looking for people with an entrepreneurial bent to them. There was sort of a strategy or approach but mostly it was take advantage of opportunities or advantages as they came up. Sometimes we would create the opportunities, sometimes we would just latch on to other people's opportunities.

Taken together, the Sector Council Program's relationship with *stakeholders* was not as vulnerable to antagonism because no exacerbating challenges existed in its parallel relationships with *other departments* and with *political actors*. As was seen in the case of HIV/AIDS, antagonism punctuated the relationship between stakeholders and government officials because of inter-department issues (the amount of time it takes to gain departmental consensus) and bureaucratic-political issues (negative decisions in the political approvals process). Because the Sector Council Program was ongoing and operational, there was little risk that political decisions would conflict with working level ones. Officials could thereby conduct their work in a less bureaucratic fashion, appealing to stakeholders.

Flexibility, not Ambiguity, is the Virtue in Punctuated Collaboration

The emergence of social movements in Canada, and creation of special policy agencies within government to conduct policy analysis (rather than program delivery) on behalf of a social group, has resulted in stable structures but not stable relationships

between public servants and the social movements that correspond to their policy area.

Boundary-spanning has become a useful borrowed concept to understand public administration in an era of increased integration of state and societal actors around public policy issues. Within the context of the four horizontal initiatives examined in the previous chapter, lead organizations play the role of *internal* boundary-spanner. They struggle to gain credibility as the pseudo *neutral third party* in the eyes of other departments, while also seeking to fulfill their departmental role as an interest-driven representative of the department's mandate.

In the context of *external* boundary spanning, civil servants involved with non-state actors in the two cases examined here experienced challenges identified by Malloy (2003) and this was particularly true for the HIV/AIDS network. However, interviews with public servants involved with the HIV/AIDS FI and Sector Council Program also revealed that it is not a healthy ambiguity that leads to productive, long-term state-society relations for boundary spanning entities but rather, clarity of roles, responsibilities, and boundaries themselves.

While ambiguity allowed public servants to achieve credibility with both central agencies and social movements in Malloy's study, here the interest was not so much in marrying the boundaries that public servants spanned but rather, the time periods they span. To be clear, public servants in the HIV/AIDS network needed to be able to work in collaboration with non-state actors when decisions were in officials-level networks and adjust to the pressure-group politics that inevitably arose when decisions proceeded to the political-level networks. This was because bureaucrats remained the primary representative of government to non-state actors throughout the policy process.

This is not to dismiss the problems that lead to Malloy's appreciation for

ambiguity but rather to suggest another route to constructive relations in the context of complex policy networks. In place of ambiguity is flexibility: allowing state-society relations around collaboration to be punctuated by brief periods of pressure-politics, and settle into more collaborative relations for long periods of time thereafter.

Flexibility requires public servants to allow interest groups to wear different hats at different points in times, but also, to facilitate their movement between these positions, by making clear which moments in the relationship can be characterized by which type of interaction. The importance of clarity over ambiguity will be returned to again when I look at the relationship between administrative and political actors in horizontal government. For Malloy, ambiguity is inevitable, and important to maintain, in order to appease both sides, but this is at times neither desirable nor possible in the relationship between working level and political level networks.

6 DIVIDED LOYALTIES

Relations between Political and Administrative Actors

Introduction

Administrative networks do not exist in a political vacuum. Few students of public administration or political science would argue any different. Nonetheless, the interaction between work of public bureaucracies and their political and administrative environment have not featured prominently in recent network literature, despite once being a principle concern of political scientists (see public choice theorists, Downs 1967; Niskanen 1973). This is disconcerting since it was interest in this very interaction that prompted scholars to develop the forerunners to the policy network concept, *iron triangles* and *issue networks* (Hecl 1978; Jordan 1981; Ripley and Franklin 1984). Why then, did this interest dissipate? It may be that as the concept of a policy network broadened beyond describing relations around agenda-setting and decision-making to encompass policy delivery, the relationship between bureaucrats and their political masters took a back seat to interest in inter-agency relations and stakeholder engagement.

This chapter seeks to bring politics back to policy networks by addressing the implications of the relationship between public servants and political actors for the intraorganizational work of the bureaucracy and well as how interorganizational work in turn affects political-administrative relations.

In examining the implications of horizontal initiatives for political-administrative relations, this chapter raises several important questions about the viability and sustainability of horizontal work. In particular, political decisions can make interorganizational work more challenging for public servants, than would be the case if their work were to take place intraorganizationally. Ambiguities in political priorities are revealed, rather than concealed by interorganizational work, as public agencies with competing mandates struggle to find common ground. This can result in bureaucratic stalemate. Bureaucratic stalemate, where it compromises government action, can necessitate interorganizational adjudication by political actors with authority to prioritize departmental mandates in order to bring resolution to the network. While this process may allow networks to overcome disagreement, it by no means occurs in a neutral manner. Political adjudication of the interorganizational work of public servants results in winners and losers. This has implications for the morale of members from “losing” departments, including their desire to want to engage in interorganizational work in the future, and their feelings of loyalty towards organizational superiors.

There are implications of political-administrative relations for horizontal government as well, which are too, highlighted by this chapter. These implications can be best understood through the work of John Kingdon. Kingdon (1995) understands the policy processes of government to comprise three somewhat autonomous “streams” of activity. A *policy stream* is where various actors of government and non-government actors develop and push policy proposals. These proposals are often independent of problems that are competing for attention within the *problem stream*, in which actors seek to have their concerns receive wider acknowledgement and government action. Finally, the *political stream* contains the mix of values that dominate public and political

discourse and ultimately limit the types of policies that receive attention. This stream is sensitive to changes in government and public opinion. As Kingdon argues, where all three streams align – a problem emerges that fits with a solution pushed in the policy stream, that reflect the values dominating government and society – a *policy window* opens, meaning that an opportunity exists for new public policies to be realized. *Policy entrepreneurs* are those individuals in the policy process that seek out policy windows in order to push a policy proposal from the wider *government agenda* into the priority decision queue of policy makers, the *decision agenda*.

Kingdon's *three streams* model of the policy process is relevant here, because (1) it contains implications for policy work involving collaboration among many different actors and (2) the turbulent political environment in which interview participants described their interorganizational work lends theoretical strength to this model. The *political* and *problem* streams of the policy process are increasingly unpredictable to civil servants, who feel their interorganizational work is undermined as a result.

It is more difficult to make adjustments to a turbulent political environment in the context of horizontal rather than vertical initiatives. Horizontal initiatives have more veto points, and tend to entail larger investments in deliberation. The legitimacy of decisions made in networks tends to rely on a process of consensus building that takes a lot of time. Policy windows can be missed.

Some horizontal initiatives can operate well in turbulent political environments, such as the Sector Council Program, but those with wide memberships and ambivalent leaders as policy entrepreneurs, as was the case for Team Canada Inc, will be unable to exploit new opportunities and will instead find themselves struggling with survival.

The challenges of interorganizational work within bureaucratic-political relations are summarized in table 6.1 below.

Table 6.1 Key Challenges of Interorganizational Work within Bureaucratic-Political Relations

	Horizontal Initiative			
	MGP	SCP	TCI	HIV
Level of conflict	High	Moderate	High	Low
Key Challenges	Collegiality	Inclusion	Commitment	Agreement
Source of Challenge	Lack of intradepartmental cohesion	Unilateral reorganization of network	Lack of intradepartmental cohesion; Lack of political support	Unilateral reorganization of network

HIV/AIDS FI: Working through the Politics

For the most part, the HIV/AIDS network was unencumbered by political decisions, though political decisions were not entirely insignificant. Some members of the network (Correctional Services Canada and the Public Health Agency of Canada) expressed a frustration with federal priorities – notably the lack of political support for harm reduction measures. Others (such as the Canadian Institutes for Health Research) enjoyed an advantage in the network due to the political salience of their mandates. In comparison to TCI, MGP, and SCP however, activities within the HIV/AIDS FI were least affected by political decisions. Among the other initiatives, two struggled with organizational demise and the third, hampered by serious, lingering trust issues.

The most prominent political decision affecting the HIV/AIDS network was the decision to create the HIV Vaccine Initiative. The HIV Vaccine Initiative owes its conception to the culmination of three events: a) the visioning exercise of the HIV/AIDS

stakeholder community funded by the federal government and which produced a document of the same name, the *Canadian HIV Vaccine Plan*, b) a push from the Gates Foundation for a global HIV vaccine enterprise it was willing to co-fund, and c) the Toronto international AIDS conference in August 2006 which saw ministers, stakeholders, and the Gates Foundation convene together. There, an HIV Vaccine plan was hatched and agreed to by the Minister for Health, the Minister of International Cooperation, and the Gates Foundation.

For federal bureaucrats, the deal was unexpected, made in the midst of immense public criticism that the Conservative government was not doing enough on HIV/AIDS.¹¹ The significance for CIDA was the agreement drew the agency, along with a bold chunk of its funding, into an *already ongoing* interorganizational initiative with additional monies to come from PHAC, Health Canada, Industry Canada, and the Gates Foundation. The event propelled CIDA into a pre-existing network.

Several departments had already been working together on a *domestic* HIV Vaccine Plan at the officials level and CIDA had not been one of those members because of its *international* mandate. A majority of the funds that had been promised to the initiative were now to come out of CIDA. The political deal was unexpected news to the bureaucrats, and its effect was to force change to the very scope of interorganizational work already taking place at the officials level. This political decision to commit CIDA and CIDA funding to the network caused initial friction between the working level members. As an official from PHAC put it:

The [CIDA] bureaucrats hadn't necessarily been consulted; the decisions had

¹¹ Prime Minister Stephen Harper's absence at the international AIDS conference in Toronto was subject to significant negative media attention, as well as major criticism from prominent conference attendees including Stephen Lewis.

been made at a political level; so the bureaucrats who were responsible for this area were slightly pissed off, because we had been developing these ideas not with them on board. They were pissed off, because number one, they hadn't been involved in the developmental work and number two, we now had a big chunk of their money promised to us. And now they had to participate with us.

An immediate issue for CIDA was that until that point, the initiative had centred on the benefits to Canada and Canadians of an HIV Vaccine facility. Given CIDA's membership now in the initiative as well the majority of funds that it had contributed, the network's purpose needed some refocusing for its members to agree to anything to move it forward. This became a tension between CIDA and Industry Canada, whose mandates seemed squarely at odds, the former holding an "outside borders" mandate and the latter, an "inside borders" mandate. As articulated by one official from CIDA:

It's an initiative that's ultimate benefit should be for the people of the developing world to not have HIV/AIDS. We won't give up on benefit needs primarily for Africa. So you put it on the table that this initiative was to develop a vaccine for those who need it the most, and those who need it the most aren't in North America. [Industry Canada's] purpose is to promote industry and to promote business but we have to find a way to make sure that it is available to those who need it.

Despite seemingly irreconcilable mandates, the departments together, succeeded in finding a common purpose and agreement on the joint initiatives. This meant reframing the vaccine facility for the global good rather than Canada alone, "finding those soft spots in the mandates," as the CIDA official put it. The details of the initiative transformed to reflect the new focus: the opportunity to produce clinical trial lots at the facility were extended to any person regardless of citizenship; in using the facility, individuals must promise that should their product be successful, it would be made available and accessible to developing countries at reasonable prices.

Several factors coalesced to make this agreement possible. First, political support for the interorganizational work of the departments was high; working level members felt pressure to “make the initiative happen” and thus, felt supported in seeing beyond departmental interests alone. What set the experience of the vaccine initiative’s members apart from that of members of the pipeline initiative was while political masters mandated vaccine initiative members to work together, these mandates were more general, flexible and thus accommodating than the regulatory mandates of the pipeline initiative’s member departments. Vaccine initiative members had, like MGP’s members, a compelling reason (political authority), to collaborate. Unlike MGP’s members, supportive organizational characteristics (flexible mandates) existed allowing them to do so. The flexibility of mandates was important, because it gave the network the ability to work out an agreement without having to seek arbitration at the political level. The vaccine initiative also contained a small membership, which entailed fewer veto points and the increased possibility for common interests to be constructed from among the members’ mandates.

Altogether then, political authority and the configuration of both organizational mandates and interorganizational structure contributed to a positive interorganizational experience for members of the HIV Vaccine working group. It was able to achieve agreement and act collegially following an initial conflict, without threats of demise or longstanding effects on morale. This would not be the case for any of the other three horizontal initiatives.

The Sector Council Program: Reacting to “Policy by Announcement”

Political decision making was of greater consequence for working level staff in the Sector Council Program than it was for the HIV/AIDS network. A negative political decision that almost ended the labour market activities of HRSDC was followed by a positive political decision that propelled it.

HRSDC has been effective in maintaining relevance in the area of labour market issues through the most significant external shock brought on by the political network to any of the horizontal initiatives. Following the Quebec referendum on secession, in 1996 Prime Minister Jean Chrétien announced that the federal government would be devolving to the provinces those policy areas that were closely associated with provincial jurisdiction. This was later followed by a more specific statement that all labour market development policies would be transferred to the provinces through bilateral labour market agreements. Between 1996 and 2007, full or partial agreements were reached between the federal government and all ten provinces and three territories of Canada.

The impact for the development of sector councils was monumental. The federal government could no longer be the direct purchaser of training. According to one public servant, “It almost killed the program.” The transfer of labour market issues also had a significant impact on relationships: between the two orders of government, HRSDC and the labour market sector, and HRSDC and other federal departments. HRSDC has had to grapple with how to take the programs they have left in the area of labour market development, and use them to serve the priorities of the provincial governments, who now have the primary responsibility in this area. According to one official:

This is a huge, huge shift in behaviour for this department. Huge. We used to be the feds; we came in with a tonne of bucks, and now are basically saying no decisions, it's in someone else's hand; so is the money. A portion of HRSDC's labour force even transferred to the provinces.

The political announcement affected the Sector Council's relationship with provinces much like the minister of health's announcement in the HIV/AIDS FI. The health minister's decision to request a single, joint policy proposal from civil society and the bureaucracy equalized the power between federal public health officials and the HIV/AIDS stakeholder community. Similarly, instead of working alone in the federal household, HRSDC staff now had to make space for a new legitimate actor, in this case, the provinces:

That meant that our own federal employees would become provincial employees. Our relationship with provinces changed massively, where we basically worked with full headlights on, in the community, we had employment centres, and we were the big guy. That's changed dramatically over the years, where provinces now play a much larger role.

In turn, HRSDC sought to establish new relationships with industry groups, which it previously engaged through funding for training and unemployment insurance.

Without the ability to any longer use this "carrot", the department had to choose between vacating the arena altogether, or developing a new way of remaining useful to industry. Within the program, management decided to evolve the initiative's mandate: "if we can't purchase training, then let's influence training and let's not just influence training, let's influence *learning*." Managers within HRSDC decided to orient the Sector Council Program toward the quality of training that workers received from both the post-secondary education system and workplace. It conducted research, produced labour market reports, developed management tools (e.g. screening tests, recruitment

strategies, occupational standards), and funded curriculum development and institutional accreditation.

Years after the initial crisis, HRSDC again found itself scrambling to respond to a public announcement made in the political realm. This time however, the scramble was in response to what HRSDC staff viewed a positive political decision for the Sector Council Program. Seized by the issue of skills and training, in 2001 the federal government announced that it would be doubling the Sector Council Program's budget. If there were fewer incoming workers to replace outgoing ones, the problem would be resolved by making the former more productive and more efficient. Industry, labour, and education needed to come together to focus on training that would produce such results and a program, the Sector Council Program, already existed to provide such a mechanism. It was the archetype of an exploited policy window.

