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## Standing Committee on Public Accounts

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EVIDENCE

**Thursday, September 30, 2010**

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**Chair**

**The Honourable Joseph Volpe**



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• (1105)

[English]

**The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Joann Garbig):** Honourable members, good morning.

I see a quorum.

We can now proceed to the election of the chair. In accordance with Standing Order 106(2), the chair must be a member of the official opposition. I'm ready to receive a motion to that effect.

Mr. Saxton.

**Mr. Andrew Saxton (North Vancouver, CPC):** I'd like to nominate Joe Volpe for chair of the committee.

**The Clerk:** It has been moved by Mr. Saxton that Mr. Volpe be elected chair of the committee.

Are there any further motions? *D'autres motions?* No?

There being no further motions, I declare Mr. Volpe duly elected chair of the committee.

Before inviting him to take the chair, if the committee wishes, we will now proceed to the election of the two vice-chairs.

Mr. Volpe.

**The Chair (Hon. Joseph Volpe (Eglinton—Lawrence, Lib.)):** I would like to nominate Mr. Daryl Kramp as the government vice-chair.

**The Clerk:** It's been moved by Mr. Volpe that Mr. Kramp be elected as first vice-chair of the committee.

There being no further motions, I declare Mr. Kramp duly elected first vice-chair of the committee.

I'm now prepared to receive motions for second vice-chair.

[Translation]

Pursuant to Standing Order 106(2), the second vice-chair must be an opposition member from a party other than the official opposition.

[English]

**Mr. Daryl Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings, CPC):** I'd like to nominate David Christopherson for vice-chair.

**The Clerk:** There being no further motions, I declare Mr. Christopherson duly elected second vice-chair.

I now invite Mr. Volpe to take the chair.

[Translation]

**The Chair:** Thank you, colleagues, Madam Clerk, ladies and gentlemen. Thank you for nominating me and for electing me.

[English]

Elections are always tough. I'm hoping that the next election I'm going to face will go at least as smoothly as this. I don't want to say I wish everybody the same outcome, because there'd be partisan...but I'm hoping the cordiality that we see this morning permeates all of our work and I thank you very much.

I congratulate Mr. Daryl Kramp on his election as vice-chair. I congratulate Mr. Christopherson on his election as vice-chair.

Madame Faille, it's not because you have been forgotten; it's just that all of those rules being what they are, everybody wanted to defer to you.

Now to my colleagues on the Liberal side, the official opposition, because we always have trouble with these things, I'm so happy that we were compacted as a unit and we all decided to vote the same way this morning. That's good. Thank you very much.

Welcome to the analysts as well. I know you're going to bring some corporate memory and some good work into this committee, and let's get to it right away.

I just would like to make a very brief and quick suggestion. I think perhaps we can re-establish some of the practices or rules that we had going in and first of all establish a steering committee so that we know where we're going to go as we go down the road.

My understanding is that on the steering committee we have representatives. I guess it's Mr. Kramp or Mr. Saxton; I don't know. It's Mr. Kramp. The NDP has Mr. Christopherson and Ms. Faille is for the Bloc. We will probably have Mr. Bains. I think one of our other members is away at a funeral—his dad passed away. So for this time, at least, it will be Mr. Bains and myself who will form that steering committee.

I propose right now that what we do is get immediately into the work next week of the steering committee. I realize there is already some work that the previous steering committee had put in place. There's something on the agenda for next Tuesday, and the clerk informs me that all of those people have already been notified and are prepared to come forward.

If it is the committee's wish, then perhaps we could begin by saying we'll carry on the agenda for Tuesday as already established, and then on Wednesday we'll meet as a steering committee to establish the rest of the agenda and work program.

Is there agreement? Do you feel good about that?

• (1110)

**Mr. Daryl Kramp:** The fact is that if we did not have our witnesses lined up, perhaps we would have the steering committee first—

**The Chair:** Right.

**Mr. Daryl Kramp:** —but in consideration, of course, for the past work of the committee and the fact that these witnesses are lined up, I think we should definitely continue that process. Then the steering committee can decide beyond that.

