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**EVIDENCE**

**Tuesday, January 31, 2012**



**Chair**

**The Honourable Rob Moore**



## Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage

Tuesday, January 31, 2012

• (1150)

[English]

**The Chair (Hon. Rob Moore (Fundy Royal, CPC)):** We'll get started. Welcome back, everybody. Happy belated new year.

Thanks to our witnesses for their patience. We had this matter we had to deal with in Parliament, and we appreciate their waiting here today.

From the National Capital Commission, we have Marie Lemay, chief executive officer; Russell Mills, chair of the board of directors; and Guy Laflamme, senior vice-president, capital experience, communications and marketing branch. As well, from the Royal Canadian Mint, we have Patrick Hadsipantelis, vice-president, marketing and communications; and Beverley Lepine, chief operating officer.

Welcome to all of you. We're going to try to move along as quickly as possible. We're here until one o'clock.

I understand we're going to start with the Royal Canadian Mint. You have a brief presentation, so the floor is yours.

**Mr. Patrick Hadsipantelis (Vice-President, Marketing and Communications, Royal Canadian Mint):** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'll try to keep to our time.

I would like to start by thanking the chair and the honourable members of the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage for inviting the Royal Canadian Mint to present the commemorative coin programs and the implications of these activities on Canada's 150th anniversary in 2017.

I believe the work that the mint has done to celebrate Canada's greatest moments and icons, while meeting its primary obligation to produce and distribute circulation coinage to support Canadian commerce, speaks volumes about our commitment in supporting our national celebrations and milestones.

In addition to serving a transactional purpose, coins are also a medium for projecting a nation's pride to its citizens and to the outside world. The mint is proud to have followed this tradition by capturing the many different aspects of Canada: its people, places, and passions. We are even more proud to be doing so while generating robust profits and returning healthy dividends to our sole shareholder, the Government of Canada.

Before I get into the business of commemoration at the mint, I would like to offer a very brief overview of our diversified business. Operating as a self-financing crown corporation since 1969, the Mint is primarily responsible for producing and distributing Canada's

circulation coins. But in addition to housing our Canadian circulation business line, our state-of-the-art facility in Winnipeg, Manitoba, produces circulation coins for foreign countries. Over the past 30 years, we have produced coins for over 70 countries, from New Zealand to Panama to the United Arab Emirates, thanks to our reputation for innovation, high-quality standards, and delivery. Our customers rely on us because the quality and technology that goes into all of our coins assures them that their national symbols will endure and resonate with their citizens for years to come.

Our bullion and refinery business has been a dominant part of our Ottawa operations lately, as worldwide demand for gold and silver continues to rise in tandem with uncertainty over the future of the global economy. Our bullion coins are sold and sought worldwide under the universally recognized Maple Leaf bullion brand. We have consistently led our industry by being the first to refine gold to 99.99% purity, which we call "four nines" purity, in 1982, and we surpassed that with 99.999% purity, "five nines", in 1998.

We took an even greater step in that direction last November by launching an innovative product called "exchange traded receipts" under the Canadian gold reserves program on the Toronto Stock Exchange, which allows individual investors to directly own title to physical gold stored at the mint. By the first day of trading, \$600 million had been raised in what became one of Canada's largest IPOs in 2011.

We're also proud of what we've achieved in our numismatics business line, which produces what are more commonly known as collector coins and medals, the most prominent of which are numerous Canadian military honours, the Queen's diamond jubilee, and more recently the Rick Hansen relay medal.

These coins and medals are important vehicles by which the mint celebrates a tremendous diversity of Canadian themes. We bring the story of Canada to life through coins featuring innovative technologies such as lasering, laser etching, and holograms, ranging in scale from half a gram to 10 kilograms, as was the case with the pure gold coin to celebrate Bill Reid's iconic sculpture *The Spirit of Haida Gwaii*. We are very proud to have produced a long line of coins celebrating first nations art with names like Alex Janvier, Jody Broomfield, and Corinne Hunt. Our collector coins are avidly sought by collectors and consumers in Canada and around the world, and they represent a very fast-growing part of our business.