What was particularly unique about the federal government's 2001 announcement was that not only had the federal government announced greater support for the Sector Council Program but also, it had done so unexpectedly, without any prior indication given to managers within the program. In this case, the government opted to make the policy by public announcement, rather than on the advice of the civil service. Public servants within HRSDC got wind of the decision just as everyone else in the country did. An HRSDC official who had just joined the program when the announcement had been made, recalls the event:

"You had a thirty million dollar program. Now it is sixty million! Go off and make it happen." We had to write the policy rationale for something that had already been approved. It's an enviable position to be in. You're not seeking approval. You know you've already been approved. The money is there. You just have to tell them how you are going to use it.

This announcement did not mark the end of major political decision-making affecting

the Sector Council Program. The trend toward provincial ownership of labour market issues has continued under Stephen Harper's Conservative government. In the 2007 budget, it announced that two billion dollars previously earmarked for the federal government would go entirely to the provinces, effectively ending co-management between the two orders of government around labour market issues. This has put officials at HRSDC, and the department as a whole in a new and difficult position: on the one hand, the federal government has expressed that the sector councils are a political priority, and on the other, labour market development is to rest within the provincial jurisdiction. Initiatives and activities at the federal level must respond to the priorities of the provinces.

HRSDC public servants are now pulled in two directions: the political priorities of both the federal and provincial governments, to say nothing of the pressures they receive upwards (from within the sector councils themselves) and across (from within departments and agencies they have opted to leverage their funding with). As there has been little forewarning of political decisions in this area in the past, the simultaneous dependency on and vulnerability to the changing priorities of, no longer one government, but rather *eleven* governments may make it staggeringly difficult for the Sector Council Program to justify its existence in the future. The program can (and has) attempted to buttress its prospects of survival by tying itself into other departments' initiatives (gaining their support while also ensuring that cutting the program would have negative government wide effects), but there is a limit to this strategy.

Mackenzie Gas Project: Coping with Irreconcilable Mandates

While the HIV/AIDS and labour market networks experienced challenges related to sudden political announcements, this was not the case for the Mackenzie Gas Project, which had been initially stakeholder-driven and subsequently, bureaucracy-driven. Officials from INAC recall expending much energy trying to “wake the federal household and political actors up” to the fact that a group of oil and gas companies were intending to seek approval to develop natural gas in Canada’s Mackenzie Valley and bring these resources to markets through a northern pipeline. In filing a formal application with the federal government, their actions would trigger an environmental assessment review and public consultation process that would demand considerable resources of the federal government. Government needed to get itself ready.

Where the MGP did encounter challenges working with political networks was around the reconciliation of conflict at the working level. As a mechanism for dealing with inconsistencies in departmental mandates, political networks contributed to the declining morale of working level actors from some departments. Interactions between actors from the administrative and political networks were problematic when decisions in the latter overrode the discussions in the former *and* were not well communicated downwards. Officials from Environment Canada felt that their involvement at the working level did not “make a difference” because actors at the political level either chose to ignore their concerns or did not receive enough information to adequately inform political decisions that would protect their concerns. The first of these suspicions results from the poor capacity of working level networks to reconcile inconsistent departmental mandates. The second issue speaks to the nature of horizontal work in a

vertical organization: the lack of time that senior civil servants and ministers have to provide effective leadership (and conflict management) to horizontal networks.

Within MGP, Environment Canada officials had been vocal opponents of decisions taken at the working and political levels: they often felt that their environmental concerns inadequately informed collective decisions. Their responsibility in the area of Species at Risk, and mandate to issue regulations respecting the Migratory Bird Act caused serious conflict between members of different departments at the working level. One controversy surrounded the Kendall Island bird sanctuary that existed in an area that the proponents were seeking authorization for the development of two anchor fields and a gathering system. For representatives of Environment Canada within the Yellowknife region, this protected area deserved special treatment: “you are not just dealing with anywhere; this is protected area, so we would maybe think that you would operate at maybe a higher standard than you might in maybe another area.”

Other members at the working level did not share Environment Canada’s perspective, including a representative from the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT):

Environment Canada regurgitates [to industry], “We have a particular regulation in migratory bird act, so if you see one, go away until the bird is gone.” That’s not very helpful. There are birds that are not the least bit sensitive. My point to people is, let’s look at mitigation planning activities.

According to the GNWT, Environment Canada’s approach would not protect species at risk because the proponents, whose activity was far too costly to monitor, would not respect the policy; as a result, development activity would take place in the area despite Environment Canada’s unwavering stance regarding activity in the area. GNWT took

the position that a more pragmatic approach – conceding the area to proponents in exchange for collaborative development of mitigation planning – would result in greater respect for the bird sanctuary than the zero-tolerance position taken by Environment Canada’s Yellowknife staff.

For Environment Canada officials, they could not accept such a concession because their obligation was to carry out their legislated responsibility, clearly set out in the *Migratory Bird Act* and *Species at Risk Act*. Surrender of this mandate, even in concessionary terms, needed the corresponding level of authority. Simply put, it was beyond the authority of working-level officials in Yellowknife to negotiate departmental mandates. When mandates conflict with mandates of other departments or what would otherwise be considered better outcomes for both the network *and* the mandated department (a point raised by the GNWT official), officials may be unable to do much to reconcile them.

The need to gain interdepartmental agreement that would move the departments forward on the Mackenzie Gas Project necessitated that the mandates of the different departments nonetheless be reconciled. As such, disagreements produced at the working level were ratcheted up to the MGP’s interdepartmental ADM committee. While the ADM committee was able to take decisions to move the working level network forward on the Mackenzie Gas Project, it had several implications for the work of public servants. The ADM committee’s work resulted in conflict not only between political and administrative actors but also between members of the working level network itself. This conflict stemmed as much from the decisions made at the ADM level as it did from *the way* these decisions were made (or *perceived* to be made).

Officials at Environment Canada expressed suspicions that the discussions that took place at the political level were inadequate. Regular ADM meetings had not taken place and made it difficult for Environment Canada officials to prepare their seniors when meetings finally were called. There was usually little notice given, and often, vague indications of what the meeting would cover. Officials did their best to brief their ADM but it was difficult to do so without a context. To make matters worse, officials did not attend the ADM meetings and so, when their ADM – unprepared to make a judgement – abstained from a discussion on the table because they did not feel well enough informed, the record of decision showed that Environment Canada’s ADM had approved. As a result, Environment Canada’s officials felt that “there was not a very good discussion around what the implications were or of the options that might have been considered.”

The lack of communication from the political network was also frustrating for Environment Canada officials, as they had hoped that decision-making authority at the political level would equalize disparities in power at the working level. Instead, they felt that the ADM acted more as “a rubber stamp kind of process” and did not feel that the working level’s lead organization represented Environment Canada’s interests upwards. One official remarked:

My role is to try and provide factual information up. It doesn’t have to just be good news stories. It has to be, if there is a scud missile coming at you, you need to know that. If ADMs and DMs decided they know more than we do and are prepared to take the risks, well, they make those decisions. They are the big boys. But did they know all of this when they made those decisions? If nobody told them that there was a scud missile there, and they made a decision, well then, they didn’t know all the facts.

The impact of this lack of intraorganizational integration was that the working level felt left out of decision-making:

I felt two or three levels away from the person who was going to attend the meeting, so it was like telling the story in the group: I tell somebody, they tell somebody, they tell another person and sometimes I would suggest that the real message or the real fact gets changed or altered or not quite in the same context as they originally were supposed to be. I've worked on a number of interdepartmental, horizontal type activities; I believe you need an ADM or DM steering committee but they really need to be engaged on it and you need to be able to get information back up to them and I don't see that that is how things are practiced. It is just one of very many files that these folks read about in the cab on the way to the meeting.

On top of feeling excluded from decision-making in political networks, Environment Canada officials felt that they were also the recipient of unfavourable political decisions: the outcomes at the political level for conflicts arising at the working level, tended to favour other federal departments. Losing an interdepartmental disagreement around conflicting mandates reduced their morale. As one official noted, "going into a lot of different, inter, intra, or interdepartmental meetings and more or less getting beat up isn't the most fun you can engage in." They effectively felt punished – betrayed even – for holding steadfastly to departmental mandates that senior civil servants *within their own department* subsequently hesitated little to surrender. At the very least, it weakened the feeling or desire to continue to view oneself as a departmental gatekeeper in future interactions and damaged feelings of loyalty to and trust between senior and official level civil servants. Environment Canada officials explained that when conflicts at the working level were brought up to the political level for resolution, why or even how a particular decision was made was not subsequently communicated back down to the working level. The working group would receive the final decision (which implicitly spells out which working level perspective, and which departments' legislative responsibilities, takes priority) but not the rationale behind it:

We don't really even know how the decisions were made. We might find out how it was resolved but we might not understand why the decision was made

the way it was made. We, on the working group believe we have mandates and certain responsibilities; it may come back to us that, well, “we are not going in that direction” but there may not be an explanation, clearly to us, at a working group level as to why that is, why the Government of Canada decides to move in this direction. That creates frustration at the working group level. It impacts the morale of the working group level... It goes back to morale, trust, dissatisfaction. Questioning whether you are going to make a difference, and so does it really matter?

In sum, political decision making around MGP resulted in the disillusionment of some officials towards their interorganizational work. Feelings of efficacy in doing interorganizational work plummeted when decisions at the top conflicted with officials’ level decisions or positions taken by officials at the working level. Officials’ lack of knowledge about decisions taken within the political realm added to feelings of exclusion.

This absence of strong intradepartmental integration was not the case for all members of MGP, nor had it always been the case for Environment Canada. The department had had a designated working level official present at ADM-level meetings and sometimes even, in place of the department’s ADM, though it no longer practices this arrangement. One official suggested the arrangement was terminated because the organizational structure of the department had changed. Another Environment Canada official considered, “it could be that the department perceives that it is not a place for us.” Situated in Yellowknife, Environment Canada’s working level staff also faced physical and political barriers to inclusion.

In contrast to interview participants from Environment Canada, MGP’s working level member from Health Canada in headquarters (Gatineau, QB) expressed gratitude for political exposure. In contrast to other initiatives and to other federal partners involved in her initiative, she enjoyed a view to the political network:

The ADM committee was interesting because it is very rare that an environmental assessment includes that high a level of management, especially on an on-going basis. Being in Ottawa I had a bit of an inside perspective on the ADM committee, attending the meetings from time to time. In contrast, the working levels folks in Yellowknife often didn't seem to have any idea what was going on with the ADM committee. There seemed to me to be a gap between the regions and the headquarters within the other federal departments; the working level had the detailed knowledge of the project and yet didn't always know what decisions their senior management was taking.

The frustration expressed by the regional Environment Canada officials over the lack of communication between administrative and political networks combined with the appreciation of Health Canada's official for the opportunity to participate in political level networks (if only as an observer) indicate the appetite of working level staff for political context. It also points to the need for better regional-headquarter integration, as well as the importance of transparency, clarity, and clear roles and responsibilities for individuals who do interorganizational work. Public servants want to know what they are getting into: if their efforts are not going to matter, they want to know, because they might then choose not to pick so many fights over their department's mandate in interorganizational working groups. As Greenaway et al (2007) have pointed out, clarity about decision paths and accountabilities are particularly important for members of network that perceive that they are on the losing side of a power differential (inherent here, in centre-region relations) *and* have diverging interests and priorities.

The conflict between Environment Canada's working level and the ADM level speaks to the poor integration of the administrative and policy networks and the importance of this relationship to positive experiences in networking. The intersection of intraorganizational and interorganizational work raises the questions of how political should the public service be, and at what level of government can you actually invest people to manage horizontal partnerships? Since officials-level staff cannot "negotiate"

regulatory mandates, and horizontal government can reveal quite intractable inconsistencies in departmental mandates, is it reasonable to expect them to work interorganizationally, particularly if they know or believe because of past experience, that their efforts will not “make any difference”?

Team Canada Inc: Organizational Cultures Meet Devolved Authorities

While working level civil servants lack the authority to concede departmental mandates to move interorganizational work forward (as was the case for MGP), ministers and senior civil servants may also lack the time to overshadow (much less, take over) horizontal partnerships, a critical point for Team Canada Inc (TCI). The initiative initially featured high support and involvement from the departments’ ADMs and DMs. As time progressed and senior management shuffled around (or retired), attendance at high-level meetings dwindled and those that attended were increasingly drawn from lower ranks of the public service. As a former director general from DFAIT put it:

If you were asking ministers to sit on every committee where there was some kind of horizontal partnership, there would be not enough hours in the day for them to do their job. So by default, it is normally left to an extent to public servants to manage it. And what is true for politicians is also true for the most senior public servant. They just don’t have the time. So it has to go down to ADM, DG or even director level. So another problem is that these people don’t have the associated power and authority to make substantial changes.

This was a significant issue and one to which the lack of survival of the initiative can partially be attributed. While civil servants in MGP felt left out of decision-making due to the absence of communication downwards, in Team Canada Inc, it was actually an important senior political actor – DFAIT’s deputy minister (DM) – that was left out of decision-making as a result of poor communication upwards and across.

When Team Canada Inc was facing a crisis of commitment in 2006, a working group was struck to recommend next steps for the network in terms of options for renewing, revitalizing, or winding down the initiative. Eventually, the decision was made to discontinue Team Canada Inc, despite increasing demands from industry for its products. Many factors coalesced, putting pressure on the program to discontinue. Following the last meeting of the deputy ministers in 2003, priorities were focusing elsewhere, individuals committed to TCI had been replaced, and the high level of bureaucratic and political commitment needed to run the program was lost. Prime Minister Harper announced the Global Commerce Strategy and DFAIT appeared eager to lead on that initiative.

When an official from TCI's secretariat mentioned all of this in passing to DFAIT's deputy minister following the initiative's closure, the deputy minister was "shocked and surprised" to hear that Team Canada Inc was folding, having been the previous chair of TCI and its "biggest cheerleader ever":

In my personal opinion, there was some misinformation to senior management within DFAIT. They weren't told the whole truth about what was going on. And it really wasn't our job to tell them because we were working for everybody. But there was that lack of communication. There were no notes going up, and that's embarrassing. And frankly, if she'd known earlier, she maybe could have done something about it.

Another member of TCI's secretariat felt that the lack of leadership within TCI's director general level committee led to the discontinuation of TCI. Further, this absence of senior leadership contributed to the poor communication of messages between the working level and political network:

It comes down to ownership. The way that TCI was created, there was a chair, but that chair never felt that they were really the true owner of the program. And [my colleague] being the director of the program, didn't have the authority to direct it, because he needed buy-in from all of the other departments. And I

think that's where the chair's role is so important. And I can honestly say that I think the fate of a program is based on their leader. I don't think that it was of interest to the chair that was in that position when it came to this decision to close it and I don't know, perhaps he was told by someone high up that, you know, "let's just let it go." The DM of this department didn't even know that TCI was closing. And we tried our darnedest, through the chair, making sure that the chair would get the message to the DM, and nothing really happened. I think that it was poorly managed.