**The Chair:** Madame Faille.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Meili Faille (Vaudreuil-Soulanges, BQ):** Could the analyst quickly give us an idea of the reports that are outstanding? Some reports were also scheduled to be drafted.

**The Chair:** Ms. Faille, I'll turn the floor over to the analyst, who can provide us with some details about the document that I believe everyone has in hand.

[*English*]

The document has already been prepared by our analyst to answer that question. I'm going to ask Alex to go ahead and present it.

Go ahead, Alex.

**Mr. Alex Smith (Committee Researcher):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

This document was just distributed. To summarize, in response to the question from Madame Faille, you'll see in the first section a list of the studies the committee had begun.

Way back when, we had a meeting on acquiring military vehicles for use in Afghanistan. The committee wanted further information from the department. A request was made for that information. That information was received and distributed to committee members. The committee can decide to resume consideration of the draft report if it so chooses.

On the second item, during the consideration of the draft report it was decided that more information was required on a particular issue. A meeting had been scheduled for last Thursday with the Comptroller General and the Auditor General on the issue of audited departmental financial statements. The committee can reschedule that meeting or resume consideration of the draft report as it so chooses.

On numbers three, four, and five, the committee had hearings on those issues. Over the summertime, we prepared draft reports for those, for the committee to consider when it next goes into a drafting consideration.

Item six is something that I'm working on currently. It's a report on the meeting the committee had just last Tuesday on the international peer review of the Auditor General.

On the second category of studies planned, those were items from the spring report. The committee had not yet had hearings on one of those. Number two is the one that's scheduled for Tuesday.

The last section, "Possible Future Studies", is just to highlight what's coming up for the committee that it may want to schedule in its further business.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Madame Faille.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Meili Faille:** The committee had requested some clarification about certain dates having to do with military vehicles. We were not satisfied with the information we were given during the last meeting. We asked the minister to give us some dates. Has that information been turned over to the committee?

**The Chair:** We received that information and we forwarded it to all committee members last June 30.

• (1115)

**Ms. Meili Faille:** Fine. I simply wanted to check with the researcher to see whether any dates had been given.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Okay. Any other...?

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Meili Faille:** I don't have the motion handy. However, one of the issues—and committee members are aware of it, I believe—involved the transfer of federal employees. I intend to table a proper motion next week calling on the committee to consult with the Auditor General on this matter. Statements were made during the summer. I obtained information through access to information that I would like to share with the committee, possibly over the course of one or two review meetings.

I'm merely suggesting some issues that I think the committee should consider. We have a lot on our plate, but I'm satisfied with the analyst's explanation. Thank you.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

This was just designed to get us going for Tuesday. The issues that are there are those that the committee has dealt with in the past. If there are other issues to be raised, we'll raise them at our steering committee, on Wednesday or sometime. We'll try to work out something with the vice-chairs and other members so that we'll be ready to go on Thursday.

Is that good enough? Okay.

I'm going to thank all of you again for...

Well, we could have a time for the steering committee. We can't do it on Wednesday morning. I'll consult with members on whether we can come up with a reasonable time, whether it would be Tuesday afternoon or Wednesday afternoon, so that we can be prepared for Thursday.

Is that okay with you if I work on that general timeframe? Okay.

Daryl, after we do some discussions, we'll have a look to see whether we can, maybe by Monday, determine whether we can do it Tuesday afternoon or Wednesday afternoon.

**Mr. Daryl Kramp:** It would be good to be consistent so that—

**The Chair:** Yes—or at least for just this coming week, at any rate.

**Mr. Daryl Kramp:** Okay.

**The Chair:** Okay?

**Mr. Daryl Kramp:** Done.

**The Chair:** Then we'll fix a regularly scheduled time.

Fair enough? Okay.

I thank you very much.

I declare the meeting adjourned to the call of the chair or Tuesday morning at 11 o'clock, whichever comes earlier.

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