• (1155)

[Translation]

Commemoration and celebration are also a part of the core responsibilities which we have proudly fulfilled since 1935, when the first silver dollar bearing the iconic Voyageur image was issued in honour of King George the V, who was Canada's sovereign.

As we speak, the Mint is promoting an ambitious array of collector coins for the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II. Just two weeks ago, we were also proud to take our first step in joining the national celebration of the 200th anniversary of the War of 1812 by unveiling a new Proof Silver Dollar dedicated to this historic conflict with the assistance of the minister responsible for the Mint, the Honourable Jim Flaherty.

Many annual silver dollar issues have followed since 1935, but it can be argued that the first true program was the commemorative circulation coin series issued for Canada's centennial in 1967. Every circulating denomination was given a new, iconic animal design, created by the hand of legendary Canadian artist Alex Colville. Redesigned only for Canada's centennial year, over 600 million of these coins circulated and were avidly collected by millions of Canadians.

Public opinion research indicates that Canada's Centennial was one of our most treasured national celebrations and our coins have been cited as one of the most remembered legacies of that milestone.

From 1973 to 1976, the Mint issued its most ambitious collector coin program yet, with an unprecedented series of \$5 and \$10 silver coins, celebrating the majesty of the Games and a powerful symbol of Canada's coming of age.

In 1992, the Mint introduced a new series of 25¢ circulation coins to celebrate the 125th anniversary of Confederation. For the first time in our history, the Mint involved the public, including children, in the coin design process by launching a national competition, inviting amateur and professional artists to create 12 new commemorative coins, one for each Canadian province and territory at the time. Some 11,000 drawings were presented to a panel of artists, public figures and citizens from across the country, resulting in 12 distinct portraits of Canada, icons of our broad and diverse landscape.

The Mint's aim has always been to inspire Canadians, to help them treasure their history, culture and values, and to make them feel proud to be Canadian. The Millennium was not only a turning point for Canada, but for the Mint as well.

Once again, we invited the public, including children, through the Millennium Coin Design Contest, to submit designs for 24 Millennium 25¢ circulation coins; one for each month of 1999 and 2000.

Public reaction to being given a voice in commemorating a national event was extremely positive, with 66,000 drawings received in response to this coin design contest. Again, our market research continues to tell us that this initiative ranks as one of our most memorable programs.

Since 2004, when we issued the world's first coloured circulation coin with the 25¢ Poppy and another 25¢ coin celebrating the 400th

anniversary of the first settlement in North America, in Acadie, the Mint decided to issue commemorative circulation coins annually.

In addition to two other Poppy coins in 2008 and 2010, this gave us themes such as: "Lucky Loonies" for every summer and winter Olympic and Paralympic Games since the legendary Salt Lake City Games of 2002; the Centennial of Saskatchewan and Alberta, where the public was invited for the first time to vote online for the winning designs of these two coins; the Pink Ribbon campaign; Quebec City's 400th anniversary; the centennials of the Montreal Canadiens and the Saskatchewan Roughriders; and from 2007 to 2010, we produced 17 coins for the Vancouver 2010 Winter Games. Public online voting was also reintroduced to select the final themes that appeared on our 25¢ coins, celebrating the Top Three Moments in Canadian Winter Games history.

Recently, we celebrated the centennial of Parks Canada on a commemorative \$1-dollar coin and we are continuing to release our 5-coin circulation series celebrating our legendary nature.

• (1200)

Every new commemorative circulation coin is promoted through varying combinations of print, television and online advertising. Additionally, the Mint is an avid user of social media to reach new audiences. I encourage you to take a look at our Twitter and Facebook pages where our followers are growing daily.

[English]

Every new coin issued by the Mint gives us an opportunity to strike a chord with the general public and provoke some reflection about what Canada means to them. Our experience with the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympic Games was a pleasant revelation for us in terms of our products' potential for creating public engagement.