The problem was that senior (i.e. DG level) members of the administrative network and the political network did not have a strong interest in seeing Team Canada Inc continue. A political member that *did* was neither attentive enough to its political network nor adequately alerted by her staff or her colleagues in other departments (such as Team Canada Inc's chair at Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada), to know that this issue of Team Canada Inc's future was being decided upon. Some other senior civil servants – the ADM or DG – had participated in the DM-level network on the DM's behalf.

For Team Canada Inc's secretariat, finding out their DM had never known the decision had been made to end the initiative, was disappointing. The secretariat had been committed to the initiative and had wanted to see it continue. However, it had not carried this message forward within DFAIT's hierarchy. In taking seriously its organizational commitment to the interdepartmental initiative as a whole, rather than to the department that housed it, the secretariat opted not to act as the program's ambassador *within its own department*. That duty it left to the department's separate *network participants*. Some of DFAIT's network participants, however, were uninterested in seeing the initiative continue. A director from Canadian Heritage commented:

DFAIT has a very specific culture. They have former ambassadors and counsellor generals who come back and basically have to integrate as DGs and actually work again, rather than command. So I mean, there is a certain mentality that comes with it.

Some departments (and some officials within DFAIT itself) felt that DFAIT did not like

working with other departments on international trade and that this was because DFAIT felt international trade was principally *its* jurisdiction. The announcement of the new *Global Commerce Strategy*, (now a predominantly DFAIT initiative) towards TCI's end, may have signalled to DFAIT an opportunity to fashion greater ownership of the trade portfolio, leading it to seek extrication from collaboration-heavy TCI altogether. One official from Team Canada Inc's secretariat lamented:

This department [DFAIT] that I work for, they are of the mentality that they are going to do it on their own... which is very unfortunate, because when you are working with international commerce, there shouldn't be just one department that makes those decisions when there are twenty three government departments and agencies that are affected and can affect change.

In sum, some TCI members explained DFAIT's desire to wind down Team Canada Inc as a reflection of their preference to "go it alone" resulting from its preoccupation with being *the* federal actor around international commerce and international business development. Senior officials that supported TCI were unable to counteract this organizational bias due to the lack of time they had to participate in (much less monitor) activities within the horizontal initiative. The absence of strong intradepartmental integration within DFAIT also reduced the chances that the horizontal initiative would survive the crisis of commitment.

Even strong intradepartmental integration would not have been enough to sustain the initiative, since the ultimate determiner of the interorganizational initiative's viability and survivability was its favour not with the department's most senior officials (or even, its minister) but rather with the prime minister and close advisors. Team Canada Inc's prospects for continuation had been largely dashed when a few years earlier, the Treasury Board of Canada failed to reward the ambitious yet successful efforts at the interdepartmental working level to produce a memorandum to cabinet

seeking central funding for the initiative.

In order to retain the commitment of the twenty-three members to Team Canada Inc, five departments came together in 2005 to prepare a memorandum to cabinet, seeking out additional funding for the initiative's activities in light of the initiative's emerging commitment crisis. If the departments could obtain central government funding, this would reduce the network's dependence on membership dues, and allow the network to produce products and conduct activities that would reinvigorate interest in and subsequently, commitment to the network.

While the potential outcome of the MC was attractive, the work putting it together involved was staggering. Twenty-three agencies and departments would need to agree on priority sectors. It was a zero-sum proposal. Some sectors would not be priorities. According to a retired public servant who had been involved as a director general at the time, a memorandum to cabinet signed by five ministers, based on proposals from the twenty-three agencies and departments, with funding requests that spelled out agreed upon priorities, for particular sectors, had never been achieved in the federal government before. This was immense work. Despite all obstacles, TCI was able to achieve a working level consensus. An initial call out to the twenty-three member departments drew in three hundred million dollars of requested funding. The five lead departments agreed on certain guiding principles and over six months, brought that down to a hundred million dollar proposal including a low-cost option of sixty million. They obtained the consent of their own ministers and DG-level TCI members representing the other eighteen departments:

This was hard on everybody, not only because we had some very tense discussions among ourselves at the DG level, but you can imagine, when those DGs went back to their department and say well, I've agreed to reduce our own

demand by fifty percent. How do you explain that to the rest of the colleagues in your department? It was very hard on the five of us that took the leadership position. But we did it. We actually got the document approved by each minister, scheduled to go to cabinet discussion, and then, it never did get discussed.

The cabinet committee for economic issues also approved the document, but when it went to the Treasury Board ministers, TCI members never heard back. They waited, and waited. In the meantime, TCI continued to become seized by its commitment problem. The level of commitment to interorganizational work from the DGs who had participated in the TB submission also plummeted as it became clear that the MC would not be funded within the dwindling lifetime of TCI:

And this was the most disheartening thing that ever happened. All those public servants who invested so much of their time, having achieved success, their ministers approval, the cabinet ministers on economic development approval, and cabinet ministers saying well this is not a priority to fund, it sent all the wrong messages to us. It sent the message that even if you achieve success in terms of horizontal management, there is no guarantee you are going to be rewarded. In fact, on the contrary, we would rather ignore that you did that, because it is embarrassing. So it was very totally disheartening. That's when I started to consider retiring.

This memorandum to cabinet amounted to the only successful attempt among the departments involved in Team Canada Inc to establish a common overarching strategic policy framework for international business development. Its failure to receive approval within Cabinet was so disheartening to the departments that there was little energy or desire on the part of them, particularly the director generals that actively participated, to want to continue interorganizational work around Team Canada Inc altogether.

The Politics of Horizontal Government

To understand why politics has had such a negative effect on the experience of collaboration for public servants, requires that we look more closely at how political-administrative relations have changed over time. Current literature in Canada suggests a crisis of government is occurring and with a negative effect on the relationship between levels of the bureaucracy and between political and administrative actors generally (Good 2003; Aucoin 2006; Savoie 2008a). The crisis stems from divided loyalties: the civil service is being at once, pulled away (vertically) and pulled apart (horizontally), and no one, political or appointed, is being held to account for its work.

The vertical fissure is the product of two separate efforts. At the top, civil servants face a consortium of influential actors, not all of which are politicians. Not all politicians enjoy influence, either. Political decisions are often spontaneous and public, and elude those senior civil servants that are not well connected. This thus compels senior civil servants to make better linkages with political actors. Their work thus, takes on a political nature, as they seek a standing with the prime minister.

Incentives within hiring have also weakened loyalties to the department. Rising civil servants who are ambitious, visible, mobile, and responsive to political preferences are the ones most often rewarded with ascension through the hierarchy. Deputy ministers (DMs) today do not get appointed to their position from within the department. Since it is also unlikely that the department will be their last appointment prior to retirement, their loyalty lessens more, or at the very least, exists temporarily. As Savoie (2008a: 180) has pointed out, “their focus, or at least part of it, will be on their next appointment, and on the individuals who will have a say in future promotions – the cabinet secretary and the prime minister – not simply on the department they are

currently leading.” Public servants may be rewarded with the position of DM for being precisely *not* loyal to the department.

Within the interviews, these ideas held particular sway. One public servant lamented, “We have senior bureaucrats that don’t know what they are doing; they were pushed up in the hierarchy because they can write memos but they don’t listen to their people.” Public servants devoted to a single organization for the entirety of their career do not get to the top. Another public servant reflected:

If you want to get to the top of the department, [moving around] is the way to go. I came in here twenty years ago and I’ve basically been doing the same job that I’m doing and I don’t think I’ve been held back because this is what I wanted to do. I decided I didn’t want to become a manager, but if you want to become a manager, you’re probably better off to do a bit of hopping around to get some varied experiences. So many of the young kids that come in do that; they go for a year and then move and then do that for a year and eventually they find something they like whereas I didn’t do that; I came in and I stayed here and I don’t have any regrets for doing it but I am not going to become deputy minister.

Donald Savoie (2008a) argues that the concentration of power in the hands of the prime minister and his personally selected courtiers, which he refers to as *court government*, has contributed to this politicization of the senior civil service. Decision-making in government proceeds and halts according to the priorities and preferences of this court. Bureaucrats that can couch their policy issue in a way that appeals to them may find that funding and approval come quickly. Those that fail can expect a lengthy administrative process, with a lot of red tape and veto points (Savoie 2008a: 17).

Particularly where something is a political priority, it can so to speak get rammed through and we certainly make our interventions and can sort of protest around the table at the interdepartmental meetings. But at the end of the day, if PCO [the Privy Council Office] allows it to go to the cabinet table, which is their function as the secretariat, it can go against our demands (Official from Western Economic Diversification Canada).

Evidence that political decisions impact interorganizational work was found across the four horizontal initiatives and was the focus of chapter six.

Donald Savoie discusses many implications of the court government thesis for accountability and the performance of government. One effect is critically important to the interorganizational work of civil servants: individuals now matter more than institutions. Position (as administrative lead for a project, as the minister of a particular department) is no longer a clear indication of influence. Being *Jim Prentice*, however, is. In the case of the Mackenzie Gas Project, Minister Jim Prentice, shuffled through the federal bureaucracy three times in 2008, from Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (January-April) to Industry Canada (April to August) to Environment Canada (August-December) and each time, political ownership of the Mackenzie Gas Project went with him. This was even the case when Jim Prentice became minister of Industry Canada, a department that has no responsible authority (permit granting authority) whatsoever around the Mackenzie Gas Project environmental assessment. His influence over the trajectory of that particular initiative is unparalleled by any other actor and that influence stems not from the fact that he was minister of any particular substantive portfolio, but from himself personally and individually, selected by the court to be the champion of northern oil and gas development. When Minister Prentice announced the federal government's financial offer to the Mackenzie Gas proponents on January 19th, 2009, the statement was released on Industry Canada's website rather than in Environment Canada's online media room. The statement also contained an anomaly in federal government news centre releases: it referred to Jim Prentice as *minister* only, omitting any reference to exactly which ministry (Environment) he was running. This

may indeed be the very start of a new precedent of ministerial allegiance to (mobile) horizontal policies rather than (stationary) departmental mandates.

If formal institutions and formal positions matter less than an individual's standing with the court, then the rules of the administrative-political game have changed. More to the point, the new rules regarding boundaries, positions, authority, information, and aggregation are less informed by administrative structures and practices and more so by political circumstances. Knowing the rules has been critical to the influence of civil servants' and not knowing them has affected feelings of efficacy. It is especially critical to their work within policy networks where rules are already less clear and less fixed to begin with.

Thus, court government only exacerbates conflict in networks. Rules about authority (who has it, not procedurally but substantively), information (the channels available and what can be shared) and payoffs (the sanctions and rewards associated with a particular activity and how they will be distributed), stand to be less clear to civil servants when control derives more from political authority than it does from central agency guidelines. Simply put, court government may contribute to the shift in control from regularized and routine bureaucracy to spontaneous and fleeting politics. Former rules may no longer hold, including the primacy of departmental mandates. Not knowing which rules continue to hold and which ones have changed can be frustrating and demoralizing for public servants who engage in interorganizational work for policy influence. The chance of a negative outcome due to not knowing the rules increases in a more politicized public service, where civil servants' influence is less tied to adherence to bureaucratic rules. This issue of rules will be returned to in chapter seven, where the

struggle to see one's expectations of the policy process realized will be more comprehensively examined.

Conclusion

This chapter has explored many instances of political activity and their implications for the interorganizational work of public servants. In particular, unilateral decisions taken at the political level produced complications for interactions among public servants in the HIV Vaccine Plan and put the Sector Council program itself at risk of dissolution. In both cases, public servants were merely expected to respond to political decisions, demonstrating that a recent statement by Donald Savoie (2008b) is particularly apt: "the government of Canada now makes policy by announcement rather than by a policy process."

In the cases of the Mackenzie Gas Project and Team Canada Inc, early political decisions were coordinated with the civil service. In this respect, their experiences were quite different from those of the other two initiatives. That stated, interviews with public servants involved in MGP and TCI revealed that the ongoing operation of both initiatives was riddled with poor intradepartmental communication, and lack of integration between political and bureaucratic networks. This in turn impacted morale within the bureaucratic networks. Within MGP, Environment Canada's staff felt excluded and disillusioned with the embedded network process. They perceived that their interorganizational battles at the working level were ignored at the political one, and consequently felt discouraged from defending their department in subsequent interorganizational working groups.

In the case of TCI, the morale of network members was compromised on two occasions. In the first occasion, the achievement of agreement of twenty-three organizations at the bureaucratic level around strategic policy direction was not rewarded within the political network. The lack of funding produced at this important juncture led to the unraveling of bureaucratic loyalties down the road. While there had been DM-level commitment to the initiative within DFAIT, lack of messages upwards (within DFAIT), across (from TCI's DG-level chair from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada), and downwards (due to delegation on the part of DFAIT's DM) contributed to the demise of TCI. All four experiences reveal that interorganizational work can be difficult, unrewarding, and ineffective in the absence of intradepartmental integration and communication between political and administrative networks.

There are several important findings that can be teased out from these experiences. First, the relationship between political and administrative actors in the Mackenzie Gas Project demonstrates that bureaucratic policy networks represent poor vehicles for the reconciliation of departmental mandates. Programs enacted in a department can conflict with its own stated policy goals or the departmental mandate, or even, the expressed political agenda (Wright 1988). If programs within a single sector can conflict with the broader goals of the sector, much less the broader goals of government, then there is a strong likelihood that departmental mandates will conflict with other departmental mandates, as well as the aspirations of the PM and his close advisors.

What this means is conflict between mandates is even more likely – inevitable even – within networks, since interdepartmental work combines the policy inconsistencies internal to departments with those external to and across departments.

Acting entrepreneurially can only get working level staff so far in interorganizational work; if two departmental mandates truly, inherently conflict, there is no way for public servants to “entrepreneur” around it. In these cases, conflicts get bumped up to senior level staff, and bumped up further, since it is not in the authority of a director general to skirt around departmental mandates. This remains the domain of the most senior bureaucrats and if necessary, the minister or prime minister. Decisions taken at this level will determine winners and losers at the working level and it is this aspect of policymaking through networks that creates conflict between and within levels that work interorganizationally.

How a network is structured will affect how public servants face these challenges. On policy issues that do not see departments legislatively mandated in rigid and mutually exclusive ways, officials will have a far better time at collaboration and will avoid intradepartmental conflict and bureaucratic-political conflict because they will have to room to maneuver and massage common goals to inform their more broad and flexible mandates, as was the case in HIV/AIDS. In the Mackenzie Gas Project, conflicting regulatory mandates set the network up for conflict and political arbitration that would leave some members unhappy. In contrast, the Sector Council Program and Team Canada Inc have much more voluntary memberships; if conflict between mandates occurs, departments have the option of leaving. The problem here (for TCI though not SCP) is exit results in the disintegration of the network altogether. As a result, policy ambiguity stemming from mutually exclusive political priorities can either force the dissolution of a (voluntary) policy network, or result in winners and losers in a mandated policy network with impacts for efficacy and worker morale.

A third finding is political decisions, made by public and spontaneous announcement, can put pressure on public managers to transform a vertical initiative into a horizontal one. The Sector Council Program received funding through a MC for its activities, but as a result of devolution of labour market policy to provinces, the program struggled to maintain relevance and sought to leverage these funds in other departments' programs. The rationale was to increase the reach of the program and draw in other departments as allies, together reducing the chance that the program would be cut. When ministers and the prime minister make policy by announcement rather than through the bureaucracy's formal approvals process, it makes it difficult for public servants to anticipate change; they are most likely to construct a coping apparatus and for the Sector Council Program, this has taken the form of networking. Over time, programs that are vertical in form can become horizontal in function, as a result of policy by political announcement.

A fourth important finding is interorganizational work is not a replacement for intraorganizational work and poor intraorganizational cohesion riddled all four networks. This lends support to Donald Savoie's (1999, 2003, 2008a) thesis that the loyalties of civil servants have fractured, and divided, and the implication here is horizontality cannot occur in its absence. The potential for gains from interorganizational networking will be limited in the absence of strong intraorganizational cohesion. Lines of communication must be kept open between levels of the federal government for members of working-level networks to send messages to and receive messages from political networks. No consensus reached in a working group will find its way into public policy decisions if each attending manager or director cannot gain a standing with departmental seniors and vice versa. Lack of

intradepartmental cohesion within DFAIT resulted in its own deputy minister, supportive of TCI, unaware of its very closing. Intradepartmental cohesion is important to not only getting the right messages down from senior management, as was the challenge in MGP, but as well, carrying them up and getting the attention of senior civil servants.

Why intradepartmental cohesion is lacking is an important question, deserving of further attention. One reason for divided loyalties stems from shocks to the political-administrative relations brought on by waves of highly public, government indiscretions committed over the last decade. Major perceived government scandal has graced the stage of federal politics in Canada twice in the last ten years, and in each circumstance, the relations between political actors and the public service has been called into question. In the first of these events – the ‘billion-dollar boondoggle at HRSDC’, the implication was the political levelling of severe and restrictive administrative accountabilities on the interorganizational work of HRSDC officials. The second of these events – the sponsorship scandal – resulted in yet more bureaucratic bashing, reminiscent of the 1980s. These incidents together demonstrate the vulnerability of interorganizational work in a political culture still imbued with notions of flexibility and risk taking of the new public management as well as demands for error-free government and probity associated with traditional public administration. The relationship between political and administrative actors suffers the consequences of the mutual pursuit of these diverging aims. The result is typically a tightening or relaxation of layers of central agency rules, a reform which holds only until the next scandal emerges and is publically seized.

A fifth point is, even if working level staffs manage to gain senior level departmental support, this does not guarantee that the Treasury Board or Cabinet – and those most influential *with* and *within* them – will make the corresponding formal political approvals. Good public policy counts for far less than politically salient public policy: public policy linked to the government's political agendas and priorities. *Before* engaging in interorganizational work, it is important to gauge the political salience of a policy issue. This is necessary but far from sufficient. Once *doing* interorganizational work, initiatives need to remain flexible and open to change. Political circumstances are unstable and government priorities can shift and unexpectedly. New problems can arise (e.g. a major oil spill) and the political apparatus can change (e.g. a cabinet shuffle) and both can produce shocks to public organizations (Kingdon 1995; Meier and O'Toole 2001; Kickert, Klijn, and Koppenjan 1999). Because horizontal initiatives are spread thinly across government, the chance is high that a given events in the political or problem streams will affect them.

As the four cases demonstrate, political turbulences can destabilize officials-level networks by altering their membership and reducing their fit with political priorities, which can impact their resources, level of funding and degree of senior support. Both TCI and SCP suffered existential crises as a result of political turbulence and both sought to evolve their mandates to continue to exist. Only SCP was successful. TCI's members could not, in time agree on what their new mandate would be.

Adapting to the political environment is a daunting to civil servants in networks because of the multiple veto points. It is far easier to mobilize around a fleeting policy window intraorganizationally than it is interorganizationally. Vertical initiatives have greater access to authoritative control mechanisms which can induce participation,

commitment, agreement, and hence, action. Superiors can command (among other tactics) but colleagues can only bargain or persuade (Kingdon 1995: 167). In the absence of a limited membership, complimentary mandates, possibility for mutual gains, and the presence of strong, credible lead actors capable of performing the role of Kingdon's (1995) *policy entrepreneurs*, initiatives built around interorganizational work will collapse in the face of strong negative political turbulence. The Sector Council Program avoided just that. With one member and one mandate, occupying the leadership position, it evolved from a supplier of training to a producer of information services in response to the government's devolution decision.

Establishing redundant relationships, and maintaining ties with actors among different coalitions, including participation in networks at both the administrative and political level, members of networks that enjoy a leadership position, can act as policy entrepreneurs, pushing the network towards reconfiguration that fits with the new environment (Lynn 1981; Bruijn and Heuvelhof 1995; Kingdon 1995). This is what Kickert and Koppenjan (1999) also refer to as "good political-administrative management." Members of Team Canada Inc's secretariat were critical of the last DG-level chairperson for the initiative, who they view as responsible for the network's demise in his failure to perform the policy entrepreneur role.

What this demonstrates is, in turbulent political environments, the timing of action becomes more important than the content of action. How consistent a policy proposal is with the political environment and the values that dominant within it, is more important than how good the proposal is, by other values that do not enjoy dominance. The more unpredictable and unstable the political and problem streams are, the less sustainable horizontal initiatives become. Turbulent political environments

demand of public servants political awareness, continual adjustment, open mindedness, and flexibility. Or, as one public servant put it, simply “Kevlar.”

Kevlar, may very be just what public servants need in turbulent political environments, particularly the one that federal public servants have weathered through over the last decade. Interorganizational work requires of government less emphasis on formal accountabilities but this is unlikely to be politically realizable if the aftermath of two instances of real (and perceived) government scandal, are taken as enduring precedents on the relationship between the political and administrative realms of government. That is, episodes like the Sponsorship Scandal have affected public administration beyond just the formal mechanisms put in place to prevent them in the future. The very behaviour of the federal government in responding to the crisis – in particular, the Liberal party – has further demoralized the public service. While Gomery’s inquiry, along with the Auditor General’s investigation focused on the power structures of government, and the failure of ministers and their staff to adhere to “established authority structures for financial and human resource deployment”¹² the Liberal government instead chose to paint the Sponsorship Scandal as a managerial crisis, and specifically, the maladministration of public servants. While public servants were indeed blamed for the corruption, and charged as such, the less noticed but more shocking realization was that ultimately, no one was held to account in parliament for the wrongdoing. Crises of accountability have thus been packaged as bureaucratic indiscretions. How is one to conduct interorganizational work – politically aware, open minded, contingently flexible – in such a hostile climate of *ex poste* political evaluation?

¹² Housed in the PMO, the Sponsorship Program did not trigger the departmental processes which Public Works and Government Services would have been mandated to oversee and enforce

It is not clear as of yet, how effective the recommendations out of the Gomery Commission or those implemented through the *Federal Accountability Act*, will be in addressing what they intended: the political rein on – and politicization of – the public service, though prognoses are dismal (see Sears 2006; Franks 2006). If anything, these bouts of regulation signal to civil servants when to steer clear of networks.

7 COLLABORATIVE GOVERNMENT

Challenges and Coping Strategies

Introduction

There are institutional contradictions in the relationships that public servants form with other public servants, members of civil society, and their political masters, in the exercise of collaborative government. These institutional contradictions, as discussed in chapters four, five, and six, make it difficult to actually collaborate, effectively limiting members' ability to realize their goals. In turn, expectations of collaboration tend to exceed what is possible given these institutional contexts. In Chapter four, we saw how the mixed hats of inter-agency work limit the capacity for strong leadership to develop in collaborative government. Lead actors struggle to balance interest in process with interest in policy, a struggle produced by the organization of government: in Canada, departments seeking to collaborate must coordinate through existing line departments. There is limited support in this structure for the creation of third-party lead bodies and for the systematic identification and inclusion of the expertise of other agencies.

In chapter five, we saw how the punctuated worlds of bureaucratic-stakeholder collaboration limit the meaningful inclusion of civil society in collaborative government, and can result in antagonism between partners. The institutional contradiction is stakeholders are empowered to make working level decisions in informal, bureaucratic networks, but remain excluded from formal, political networks. In this context, the

relations between civil servants and stakeholders, including even those *who want similar things*, are vulnerable to hostility.

Finally, in chapter six, we saw how the divided loyalties of government produce contradictions for officials level collaboration. Lower level public servants engaged in working level networks can feel far removed from their administrative superiors and political masters participating in political networks. Horizontal government asks officials level civil servants to work with colleagues in other departments, but their lack of authority to negotiate, prioritize, and/or concede departmental mandates for the benefit of citizens or government as a whole limits what they can achieve. Civil servants feel that they are ill equipped for this, and unable to reconcile mandates in the pursuit of joint action. Sometimes, disconnectedness from their political masters, makes them unsure what they should be doing and who (department, GOC) they should be vouching for. Receiving the message, “the GOC is just not going in that direction” after months of working level collaboration has taken place, does not whet the appetite to engage in more. All of this is disempowering, where public servants have developed *a priori*, high expectations of collaborative government.

Previous chapters focussed on the unique obstacles to collaboration in public servants’ relationships and other agencies, political actors, and stakeholders and this dissertation will conclude with an assessment of the overall challenges of collaboration in government. The first part of this chapter will overview four general challenges to interorganizational work cited by public servants operating interorganizationally. It will then proceed to demonstrate their significance, in the context of a framework of rule contestation.

Challenges in Collaboration

The general challenges that public servants face in doing interorganizational work can be divided into the personal, organizational, and interorganizational. The various struggles associated with interorganizational work manifest at different units of analysis: the public servant, the department, and the relationships and institutions sustaining the network. Frequently interview respondents would wear different hats when discussing their experience. The same individual might express frustration over their organization's lack of inclusion in the network (an organizational-level challenge), followed by their personal issues with a combative network participant (an individual-level challenge), and end with the expressed desire to see greater commonality around the bigger picture for the benefit of the "federal family" rather than the particularistic interests of each department (an interorganizational-level challenge). In this section, each of these different loci will be examined together, keeping in mind the multiple levels at which these challenges manifest.

Many of the challenges outlined here have been acknowledged by other writers, though not all have been confirmed empirically. Kickert, Klijn, and Koppenjan (1999) emphasize the importance of "good political-administrative management" to the operation of policy networks. In particular, network managers should choose "the appropriate time to attempt political-administrative harmonization," linking up the non-representative policy network steered by the bureaucracy with the more representative policy network associated in Canada with executive government. Kickert, Klijn, and Koppenjan's contention that political-administration harmonization is important to the effectiveness of networks, is echoed by interview participants and further supported by

their experiences, confirming an insight about collaborative government that has hitherto remained a theoretical proposition.

Other challenges raised by interview participants conflict with assumptions within the literature, here, the presumption that highly inclusive networks translate into participatory decision making and the greater achievement of policy goals (see deLeon and Varda 2009). One common theme in the interviews explains why Sector Council Program encountered the fewest challenges in collaboration: less conflictual and more productive interactions take place serially and bilaterally between members of a network rather than through single, collective and inclusive deliberations. Collective multilateral deliberations benefited from a series of previous informal bilateral exchanges between network members, what we might call *networking* here. Learning best took place in the absence of sideline observers, as disagreements between two or three members can be exacerbated by the feeling that the conflict is being witnessed by others, damaging the credibility of the one “who learns” (and hence, “who loses”). Observed by other network members, disagreement between actors can degenerate into a struggle for credibility and perceived power, rather than an opportunity for learning. This is consistent with Mark Imperial (2005)’s study of six American watershed management programs which finds that collaboration works best when there are several smaller, overlapping networks rather than a single, central, inclusive one.

Taken together, the interview participants’ perceptions – that administrative networks are embedded in political ones (confirming theory) and that open deliberations can inhibit learning compared with closed, bilateral deliberations (challenging theory) – reveal findings that deepen our understanding of how collaboration takes place and the challenges and opportunities it presents for

policymaking processes. This chapter will outline four challenges that public servants across the initiatives raised as relevant to their own experience with interorganizational work before turning to destructive manifestations of these challenges as *rule contestations*. These challenges relate to gaining inclusion, obtaining commitment, facilitating collegial relationships, and achieving agreement.¹³

Gaining Inclusion

Interview respondents cited many sources of network exclusion, which limited their personal or organizational standing within a network. One obstacle was the lack of knowledge about an existing network in which the department might have a vested interest. This challenge is not an insignificant one. Departments have multiple priorities and can be unaware of activities going on within other departments. Even when they are aware of those activities, it is often not immediately clear that their department might want to get involved, either because the wrong departmental section is aware of the initiative and unaware of the “right people” in their own, or because the linkages between mandates are less evident to the right people in the right section.

Poor intradepartmental awareness (of what other sections or branches are doing), can lead members of one departmental section to *abstain* on behalf of the entire department from a pertinent network. This was the case for a member of MGP. While the department has since become a member of the Mackenzie Gas Project, it missed out on an important early decision: special funding for participation through a joint memorandum to cabinet.

¹³ These challenges were identified based on data coding and content analysis of participant interviews. The data analysis techniques are explained in chapter two.

Even when excluded actors gain access to a network, the effects of exclusion can continue to affect influence and relations within the network. Across all four horizontal initiatives, there was a strong consensus that “getting in early” was key to success for both the network (in achieving its intended goals) and member organizations (in having influence).

However, getting in early is not always possible, nor always desirable. TCI followed the practice of early engagement and ballooned to twenty-three members, which ultimately compromised the initiative’s goal of joint policy development. Political decisions that occur throughout an initiative’s life can dramatically affect who might want to be a member as well. CIDA had not been an original member of the HIV/AIDS Vaccine Initiative, not because it failed to get in early, but because the initiative was a different one prior to the political decision to reshape it mid-way through its development. Perhaps then, it is not so much getting in *early* that matters, but rather, getting in when the window of opportunity to do so, opens (Kingdon 1995).

A second obstacle to network inclusion is the lack of personnel that a department can commit to the network. In the case of the aforementioned department, early exclusion as a result of poor internal organizational awareness produced this additional obstacle to inclusion later on. Lack of personnel can stem from other sources too. Agranoff (2007) recently made the important point that while scholars predominantly study singular networks around which actors participate, in reality, public managers are party to multiple networks. Public managers face competing priorities, including multiple networks that vie for their attention. The trade-offs are even more

characteristic of senior government officials, whose work tends to take on an even more horizontal nature.¹⁴

Alongside the lack of personnel that an organization has to represent it within a network is the lack of resources that an organization possesses to be granted a standing when personnel are available. Network inclusion is more than just a procedural qualification of access: warm bodies seated around a table. Network inclusion means substantively inclusion as well. The work of Voets et al (2008) suggests an organization is included in a network when it occupies a seat, is provided with opportunities to express its views, and enjoys some impact on the network as a result of expressing those views.

An organization may be excluded from a network because the organization itself or the personnel representing it are not perceived by others to possess resources valuable to the network. The contribution the organization can make to the network is not clear, in terms of understanding policy issues, contributing to network operations, or a host of other activities deemed important. This type of exclusion was cited by public servants across the four initiatives. In many cases, it stemmed from what members of excluded organizations considered were misconceptions about their organization itself. Regional and sectoral departments struggled to be seen as relevant or resourceful given their particularistic mandate. New organizations faced the obstacle of not being well known, much less visible. Even when they were, network members did not have

¹⁴ Collaborative government should not be seen simply as an objective “good”. Agranoff (2007: 31) makes the point that “we should not be impressed by the idea of collaboration per se, but only if it produces better organizational performance or lower costs than its alternatives.” Collaborative government is an alternative arrangement to hierarchical government for the delivery of goods and services and development of public policy. As such, it must be evaluated against what could be achieved in its absence.

enough information to make an assessment of the importance of new or unknown organizations. Inexperience with interorganizational work made it difficult for new organizations to even articulate their resourcefulness. Finally, some organizations were subject to discrimination as a result of what others viewed as their fringe mandate, as was the case for Correctional Services Canada (CSC), which was perceived in the HIV/AIDS FI as having less relevant (at best) to less deserving (at worst) clients.

To get included in a network, public servants must first, have visibility within the federal government as well as within their own department, and second, be able to demonstrate some authority (such as a mandate), expertise or resources that would compel other organizations to work with them. The first of these factors – visibility – speaks to the importance of good intradepartmental integration. If you are not visible to those within your own department, the likelihood that those outside of your department will know who you are is low. This is not a small point, as it has had significant implications for members of the horizontal initiatives examined here. The lack of visibility of the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act Division *within* Health Canada, led to its early exclusion from the Mackenzie Gas Project.

Intradepartmental integration is important to the substantive inclusion of an organization as well. Reorganization at Correctional Services Canada made more visible its health mandate and expertise in the area of federal inmates and was critical to the agency's subsequent influence within the HIV/AIDS network. This was also true for the Canadian Institutes of Health Research when it organized itself to better fit with the political priorities of the government of the day.

Personal skills are also valuable to organizations that seek a greater standing within interorganizational settings. Interorganizational and intraorganizational

awareness – knowledge of organizational structure, departmental activities, and sites of expertise within and outside one’s organization – increase the ability of public servants to participate in interorganizational work. Interdepartmental groups may require a high level of technical knowledge and specialist expertise to effectively address complex policy issues. The absence of sufficient technical expertise was cited by interview respondents across the initiatives, but particularly within the HIV/AIDS network as a source of frustration in interorganizational work.

However, it is often difficult to know in advance what technical issues may arise. As one official put it, “you need a good team behind you” to effectively feed in your organization’s preferences. The burden that this places on network members varies according to the scope and depth of a department’s mandate in the area. One interview respondent remarked that interorganizational work for her had become far more demanding after moving from Fisheries and Oceans Canada to Environment Canada, because of the depth of involvement that the latter had in MGP. While Fisheries had one piece of legislation that informed their participation in the network, Environment Canada had multiple acts, and thus, necessitated the representation of various different branches and sectors:

You are the lone person [from your department] at the table and you are trying to represent the broad mandate, so if you can’t fully know your mandate or the particulars of your mandate – you know you have responsibility for air and water quality but you are not the particular expert – you really need the skill of knowing where to pull the information in from your department into a coordinating committee, and it’s tough too, because you are on these committees and you’ll be challenged with something and you don’t always have it at your... “Why is Environment Canada saying this?” I have no idea. You know? You may have a general idea but the expertise is not always with you in the room. So that can be a challenge.

The challenge of network inclusion was experienced by members within all four initiatives, although some organizations faced this difficulty more than others as a result of their agency's internal organization, nature of their mandate, nature of their clientele, level of experience, and degree of personal skill. Organizations that were able to strengthen their intraorganizational capacity overcame this exclusion. Organizational alignment with political priorities and human resourcing to privilege network representatives with strong inter- and intra-organizational awareness further buttressed a department's standing within a network.

Obtaining Commitment

Kickert, Klijn, and Koppenjan (1999) have emphasized the difficulty of obtaining commitment in networks because participation, contribution, and compliance are voluntary, a point echoed by many interview participants. Interorganizational work increased the work load of almost all public servants interviewed. Network members were expected to attend meetings, actively engage with others, be open to and consider alternative points of view, surrender organizational resources to the network as a whole, and act consistent with the interests of the network, particularly back within their host organization. Not only does this take time; if there is significant conflict or disagreement, the desire to participate lessens even more. The demands also vary by department and for those organizations for which the issue is not as central or for which there are fewer personnel that can be dedicated to the issue, commitment is an even greater struggle. This was the perspective of an official from CIHR:

This is my whiny part now. If you go to the Public Health Agency, you know, you have x number of people, you go to Health Canada you have x number of people; here, it's pretty much me that has to go to these meetings. It's crazy. I kind of came to this job to get away from meetings. There's about three or four

subcommittees of the initiative, and then the Vaccine initiative has its own special terms and conditions because –that’s government, right? – you create a distinct program, you have a distinct Treasury Board Submission, distinct reporting requirements.

At the individual level, the most pressing and aggravating issue concerning policymaking through networks was that it takes a lot of energy. Networks do not form on their own, nor do they continue on their own; they require sustained commitment; and even when that commitment can be guaranteed from all members, they still take a lot of time, and that in and of itself, tends to weigh on people’s attention.

If your network is not well established, then you’ll learn some time after the fact, but you need to put a lot of time and effort to establish your network. So it is something we need, but you need to find the time for that. That’s the frustrating aspect. Sometimes you feel ... like I am responsible for fed-prov [relations] but I don’t have a lot of time to put into this, even though the expectations are there. It’s time. Time is a big thing.

I tell you, it is no easy matter, any of these consultations from multiple jurisdictions, you have to allow time; it takes time. Always.

It takes us time to get projects up and running. Typically it takes us about half a year, from conception to implementation and that time is really used to bring everybody who you think needs to be brought on side to be brought on side. So for example, nursing. A lot of foreign trained nurses in Canada are having a hard time, so we want to make sure that all the different nursing regulators in all the provinces are on side with the particular project; that means we also want to need to make sure that the health ministries in each of the provinces are on side and nursing unions are on side. That takes time. And it often means we take baby steps.

A factor that weighs heavily against interorganizational work as quick and responsive, is accountability. As one respondent from HRSDC put it, “The major problem I really see is the multiple levels of approval that are required to do anything. It’s huge.” It may also be huge for a department like HRSDC, which suffered accountability overload following the 1995 audit of its grants and contributions (Phillips and Levasseur 2004). What should have been an otherwise mundane, internal review highlighting some poor bookkeeping, instead became a major public episode of administrative scandal. Initially

dubbed the “billion-dollar boondoggle” by the media, the later realization that little, if any, government spending had actually gone unaccounted for, received barely public notice (Good 2003). The real damage was layers of new reporting requirements burdening the collegial relationship public officials had been encouraged in political rhetoric to foster with those non-profit organizations that were recipients of the grants and contributions (Phillips and Levasseur 2004).

The challenge of commitment also tends to vary with the nature of the network’s activity. Public servants cited a difficulty with delivery, and with sustained commitment to the network following an initial decision-point. As a central member of the HIV/AIDS FI remarked “I find we’re very good at the upfront piece; you pay a lot of attention to developing something, but the follow-up is weaker.” Across the initiatives, lead organization members expressed a frustration with delivery. While agreement to joint action is difficult to achieve, even when it is achieved, there is no guarantee that the network will be able to deliver if along the way, competing priorities distract network members from fulfilling their commitment to drafting a document, collecting departmental input, or obtaining senior approval on a way forward agreed to at the working level.

One way to overcome the commitment problem is to formalize networking across the hierarchy of government. At the working level, this can be achieved through an employee’s work plan. If an agency can obtain senior support for its role in an interorganizational initiative, then the commitment problem is usually resolved. However, a disaccord between bureaucratic and political interest in interorganizational work was a significant issue for members of TCI, the HIV/AIDS FI, and MGP. Formalization of working-level collaboration requires that senior commitment already

be present.

The problem of commitment, in a network beneficial to citizens, is at its root, this: benefits accrue to the network collectively, while costs are borne out by individual organizations. Networks that can effectively internalize these costs (i.e. obtaining separate funding for the network that does not draw on departments' "A-bases"), and limit benefits to members only, are better positioned to overcome the commitment problem. In the absence of funding, networks that focus their activities on the least demanding forms of collaboration (information sharing over joint delivery) or most tangible forms of collaboration (joint delivery over joint policy development) are also more likely to avoid the commitment problem and also achieve senior commitment necessary for the formalization of networking at the bureaucratic level. That stated, the point of collaboration is not to avoid doing meaningful work in order to preserve commitment and so, departments should strive for funding, and tangible group benefits first, rather than diluted joint activities.

Because funding and tangible outputs existed for Sector Council Program, it encountered the least difficulty with commitment, though it remained a challenge nonetheless:

Getting other federal government partners on board is difficult if they don't see any correlation, if it is not immediately obvious to them that it will satisfy any of their policy objectives. Sometimes it is difficult to engage them because they feel threatened or feel like they are ahead or there is nothing to gain by collaborating or cooperating, so they are difficult to engage.

For HRSDC staff, the solution to this obstacle was *framing*. HRSDC staff aimed to articulate to other departments the benefits of collaboration to the department's client base, engaging even, other department's stakeholders or their senior staff directly. As a generalist department aiming to engage specialist departments, this tactic was effective.

It represents a shifting strategy from lobbying and bargaining “this is what I want” to selling and framing, “this is what *you* want” and demands of public servants working interorganizationally the same *interorganizational awareness* that counteracts network exclusion:

Sometimes it’s a little tough getting other departments to be involved because they didn’t really see why. Why do we need to come to this meeting? And I would sell it. I would read up on them; I would not just read their websites; I’d likely go into their business plans, like what they submit to parliament; what they’ve done and where they want to go, so I could speak a little bit more intelligently and hit some key words. Like, “that strategy you’re doing; you can see the link here.” It’s like conducting market research and then selling to someone. You never go into an interview with a company without doing at least some research. And you have to appeal to people’s corporate sense of responsibility within the federal government. Sometimes it works; sometimes it doesn’t. Sometimes people are very comfortable in their silos and they don’t want to be pushed away from that. And I respect that. So then I would call their boss. I think at the end of the day we wanted to say, “You can go back to your department and say you participated in this, and through your participation, you helped to achieve this.”

There is a danger however, in networking *too much*, or rather, involving too many *non-critical members* in the network. While non-critical members can attract funding, and lend critical members of the network valuable support around the time that an issue dwindles on the political agenda, it can simultaneously weaken the network. Including non-critical members may bring new resources and scale to an initiative allowing it to carry on in the face of declining political commitment but too many non-critical members can also lead to the erosion of the common mandate, and eventually to commitment problems at the working level down the road.

Negotiating New Relationships

A third significant challenge that interview respondents faced in their interorganizational work was their ability to transform pluralist relationships previously

formalized by convention into more productive relations suited to collaboration. Policymaking styles tend to develop in a particular country over a period of time, scripting in many ways, the relations between actors, not only who is included but how they are included and what actions or activities are considered appropriate (Richardson et al 1982). Policymaking styles certainly evolve.¹⁵ However, a period of time can lapse before interorganizational culture catches up with formal or structural change, or the opposite: structural change follows political rhetoric. As recent as 2007, Howlett found that multi-actor decision making in Canada tended to be more antagonistic than models of multi-actor decision making developed around European cases suggest, indicating the continued relevance of pluralism to policy making in Canada over corporatism in Europe.

Public servants involved in the HIV/AIDS FI struggled to transform the way government and non-government actors related to one another to better suit collaborative structures. The challenge was not that stakeholder antagonism was unwarranted or misplaced but rather, that it inhibited collaborative interaction. There was a desire to want to include pressure groups more intimately in decision-making, but a prerequisite for that inclusion was behavioural change. For pressure groups this meant that the representation of particularistic interests must take a backseat to full ownership and responsibility for all dimensions of public policy (and all of its consequences).

¹⁵ Consider for example, that the federal government was extremely active in the 1980s and 1990s in the funding of the advocacy function of various NGOs covering women's issues, citizenship development, language, and multiculturalism. When in 2006, the funding of the advocacy function of NGOs lost its political esteem, the federal government abolished the 'equality' mandate from Status of Women Canada, removing advocacy funding from its contribution program altogether.

A paradox of collaboration-based government is while non-state actors may enjoy a seat at the table, and a say in actual policies, there is a clear limit to their involvement. There are “secret” and “protected” documents; there are confidential approvals processes; there are intradepartmental meetings in which non-state actors will be barred from attending. As much as non-governmental groups are expected and encouraged to take ownership alongside government actors of policy proposals they participate in developing, there comes a point – the formal decision making point – in the policy process where that relationship must be momentarily set aside.

When political decisions conflict with the informal consensus between the bureaucracy and societal actors, non-governmental actors needed the opportunity to revert back to their role as an outside pressure organization. In turn, governmental actors needed to bear in mind that this conflict represents only one inevitable round of the process of collaboration, and empathy and honesty will go far in securing the productive relations in later ones.

This need for openness and honesty is not limited to relationships between actors internal and external to government. Many respondents emphasized the importance of interorganizational behaviour that maintains trust between federal actors themselves:

I needed to go back to them to say well, I have nothing to tell you but at least I’m telling you that; people need that if they’re going to continue to be engaged with you; otherwise they’ll stop responding. So you have to maintain those relationships; it takes a lot of energy, it takes work, it takes an even hand. You have to have a good tone when you are working with other people. It’s like in a family; when you’re feeling grumpy, it doesn’t work when you take it out on everybody. Or if you find that they’ve given you something that you can’t really work with, you say “thank you very much.” That’s important to maintaining a good relationship.

When CIDA was inserted into the pre-existing HIV Vaccine Initiative, working level staff from other departments took the following approach to engaging them:

All we had to do, was kind of be cooperative, listen to them complain and bitch and get it out of their system, and then get them to contribute. How do you want to do this? How does this look? How does this meet your needs? You know, just work with people.

Respondents have opted to cope with the challenge of collegiality in many ways. First, experience with collaboration goes far in promoting collegial relations. If you have worked with a difficult individual or organization before (better yet, if you worked *for* that organization before, the case for a Canadian Heritage director working with DFAIT under TCI), you are more likely to understand where they are coming from and barring that, know how to deal with those individuals without further stimulating conflict.

Removing yourself or someone else from the network (if you are structurally in a position to do so) can be an effective way of dealing with antagonism. The network lead in PHAC for the HIV/AIDS FI did not hesitate to seek removal of individuals from the network (going directly to their manager) who did not adopt collegial relations with other members of the network. Acting as the working group gatekeeper, this particular public servant has been effective in protecting the collegiality of the network. However, this public servant was able to play this role because of the largely intraorganizational nature of collaboration in the HIV/AIDS FI. In addition to leading the initiative, PHAC enjoys representation through five responsibility centres, thus composing more than half of the interorganizational initiative.

Getting Agreement

Getting agreement is the fourth major challenge for public servants working interdepartmentally. Even if the right people have been included, members are all committed, and the relationship reflects a collegiality around a common purpose, language and ultimately, culture, it does not ensure that everyone will agree. These are

necessary, but not sufficient conditions for agreement. As one respondent remarked, “all the partners have their own sort of view on a matter and so trying to develop a cohesive understanding of where the Canada sits on this issue, what it is doing, is quite involved. It is not an easy thing to do.”

Departmental representatives can aim to act more in the interests of the government as a whole, rather than an ambassador for their department alone, but this usually is not enough to facilitate agreement because some members will still be more inclined towards departmental thinking. Accountabilities across all four initiatives remain predominantly hierarchical. In the absence of institutionalized horizontal accountabilities, interorganizational work needed a big picture member, and in the case of all four initiatives, this role fell to its lead organizations. Remarked a member of the INAC-hosted secretariat for MGP:

The challenge of that is sometimes it might seem that people are too narrowly focused and are not looking at the bigger picture so you have to draw out what could seem like narrow interest and put it into the broader picture. So that is a challenge, but it certainly can be done and that’s sort of our job in some areas.

Leveraging helps to make agreement possible as well. If you can avoid making decisions appear zero-sum, you can get agreement. A public servant from Heritage Canada did not see any conflict between her department’s mandate (to support cultural industries) and the mandates of other departments:

For me, it is not a challenge. For me, I am a public servant. That is my official title, and for me, if I am helping industry, I am answering to the objectives of my department. It’s that simple. If I help a cultural entrepreneur sell in Germany, then I’ve met my responsibility as a public servant, as a member of this department, and as a member of this program. For me, it just falls so easily. Can you take what they want to do for fisheries and flip it for culture? It’s just the reality of it. If you are doing a guide for trade, it doesn’t matter what you are selling. Pieces of it are still of value. And even now, can you take an initiative that somebody else has done and flip some of the ideas in for your sector. I mean, trade is trade.

The ability to find opportunities in initiatives that directly benefit another department is viewed as critical to effective collaboration, and to what it means to act entrepreneurially. While this may not appear to be new or difficult work, public servants revealed it is more challenging than it appears. Public servants must know a great deal about the work of other department, though process knowledge and policy expertise are not enough. Opportunities do not objectively exist, waiting to be discovered; in many cases, they have to be *made*. As one individual remarked, “you had to be creative to find innovative solutions.” For initiatives that involve departments with widely different mandates, the ability to create solutions that work for many members is invaluable. A member of the MGP secretariat explains:

You have differences but at the end of the day, you need to come up with a joint position. “Okay, Department of Fisheries and Oceans, you have these responsibilities. You have this requirement. We recognize that. Health Canada, you have these requirements. Now Health Canada, respecting the requirements you have, is there a way to perhaps get at what you need through another means, or do it this way?” There is a lot of negotiation and looking for solutions, to get at whatever it is that you need.

When the Department of Fisheries and Oceans requests funding from a horizontal initiative to do an aqua-culture mission to China, why should Canadian Heritage support them, much less agree to let that department take resources from the collective pool to which Canadian Heritage has contributed, for seemingly departmental ends? Sound reasons exist, but it takes some skill to bring them into focus, as a Canadian Heritage director demonstrated:

Their assistant deputy minister leads that mission. But the thing is, you can look at how they coordinated it. Did they use a data-base that made things work better? Did they create a guide, a catalogue of the different companies going? Did that work well? Did they create something that was as small as a cell-phone that could work as a guide? We would want to go to China. Did the ADM level work in China? Do the Chinese consider that level a bit too low? I mean, other cultures will want to see a certain level. So if an ADM works, you have a better

chance of doing your own mission, because you can get an ADM. If it's only the minister, well good luck on that one. You can look at something that fisheries has done. If they are going into a country that you are going into, there are a lot of things that you could glean from that. Who in industry should you bring? Can you bring a sales manager versus a VP of marketing, versus the president? So, you can learn those kinds of things from an event. You basically can learn from what other people have done.

Public servants have to work around unsupportive structures such as conflicting mandates and restrictive hiring practices if they are to achieve network-level goals.

When TCI needed a secretariat to serve all its members, it was forced to formally house the secretariat departmentally and then in practice, tie the secretariat's allegiance to the network rather than the department by offsetting the department's human resource bill through TCI membership dues. Ultimately, entrepreneurial skills help public servants to overcome all of the challenges described above - getting inclusion, obtaining commitment, facilitating collegial relations - but its value is most evident when a network is confronted with the challenge of agreement.

The Paradoxes of Networking

Interorganizational work comes with many challenges for public actors. Identified here were four issues that public servants across the four initiatives grappled with: inclusion, commitment, collegiality, and agreement. Together, these particular challenges highlight three paradoxes that mediate the interorganizational work of public servants. On inclusion, central actors are often dependent on non-central actors to draw formalization and funding to the initiative, but this level of formalization simultaneously puts the network in danger of losing purpose and focus, which are critical to sustained commitment and agreement. Networks struggle to maintain focus on the common (to draw political funding and support), while articulating and

providing clear benefits to the particular (to secure administrative commitment and agreement). The second paradox is efforts to maintain inclusion, commitment, collegiality, and agreement compel public actors to put energies into the policy process, but can also sap energy to actually address substantive policy issues. For peripheral network members, turning resources and energies towards the policy process only serves to amplify desires to extricate oneself from the network. As such, it appears that a zero-sum, path dependent relationship exists between policy issues and policy processes and not just at the level of network manager but at the level of network functioning altogether.

Third, as a template for interaction that informally equalizes the power differentials between actors, collaboration contradicts the existing institutional and structural apparatus of the policy process, which formally privileges particular actors (political actors above administrative actors, and administrative actors above societal actors) above others. As such networks will inevitably feature punctuations of conflict stemming from institutional boundaries that limit full power-sharing.

Altogether, these paradoxes reveal that the interorganizational work of public servants can be extremely difficult. Throughout the horizontal initiatives however, there is also evidence to suggest that challenges associated with networking can be overcome if rule clarity can be better established. Many of the manifestations of these challenges of doing interorganizational work can be understood as the product of rule conflict which can lead to behaviour by one actor that is considered unacceptable (at best) and cheating (at worst) by another actor. The remainder of this chapter will explore how rule contestations riddled all four horizontal initiatives as well as why rule contestation might be an important consideration in the design of policy networks. It will argue that

rule contestation results *from* the institutional contradictions in collaborative work examined in this dissertation as mixed hats, punctuated worlds, and divided loyalties of government and results *in* obstacles to inclusion, commitment, collegiality, and agreement. Rule contestation (and the institutional contradictions that cause it) is important to understand not only because it is a barrier to inclusion, commitment, collegiality, and agreement. More importantly, rule contestation reduces the desires of actors to want to engage in interorganizational work altogether.

Rule Contestation in Collaboration

The challenges of interorganizational work have thus far been explored in the relationships that civil servants have established with stakeholders, political masters, and civil servants operating within other departments. This information is summarized in table 7.1. Interorganizational challenges were experienced differently across the four initiatives as a result of numerous interacting variables: the nature of political leadership, activity of the network, organization of government administration, composition of the network, performance and structure of the network's lead body, and skill set that civil servants bring to the network setting.

Table 7.1 Summary of the Structural Effects of a Policy Issue for Network Challenges

Institutional Structure	Defining Activity	Key Challenge	Sources of Challenge
MGP	Regulation	Agreement	Irreconcilable mandates
SCP	Contracting	Inclusion	Limited interdepartmental knowledge or external profile
TCI	Coordination	Commitment	Lack of funding; large sectoral membership
HIV/AIDS	Policy Consultation	Collegiality	History of antagonistic relations; Impediments in formal approvals process

Across the initiatives, it is clear that some challenges are more serious for actors than others, reducing actors' own efficacy, perceived credibility, and collegiality towards others. Some challenges prompted civil servants to "consider retiring" and question, "whether [they] make a difference" therefore, "do you need to put any effort in?" At times, public servants spoke of low efficacy and low morale. They shared negative feelings *about* collaboration: "Going into a lot of different interdepartmental meetings and more or less getting beat up isn't the most fun you can engage in."

A distinction can thus be made between those experiences with collaboration that limited individuals' abilities to pursue their interests through interorganizational work, but did not change individuals' views about networking and those that may have actually reduced individuals' desire to want to pursue their interests through interorganizational work altogether. What can account for this?

One explanation might be that public servants develop negative feelings towards collaboration when they find that other network members hold and pursue interests that conflict with their own. The interviews, however, provided little evidence of this. Regarding a piece of legislation to protect the environment, one participant stated, "everyone is going to have a different perspective on what it is that will get you to that

cleaner environment.” This is nothing new for network participants. Diverse interests, ideas, and perspectives are a given; in fact, they are the *raison d’être* of networking. As such, ideational conflict accounts poorly for civil servants’ negative attitudes towards collaboration.

What seemed to worsen civil servants’ feelings toward collaboration was the belief that other network members did not follow rules: did not couch interests in the *right* language, did not use “sanctioned” communication paths (e.g. “tattletaling”), shared information selectively, or contaminated the collaborate environment through aggressive and forceful behaviour. These actions have less to do with diverging *policy* ideas and interests and more to do with how those interests are expressed, how actors behave, and ultimately, how closely actual policy processes align with actors’ expectations about those processes. Expectations for the policy process, indeed, seemed to be the basis upon which members evaluated collaboration and considered whether they would do it again. Expectations about processes, as chapter two outlined, denote actor’s perceptions about what the rules of a game are or will be.

The framework developed in chapter two uses the concept of rule contestation due to an institutional deficit to explain why challenges arise within relationships that occur in network settings. An institutional deficit occurs when an action arena lacks clear and internally consistent rules. When network members enter an action arena without clearly established rules, it can result in rule ambiguity (lack of clarity as to what the rule is) and rule conflict (the presence of two or more rules that are mutually exclusive). Network members may hold conflicting understandings of who is entitled to membership and how membership is obtained and rescinded, what network positions are available and what authorities and responsibilities come with those positions and

who can hold what types of positions and why. The types of ideas, issues, and interests that will be subject to consideration, how decisions will be made, what communication channels are available and acceptable, and what benefits are to flow and how those benefits will be distributed. Networks, as new and unstable action arenas entail the negotiation of new rules, as well as the institutional legacy of old rules and thus may be highly prone to institutional deficits. Conflicting rules and ambiguous rules increase the likelihood that a rule important to one member will be broken by another, dashing expectations about the process of collaboration.

The desire for clear rules emerged across the initiatives, summarized well by a PHAC member of the HIV/AIDS network:

In order to work collaboratively together, cooperatively together, we have to agree to certain ground rules. In the public service, those ground rules are core values, the public service values, respect, openness, transparency, the pursuit of excellence, that sort of stuff. You have to have a discussion around clarifying or respecting rules and responsibilities. I find that once mandates, roles, and responsibilities are clarified and we develop a common language, a sort of common narrative, it makes it easier to communicate with less conflict. Because our roles are clear. You know what I am responsible for; I know what you are responsible for. Then it is a matter of negotiating through a respectful process, how I can support you in achieving or exercising your mandate, and reciprocally, you recognizing my mandate, and supporting me in achieving my mandate. We would not deliberately do anything to prevent each other from achieving our mandates; that's a recipe for failure and for conflict.

Table 7.2 below identifies the most significant rule contestations that arose within each of the four horizontal initiatives. In the case of the Mackenzie Gas Project, rule contestation occurred over information, authority, payoff and aggregation rules. Working level staff at Environment Canada expected that the working level across government would have equal influence at the political level, but this was undermined by the departments' different organizational cultures. Health Canada's working level official had been privy to ADM-level conversations and Environment Canada's

exclusion by their own senior officials in Ottawa, represented a violation of this rule.

The lead secretariat's practice of network management also signified the violation of a rule held by network members that the lead secretariat would be impartial towards policy content. The adjudication at the political level of the conflict at the working level over the Kendall Island Bird Sanctuary represented, for officials at Environment Canada, a violation of the rule that the department's mandate would remain preeminent, even in intergovernmental work.

Table 7.2 Summary of Rule Contestations for Public Servants

Case	Type of Rule Contestation	Rule under contestation	Crisis Event
TCI	Boundary	Members are equal	Generalist departments assume lead (act as if they own trade)
	Information	Members will share information, regardless of substantive interest	DFAIT's DM is unaware of the decision to terminate the TCI initiative due to poor communication
	Scope/ Payoff	Participation leads to benefit	Multiple mandates established and one takes precedent
	Payoff	Participation leads to benefit	Sectoral benefits are not articulated despite sectoral investments
MGP	Information	Members are equal	Some civil servants have access to seniors and not others
	Authority	Lead bodies are impartial	Secretariat practices network management
	Payoff	Participation leads to benefit	Negative political decisions reveal lack of formal power
	Aggregation	Primacy of departmental mandates	Mandates are reordered at political level to overcome conflict
HIV/ AIDS	Position	Primacy of collaborative decisions	Stakeholders are included at one level but not another
	Information	Members will share information, regardless of substantive interest	Stakeholders do not change language and behaviour when invited to collaborate
	Payoff	Participation leads to benefit	Negative political decisions reveal lack of stakeholders' formal power
SCP	Authority	HRSDC is the network lead	Federal civil servants lose mandate to provinces

Rule contestation in Team Canada Inc revolved around ambiguous and conflicting information, boundary, scope, and payoff rules. Sectoral departments joined the initiative under the impression that a) participation would result in discrete departmental benefits (payoff rule) and b) that the policy dimension of the network's mandate would be equally pursued alongside its joint program delivery function (scope rule). Violation of both these scope and payoff rules contributed to the decline in membership over the years. Both the scope and payoff rule violations resulted in part, from poor network design, namely the pursuit of mutually exclusive network goals in a single initiative and the absence of mechanisms to allow departments to sectorally distinguish the number of their clients served. However, ambiguity over information rules also resulted in poor communication of TCI's commitment troubles to DFAIT's deputy minister, who, according to TCI's secretariat, would have been in a position to rescue the initiative had she been alerted to its struggle.

The value of this model of rule contestation is it allows us to distinguish between *instrumental* network challenges and *procedural* network challenges, the latter of which signal something more devastating to civil servants. Actors perceive the challenges of gaining inclusion, obtaining commitment, facilitating collegiality, and gaining agreement to result from their own (instrumental) resource deficiencies, (e.g. lack of resources to join a network), or (procedural) process deficiencies (e.g. lack of knowledge about the rules in play), or a combination of both. Some types of rule contestation occur more frequently and/or are particularly devastating when they do occur for network members in particular types of networks, as is depicted in table 7.3 below.

Table 7.3 Likelihood for Conflict in Policy Networks Based on Contestation over Rules and Type of Policy Arena

Source of Rule Contestation	Horizontal Initiative by Type of Policy Arena			
	Regulation	Contracting	Coordination	Joint Policy Making
<i>Position</i>				X
<i>Boundary</i>			X	
<i>Scope</i>			X	
<i>Authority</i>	X	X		
<i>Aggregation</i>	X			
<i>Information</i>	X		X	X
<i>Payoff</i>	X		X	X
OVERALL CONFLICT	High	Low	Moderate	Moderate

Payoff rules are important to members of multilateral networks, indicating that structures to ensure clarity about how members will benefit, should be a principle concern in these types of arrangements:

There has to be clear roles, responsibilities, and accountabilities; you have to continue to be able to identify your inputs. You have to make sure that your investment will have the outcome you really want it to have and that you will be able to continue to invest if necessary (CSC official within the HIV/AIDS FI).

Authority rules were also important to network members and this was most evident in the Mackenzie Gas Project, where the proper role of the lead secretariat was under contention. This suggests that regulatory networks and networks that feature rigid, conflicting mandates need to focus significant efforts on establishing clarity about the sets of actions that can be taken by the network lead. Officials from Environment Canada confessed that they had little understanding of the exact function of the initiative's secretariat, and whether it indeed had the authority to use its structural position as lead actor to shape the policy content of collaborative discussions:

The mandate is a political mandate and we have to respect that but within the bureaucracy, there has to still be rules of engagement, and we have been trying to clarify exactly what their role is. Is it a coordination/facilitation - which is our

perception – or is it truly, a word they use, “oversight”? The language which we see in the coordination documents is I would call it, dictatorial. They get to decide. So if they are going to decide, do we need to put any effort in it? Tell us what the terms and conditions of it will be and we will walk away. We are trying to get that clarity.

Similarly, *aggregation rules* are critical to network members that express minority points of view. In the Mackenzie Gas Project, Environment Canada’s officials carried the assumption that departmental mandates were equal and this assumption was challenged when the political network prioritized some departmental mandates over others in the process of resolving mandate conflicts. In networks where there stands to be diverse membership and a wide range of interests, aggregation rules need to be given close attention and clarified to officials in working level networks who will be affected.

Scope rules can interact with payoff rules to create commitment problems for a network. If network members have different and opposing (i.e. zero-sum) understandings of a network’s purpose as well as the activities and targets that will support the achievement of that purpose, the network risks losing focus over time. Discontentment will inevitably occur at the stage of payoff, if contestation over scope rules does not emerge before. Contestation over scope rules was a principle instigator of commitment challenges for Team Canada Inc. A secretariat member recalls:

The preoccupation with all Team Canada Inc members initially was exporting ... and help[ing] companies become export ready. That was the overall mandate. However, there were members within that group who had that element as a little part of their mandate but were more interested in investment, in other things, in the cooperation agreement, or in policy and really that isn’t what Team Canada Inc was really dealing with. One of the first disjoints, really, was [over] what the mandate was established to be and the interests of some of the members.

Networks that feature a functional mix of members, such as sectoral and non-sectoral departments, or policy as well as program delivery organizations, must pay close

attention to scope rules, if rule conflict between members is to be avoided.

Contestation over *information rules* occurred in TCI, the HIV/AIDS FI and MGP. Members of these networks held differing understandings regarding how information was to be appropriately transmitted and who was to enjoy communication links with whom else. When an initiative features members with inside and outside privilege, information rules are extremely important to gain clarity around. A PHAC member of the HIV/AIDS FI explains:

[Stakeholders will] ask me questions that they know I can't answer, and I will say, you know I can't answer that. But it's important for them that they have given the bureaucracy the questions, so I can say, I will communicate your questions, but you know I can't answer them. It's the clarity that's important.

Position rules were particularly relevant to the two initiatives that featured direct involvement of stakeholder groups. Civil servants involved in the Sector Council Program and the HIV/AIDS FI both articulated the importance of clarity of the positions that members in the network held. Combining position rules with rules regarding information (communication channels) and authority (actions assigned to particular positions), civil servants worked to establish *boundary rules* for stakeholder involvement:

I think the decision points have to be clear. Because there are certain things that non-governmental groups cannot influence. So once you get to the memorandum to cabinet - you are going to policy approval and money - once it goes to the MC and TB submission process, they are out of it. They can't be involved in that. You need to build in those roles and responsibilities and decision points, so it's very clear for non-governmental groups where you play and where you don't play, and you have to explain why.

Like information rules, boundary rules should be a primary concern of members of initiatives that feature inside and outside actors. These points are summarized in table

7.4.

Table 7.4 Importance of Rules in Different Network Settings

Rule Type	Relevant Context
Position	All networks
Boundary	Networks with power differentials
Scope	Networks with multiple functions
Authority	Networks with regulatory functions
Aggregation	Networks with conflicting interests
Information	Networks with power differentials
Payoff	Networks with a large membership

Managing Expectations for Horizontal Government

As this dissertation has argued, actors come to collaborative settings with expectations about *rules*, about how collaboration is going to work. Network members enter a network with pre-conceived notions about the nature of roles, positions, communication channels, decision-making processes, and pay-off schemes. In particular, civil servants interviewed for this study tended to expect to be treated equally in network settings, irrespective of the centrality of their department's overall mandate, to the network's issue area. They expected to have influence over policy outputs as a result of membership within a network; they expected working level networks to matter and to inform decisions within political networks. They expected that proposals around horizontal initiatives will receive *more favour* with political decision-makers than proposals around vertical initiatives *because* they are backed by an interdepartmental consensus. They expected to be rewarded for developing collaborative proposals through approval from Treasury Board and Cabinet, an expectation that they would not necessarily hold on to for departmental proposals. These were their rules.

The absence of payoff in the formal approvals process for interorganizational work, seems not only to have hindered civil servants' policy ambitions, but challenged their understanding of the policy process as well. Operating with the perception that you have influence, when experience reveals that you do not, can be demoralizing. It can cause public servants to reevaluate their desire to engage in interorganizational work.

It would seem then, that if the collaborative experience of federal civil servants could be better supported, efforts should be directed at reducing failures (to gain inclusion, obtain commitment, facilitate collegiality, and achieve agreement) that stem from network members' understanding and expectation of the policy process, of the rules of collaboration.

Policy networks can thus, at two levels (structural and managerial) better support the work of public servants. They can be better structured to avoid rule contestation altogether, and they can be better managed, once structured (however poorly), to mitigate rule contestation. At the structural level, the goal would be to develop collaborative initiatives in ways supportive of commonly held expectations of its processes. At the managerial level, the opposite movement is necessary: once a network's formal structure has been put in place, expectations for collaboration may need to be tempered. At the very least, actors need to know what they are getting into, what the network's formal structure means for the types of boundary rules, and payoff rules that *can* be put in place. Formal structures, while they will not necessarily determine the rules that form within the network, constrain the possibilities irrespective of members' expectations or desires for particular rules.

Neither of these tasks is easy. Civil servants do not have full control over the specification of network structure, and have almost no control at all over two important and interrelated variables: political leadership and core funding. Civil servants can request funding for network processes, but Cabinet decides whether a horizontal initiative is supportive of the government priorities and Treasury Board subsequently determines what funding the initiative will receive, if any. In developing proposals, civil servants can influence other key structural variables to make the network more manageable and avoid rule conflict: the mandate and scope of the initiative, the location of the initiative's secretariat, and organization of one's own department to facilitate both intradepartmental and interdepartmental influence and visibility.

The more difficult of the two tasks may be adjustments of expectations at the managerial level, once the network's overarching structure is already in place. First, it is not clear who within the network should be in the business of clarifying rules and adjusting member expectations. Establishing rule clarity is not merely a technical process, and departments with an ideational stake in the network's outputs, may lack the credibility and consent of network members to facilitate this process. Central agency staff could play this role, advising networks on what kinds of payoffs, positions, and aggregation rules will work in the collaborative setting. Given that central agencies – particular the Privy Council Office – were constructed to *facilitate* interorganizational work, the challenges of collaborative government presented here, may in fact be instances of *central agency failure*. This point will be returned to below. Suffice to say here, central agencies *did not play* a strong supporting role in the interorganizational work of line departments involved in the horizontal initiatives examined in this dissertation.

If central agency staff were able to play the role of network facilitator credibly, would they also be able to play this role, effectively? The case studies revealed that nurturing the policy process around horizontal initiatives can be time consuming and costly. It can drain resources that could otherwise go to policy development or program delivery. Political circumstances can and do change as well, meaning that not only do initial expectations need to be better aligned with what is workable, they may constantly need to be adjusted, as the political context changes. In short, central agencies would need play the continuous role of “process realist”: one that constantly reminds departments and their stakeholders of the things they cannot achieve and should not expect to achieve, a real downer to be sure.

That is, even if a process realist could constantly remind network members of the limitations to joint action, this would put a damper on the energies and ambitions of network members, problematic because it would lessen their interest in interorganizational work altogether. Many civil servants interviewed desired the very opposite kind of network leader, someone who could motivate and inspire. Thus, unrealistic and even, conflicting expectations sparked and sustained by a charismatic leader, may be the thing needed to drive civil servants to achieve collective action.

Herein lays the basic conundrum. For actors who enter collaboration with wild expectations, the process may disappoint; the outcomes may dissatisfy; but far more will have been achieved than if members had worked on their own or if members had worked cautiously with conservative aspirations. Unrealistic expectations about collaboration in the face of unsupportive structures are critical to better network outcomes for citizens, yet can be destructive to collaborators’ feelings of efficacy in the

process. How can collaborative work leading to better outcomes continue then, with the morale of civil servants working horizontally, sustained throughout the process?

Such a conundrum cannot be resolved in the confines of the closing paragraphs of this dissertation. However, some thoughts on this issue are put forward. The answer may well turn out to be, networks need a better balance between supporting structure and supporting manager. At current, there may be too much expectation around collaboration and too little supporting structure to allow those expectations to be met. A better balance may be needed between the structures in which public servants do horizontal work, and the culture and rhetoric of government, which compels them to do it.

When past ideas of public administration restructuring caught the interest of governments in the Western world, the Canadian federal government joined eagerly in on the discourse, though not always in the practice itself, and this seems to be the case here as well. In the past, this failure in Canada to match the rhetoric of reform with its practice has come as a relief to many; conservative implementation of the new public management, for example, amounted to dodging a bullet. Collaborative government however, may not be a bullet we are interested in dodging.

In the current phase of thinking about public administration, collaborative government is finding its way into the actual structures of various other countries, with Britain seen as a front-runner on "joined-up government." A survey of initiatives to facilitate collaborative government at the provincial level in Canada alone (see Peach 2004) suggests that the federal government is a laggard even domestically, and could do a lot more to support interorganizational work, than merely tout its virtues in the Speech from the Throne.

The practice of horizontal ministerial portfolios was recently implemented in Finland under the government's *programme management reform*, and is an example of how the hardware of government could be altered to support collaboration. Finland's program management reform ran its full course over the period of 2003-2007 and has since been evaluated, reformed, and implemented again by the succeeding government. Under this reform, the coordinating minister for horizontal initiatives enjoys "political responsibility over the programme area, larger than his/her own government portfolio." The Prime Minister's Office (PMO) in turn provides the horizontal initiative with resources and funding to support policy analysis, evaluation and monitoring. A program director is nominated from either within the coordinating minister's department, or the PMO, to manage the program. It is also supported by a steering group made up of members of participating agencies. At the beginning of a government's term, the PMO announces a limited number of key horizontal priorities and develops the Government Strategic Document (GSD) to "identify clear effectiveness objectives for programmes and policies with an indication of the means of measuring them." An annual Government Strategic Document process ensures a separate budgeting and evaluation process for the horizontal initiatives. It is managed by the Prime Minister's Office, in consultation with the Department of Finance to ensure fit with its own budgeting process for vertical initiatives. The two "budgets" are presented together annually. The stated purpose of placing budgeting and monitoring in the PMO is to ensure a high degree of political engagement (Prime Minister's Office 2007).

This is not to say that the Canadian federal government should adopt this model. While similarities exist between the two countries (e.g. parliamentary government systems), their differences deserve attention. For one, Finland's experience with

coalition government suggests a stronger existing culture of collaboration. A discussion of Finland's reforms does raise the question of whether horizontal government might require something more than the managerial vision of the Sector Council Program or the political announcement, *laissez faire*, of the virtual agency, Team Canada Inc. Federal civil servants engaged in interorganizational work would not have been in so much of a need of either a "network realist", or a charismatic leader inspiring them to collaborate by raising their expectations about its value, if mechanisms were in place to make horizontal work easier to do and less riddled with rule contradictions along the way. Insight can be gleaned from concerted reforms for horizontal government taken elsewhere, Finland being one example.

Study Limitations

While this study has highlighted some perplexing challenges that public servants have faced in doing interorganizational work, hitherto unexamined in the scholarly literature, a number of caveats deserve mention. First, this dissertation has taken a case study approach to understanding the challenges of interorganizational work. To this end, the findings within this dissertation cannot be assumed to apply to all instances of horizontal work. External validity of these findings is somewhat limited. Whether civil servants operating within other horizontal initiatives experience "divided loyalties", "many hats" and "punctuated worlds" is a matter for further empirical investigation. The external strength of this dissertation then, is its development of theoretical propositions, the external validity of which can only be determined through further application and testing.

Inherent to the embedded case study approach to networks is that some actors and not others will be investigated. By shedding light on Canadian federal public servants operating at the “officials level” within line-departments, this dissertation simultaneously casts a shadow over other actors including senior public servants, central agency officials, elected officials, political staff and those drawn from civil society. Perspectives of stakeholders and politicians are attributed only indirectly through public servants: we know little about their thoughts and views about horizontal government and how they experience it. This is both the dissertation’s strength and weakness.

Compelling reasons existed for the study of only officials-level federal public servants operating in line departments in Canada. For one, mapping an entire policy network is extremely time-consuming and costly; examination of the challenges faced by all actors would have limited the time that could be devoted to multiple cases. Two, middle-ranking civil servants have not enjoyed the same degree of scholarly attention devoted to political elites, street-level bureaucrats and non-state actors in policy studies (see Pressman and Wildavsky 1984; Lipsky 1980; Heinz et al. 1990; Laumann and Knoke 1987). Given that officials-level civil servants *are* policy makers that participate in networks, the lack of attention they have received in studies of networks is problematic and thus, this study design, warranted (Lindblom and Woodhouse 1993; Page and Jenkins 2005).

While the benefits of case study research outweigh its weaknesses in the context of this study, it has other drawbacks that also deserve mention here. As mentioned, case study research trades in generalizability for theoretical richness. This is to say that case study research allows us to develop a deep understanding of complex contexts but also

prevents us from saying much about the world outside of it. As a non-experimental approach with a small number of cases, independent variables also exceed the number of cases and prevent the researcher from “holding things constant.” This can diminish the internal validity of case study findings, a problem for which no clear solution exists. Experimental and statistics based research can be more certain but only about less specific phenomenon, whereas qualitative research can only be less certain, but about more specific phenomenon. That is, case study research can reveal new variables that experimental methods and statistical methods cannot, since variables are part of these study’s *a priori* design. Again, the limitation here is also the strength of the approach.

A third limitation of this research is its conceptual validity. This is a problem inherent within research involving the study of humans: interview participants can conceal actual feelings and fail to report truthfully on behaviour and events. Triangulating the data can help the researcher to minimize these discrepancies, particularly the latter, but it is difficult for a researcher to objectively judge the credibility of data collected on human subjects whereby that data constitutes feelings, perceptions, and beliefs, for which few other sources of data exist. The decision to conduct one hour, not for attribution interviews strengthens the internal validity of this study’s findings but does not necessarily guarantee the data’s objective credibility.

In this dissertation, and in keeping with others (see Page and Jenkins 2005), the perspectives shared by public servants are presented here without judgment. This is not to say that the perspectives shared by public servants should be taken as fact but rather, that they should be acknowledged for what they are: feelings, perceptions, and beliefs as shared by those Canadian federal public servant who work interorganizationally.

Whether public servants *actually* struggle to work interorganizationally due to a

disconnect between bureaucratic and political networks is less important here than the fact that public servants *feel* that this struggle exists for them. How public servants feel about their interorganizational work has some impact on civil service morale and behaviour and thus, how networks function, irrespective of whether or not such feelings are empirically justified and therefore, valid (Kernaghan 2001). However, none of this dissertation's findings should be taken as fact that rule contestation exists apart from public servants' perception that it does.

As a final and related point, this dissertation's findings are solely qualitative, meaning that the challenges of interorganizational work are qualified rather than quantified ones. As such, this dissertation is limited in its ability to "diagnose the patient." We know what challenges some public servants may face and why they may face these challenges, but we know nothing about the degree and extent to which these challenges are faced. Quantifying these challenges will be an important part of future research, if only because it is in understanding their prevalence across governments that would compel us to move towards prescriptions for their resolution. With these limitations in mind, it would be imprudent to prescribe remedies for the problems of interorganizational work. Instead, this dissertation identifies actors and institutions (central agencies) to play a larger role in supporting interorganizational work. What their role need be, is left as an open question for practitioners and scholars to address in subsequent research.

Future Research

This work is by no means complete, and in many ways, raises as many questions as it provides concrete answers. This is as it should be. Understanding the complexity

of policy networks is a long-term multi-study academic project and no single theory alone will sufficiently and meaningfully capture all of its important detail (Howlett 2007; Menzel 1987). Three areas of future research are identified here, both to address limitations of this study and build upon its strengths.

This dissertation found that civil servants hold different expectations of collaborative governments which can lead to rule contestation. As such, future research should examine the extent to which expectations of collaboration differ across actors, institutions and positions within networks. If public servants hold unrealistic expectations about collaboration, do different types of actors hold *different* views of collaboration? This research agenda could involve a large-N study based on survey data and map expectations of collaborative government, identifying types of expectations, the degree to which they conflict, and their sources of influence. There is a well established body of literature that has documented the multiple, conflicting expectations that actors have of legislatures as state institutions (see for example, Docherty 1997; Malloy 1999a), and this study would both update this literature for the interorganizational context, as well as address outstanding questions of this dissertation regarding internal and external validity. A theoretical proposition emerging from this dissertation could be tested: actors in the policy/political process do not necessarily square their expectations of influence with what is possible, nor hold consensual understandings towards political institutions. This research would incorporate the experiences and perceptions of other actors – central agency staff, elected officials, provincial bureaucrats, and stakeholders – into the study of interorganizational work.

A second promising research area is the role that central agencies play and should play in horizontal initiatives. A finding of this dissertation is that their role is

rather limited. Interviews with public servants from Finance Canada and the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat revealed that central agency staff increasingly deal with interdepartmental files *but* that this work is carried out in much the same way as work around departmental files. Given that central agency staff who work with line departments play the conflicting roles of both “gatekeeper” and “internal advocate”, the challenges they face when these roles span multiple line departments stand to be both significant and perplexing. Identified as a set of actors within the federal government best positioned to support the interorganizational work of line departments by minimizing their rule contestation, it is critical that we understand the dynamics of interorganizational work for central agencies.

Finally, a variable that emerged as theoretically important late in this dissertation’s development and warrants further attention is *time*. Is conflict and rule contestation as a source of conflict more likely to occur at particular – and potentially reoccurring – points in time? Is there a temporal character to the challenges for public servants of interorganizational work? As this dissertation has qualified, macro-variables such as the Speech from the Throne and the election of a new government can result in network changes, directly in terms of its composition or indirectly, in terms of the political context in which it operates. The accountability apparatus of government is one that has shifted dramatically over time as well, and possibly with significant effects on interorganizational work. Over the past decade, accountability mechanisms were introduced immediately following publically salient episodes of government indiscretions (i.e. the audit of HRDC’s grants and contributions, and the Sponsorship Scandal) and dismantled by piecemeal thereafter as part of a rhetoric of innovative, flexible, and responsive government. This is certainly true in what might be dubbed the

“post-Gomery” era. The global recession ending the first decade of the 21st century may have prompted Canada’s federal government to relax its accountability regime (which the media speculated former Clerk of the Privy Council, Kevin Lynch, left his post over) in order to ensure the timely funding of infrastructure projects it believed would kick start the economy (Stanbury 2009; Riley 2009).

Finally, the relationship between stakeholders and civil servants, is too, one affected by the temporal progression of a work through the stages of the policy process (on the stages model, see Brewer and deLeon 1983 or more recently, Sabatier 2007; Howlett and Ramesh 2003). A time series study across the federal and/or provincial governments could indicate if the intensity of challenges associated with interorganizational work remain constant or vary over time, and why, examining each of these possible explanations.

Final Thoughts

Horizontal government still takes place within an institutional structure of vertical integration. While significant attention has been paid to how *much* this vertical structure inhibits horizontal work, less attention has been paid to how it *changes* horizontal work (e.g. Meier and O’Toole 2001, 2008; O’Toole and Meier 2004b). In this study, we find that public servants struggled to gain inclusion, obtain commitment, facilitate collegiality, and achieve agreement. Relationship types and public administration ideas/activities, together affected their experience of collaboration. The challenges of collaboration differ for civil servants across the activities of regulation, contracting, program coordination, and policy development. They also differ for civil

servants in their relationship with other civil servants, stakeholders, and political masters.

As this chapter has argued, interorganizational work comes with many significant obstacles and challenges. Because it takes more time and energy to achieve agreement, it can more emotionally invest its members than intraorganizational work. Getting included and getting other individuals to participate in and commit to joint activity is difficult work. Establishing an interorganizational culture that is collegial, where historical relations were antagonistic is also a challenge. Even if members achieve inclusion, commitment, and collegiality, agreement from everyone can remain a challenge. Being able to agree to terms and conditions is contingent on mandates being objectively reconcilable and a solution searched for and found by credible actors. These challenges make interorganizational work more demanding than intraorganizational work. Political decisions that thus, negate the interorganizational work of civil servants can be far more devastating for civil servants than political decisions that negate their intraorganizational work. It can be demoralizing for particular members or for the group as a whole.

The political nature of government work makes civil servants' interorganizational work even more unpredictable, akin to playing chess without knowing the rules of the game, and with rules that change when you finally learn them. Rule contestation can result. Failure to achieve organizational or network level goals can dampen feelings of efficacy just as success can make civil servants feel more satisfied and more empowered than any intraorganizational achievement could.

However, there are deeper issues that are implicated in this analysis and go far beyond the interorganizational work of public servants. They speak to the legitimacy of

government in an era of widespread civic disillusionment toward political institutions and political institutions that have failed to articulate an internally consistent notion of democratic accountability. As Canada's own former Clerk of the Privy Council, Jocelyne Bourgon (2007) has written:

We have seen the growing signs of disenchantment. Decades of reforms to make governments more efficient and transparent have clearly fallen short of enhancing public trust. Decades of pressure to reduce the role of the State have not generated more trust, a greater sense of security or greater citizen satisfaction.

The complexity of policy problems, the vast size and intricacy of the civil service, the increased transparency of government and associated politics of blame, have made it difficult to hold governments to account but nonetheless important to do so. For horizontal government to become the way that things are done or at the very least, a way that things *can be done*, rather than a slew of challenges to doing things, public servants are going to have to feel empowered to work across organizational boundaries. As long as we fail to articulate an internally consistent notion of government accountability, or at the very least how accounting for control, accountability for democraticness, and accountability for learning, as set out by Aucoin and Jarvis (2005) are to inform government operations, horizontal government risks being seen by public servants as an invitation to be the next government scandal. The entrepreneurial bent of accountability (taking risks, learning from mistakes) simply cannot happen in the context of political interference and tissue paper-thin transparency serving accountability for control and democraticness (see Mayne 2004, 2006, 2007). As political strategist, Peter Donolo (2009) notes, the emphasis on accountability, fuelled in part by new public management has left public servants in paralysis:

Public servants work with one eye looking over their shoulder. They must not only make reasonable decisions, they must make decisions that can withstand the most infinitesimal scrutiny and the most deliberately unfriendly light and unfair interpretation. The consequences can hardly be surprising: a culture of butt covering; the indefinite deferral of essential decisions; the triumph of process over results. Risk taking has become taboo. Initiative has been squelched. Creative solutions to public policy challenges have become stifled. In a perverse way, doing nothing has become the easiest, and certainly the safest, course. Because doing something - anything, really - may get you into trouble. Doing nothing won't.

The vexing task for public servants who seek to work horizontally is the same one that plagued public servants at HRDC leading up to the 1995 audit of its grants and contributions: implementing the competing priorities of more with less, innovation with results, and partnerships with rules and reporting (Good 2003; Phillips and Levasseur 2004).

And yet, scholars and practitioners alike have placed a lot of hope in the processes of collaborative government to reconcile competing priorities, process complex worlds, and meet citizens' demands for responsiveness and accountability. There is hope that they will enliven political societies, which have become apathetic toward traditional political institutions. There is hope that contemporary policy issues – climate change, national security, public health – will be effectively tackled through the “flexibility, experimentation, political accommodation, and collective intelligence” realizable perhaps, *only* through the institutions of collaborative government (Bogason and Musso 2006:14). There is hope too, that policy networks will in fact, expand the space of government, and include citizens more intimately in the policies that ultimately shape their lives. Policy networks are seen as vehicles, however imperfect and ill specified today, for the realization of political legitimacy, administrative performance, and policy effectiveness in the years to come.

There is now plenty of caution against *romanticizing* collaboration government with work towards understanding how it functions in political context and how it can be improved beginning to take place. This dissertation has demonstrated that collaborative government comes with significant challenges for Canada's federal public servants and these challenges entail barriers to the attainment of mutual adjustment and joint action. This is not, however, just a bad news story. The concept of rule contestation developed and applied in this dissertation, represents a powerful conceptual tool for understanding conflict in networks and identifying sources of conflict that are harmful and unproductive to the realization of common goals. With this knowledge, we can seek further specification of government structures and the processes of collaboration within them, and thus move closer to the normative ideals of governance, which we seek.

APPENDIX A - CASE STUDY PROTOCOL

A Introduction

- A1 Case study questions, hypotheses and propositions
- A2 Theoretical framework

B Data Collection

- B1 Agencies and Departments included
- B2 Contact persons
- B3 Timeline for interviews
- B4 Supporting documents

C Outline of Case Study Report

- C1 Description of horizontal initiatives (e.g. context and history)
- C2 Public sector practices within initiatives
- C3 Reflections on practices
- C4 Appendices

D Case Study Research Questions

- D1 What challenges do public servants face in policy networks and why?
- D2 How do these challenges affect their work?
- D3 What do public servants do to cope with these challenges?

APPENDIX B – PUBLIC AGENCIES AND DEPARTMENTS

HORIZONTAL INITIATIVE	PARTICIPATING AGENCIES/DEPARTMENTS
Mackenzie Gas Project (MGP) and induced oil and gas exploration and development activities in the NWT	<p><i>Led by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada</i></p> <p>Department of Fisheries and Oceans Indian and Northern Affairs Canada Environment Canada Parks Canada Natural Resources Canada Transport Canada</p>
Federal Initiative to Address HIV/AIDS in Canada	<p><i>Led by the Public Health Agency of Canada</i></p> <p>Health Canada Canadian Institutes of Health Research Correctional Services Canada</p>
Sector Council Network	<p><i>Led by Human Resources and Social Development Canada</i></p>
Team Canada Inc.	<p><i>Led by Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada</i></p> <p>Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency Business Development Bank of Canada Canada Customs and Revenue Agency; Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation Canadian Commercial Corporation; Canadian Heritage; Canadian International Development Agency Environment Canada Export Development Canada Fisheries and Oceans Canada Foreign Affairs and International Trade Human Resources Development Canada Indian and Northern Affairs Canada Industry Canada National Farm Products Council</p>

National Research Council of Canada
Natural Resources Canada; Public Works
Government Services Canada
Statistics Canada
Transport Canada
Western Economic Diversification

APPENDIX C - INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

How did you come to be involved in [initiative's title]?

- What is the purpose of the initiative?
- Where did the initiative come from?
- What is your department's role within the initiative?
- What formal and informal structures exist within the initiative?
- What structures are you involved with?

What is your role within the initiative?

- What kind of activities do you engage in?
- Who do you work with?
- Why do you engage in these activities?
- How much of your work consists of work for this initiative?

Are central agencies involved in any aspect of the horizontal initiatives?

Are there challenges to doing interorganizational work?

- Are there any challenges to working with stakeholders?
- Are there any challenges to working with other departments?
- Are there any challenges to working with provincial governments?
- Are there any challenges to working with international actors, such as foreign governments?
- How does doing interorganizational work differ from intraorganizational work?
- Are there any unique challenges to working with other federal partners versus provincial governments versus particular stakeholders?

How do you respond to/cope with these challenges?

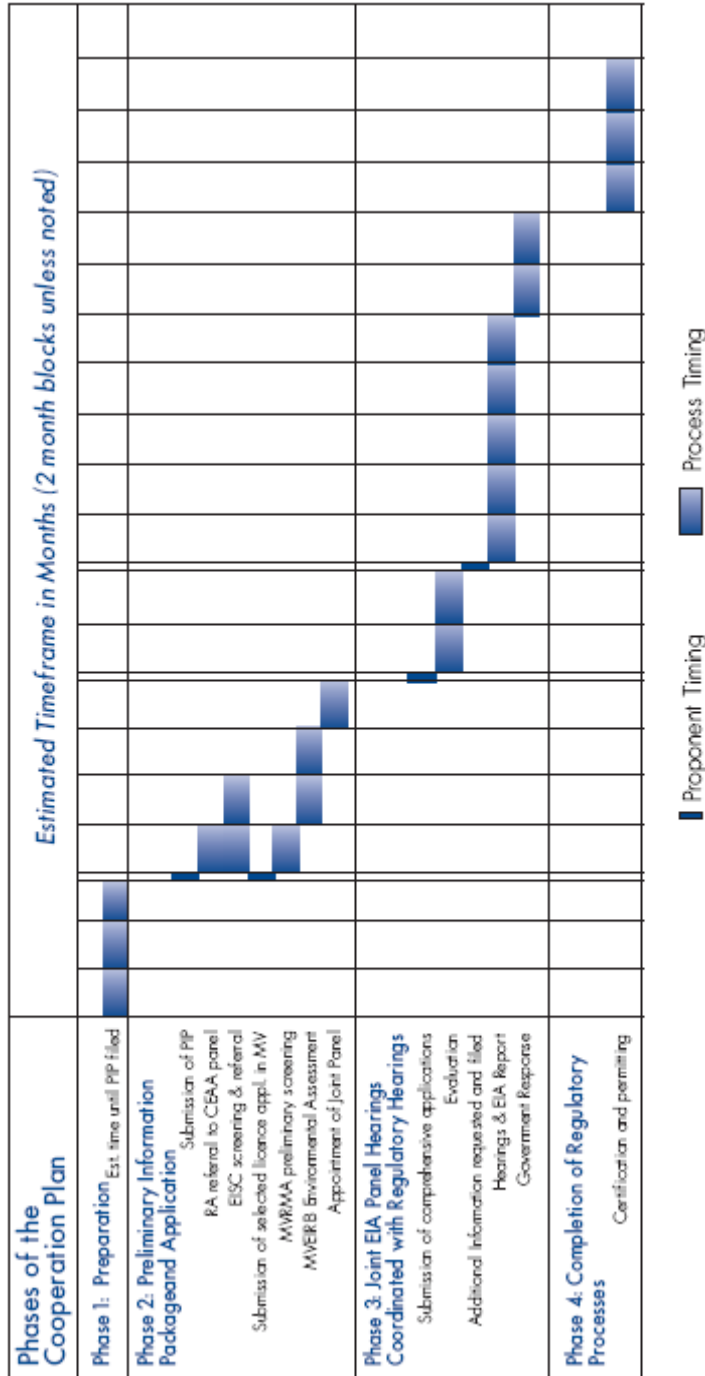
- What skills are necessary to be effective at interorganizational work?

What is gained from doing interorganizational work?

- Is anything gained from doing things collaborative versus doing things alone?
- What do you gain?
- What does your department gain?
- What does government gain?
- What does the public gain?

Looking back over your time in government, have you noticed any changes affecting your work?

APPENDIX D - MACKENZIE GAS PROJECT SEQUENCE OF EVENTS AND ESTIMATED TIMEFRAMES



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