We opened pavilions in downtown Vancouver for both the Olympic and Paralympic winter games, and the reaction of the public and visitors completely exceeded our expectations. The Vancouver 2010 athlete medals and all our signature products were on display for 150,000 visitors at our pavilions during the games. Both of our exhibit spaces were totally accessible to the mobility-impaired, and we were especially pleased to easily welcome a great number of handicapped visitors during the Paralympic Games.

One tried and true way to reach out to Canadians and get new circulation coins into their hands is to hold public coin exchanges at which people come to an event venue to trade their loose change for new commemorative coins at face value. In this way more than 600,000 Vancouver 2010 circulation coins were exchanged with the public during the winter games.

We made such an impression in Vancouver that we decided to open our third boutique there in early 2011. We're still there today retailing our products and using our new store as a springboard for numerous coin exchanges and local outreach initiatives. Just last week we put on a very successful program of activities to support Vancouver's celebration of the year of the dragon, and we are very proud to be part of the community in Vancouver.

We routinely visit different regions of the country to take Canada's Mint to its people, from Baddeck, Nova Scotia, for the centennial of powered flight in Canada, to Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, for the celebrated Saskatchewan Roughriders centennial. We also value the partnerships we have with other federal departments, agencies, and organizations, such as we had with Parks Canada for its centennial last year or with the Royal Canadian Legion whenever a new poppy coin is launched. We also act as members of the interdepartmental commemoration committee and its multiple working groups. We value opportunities to join events and celebrations around the country, and that's what we intend to do on the road to Canada's 150th in 2017.

We continue to research themes and subjects that matter to Canadians and continue to tell the story of our great country one coin at a time. We also track the retention rate of our new commemorative coins to determine the extent to which Canadians are collecting these coins, and the results are extremely positive. We estimate that about two-thirds of the special commemorative coins we've issued since 2004 have been saved by Canadians.

We look forward to working with our colleagues in various federal departments to bring out the best of Canada to its citizens and to leave the lasting impression that our natural, historic, and cultural heritage deserves.

It will now be my pleasure to take the committee's questions.

Thank you.

• (1205)

**The Chair:** Thank you for your presentation.

Now we will move on to the National Capital Commission for ten minutes.

**Mr. Russell Mills (Chair of the Board of Directors, National Capital Commission):** Thank you, Chair and members of the committee.

My name is Russell Mills. I am the chair of the board of the National Capital Commission. I am very pleased to be here today with Marie Lemay, our chief executive officer; and Guy Laflamme, who is the vice-president of capital experience.

We'd like to start our presentation today by showing you a brief two-minute clip of how the NCC handles celebrations of Canada. This one in particular had a cumulative audience of 15 million people right across the country.

[Video Presentation]

**Mr. Russell Mills:** That was from last year's Canada Day celebrations. It was a great occasion.

We're happy to meet with you this morning to talk about the capital of our country and the important role we believe it can and should play in the celebrations of the 150th anniversary of Confederation.

I'd like to begin my presentation by sharing two quotes with you that were received during a national exchange we recently conducted with Canadians.

The National Capital has the duty to be the mirror on our country.... In a few steps, in a few glances, one has to find the country as a whole in the Capital.

This is the second quote:

The Capital should, through its natural setting, monuments and architecture, communicate to Canadians and to the world our values, our achievements and our pride as citizens.

The first comment is from explorer Bernard Voyer, and the second is from businessman Thomas d'Aquino. They are among 30 comments from eminent Canadians published in the magazine *Canadian Geographic*.

At the NCC we have a diverse and exciting mandate to build a great capital for all Canadians that reflects our history, identity, culture, and values. To achieve this the NCC works closely with all levels of government, departments, and agencies, as well as private sector partners. We coordinate programs, public activities, and events related to the national capital region.

Before I turn things over to Marie I'd like to tell you about some historical celebrations in the capital, because the capital has always played a key role in celebrating the anniversary of Confederation.

To go back in history, celebrations to mark Confederation occurred in Major's Hill Park on July 1, 1867. There were all-night festivities, fireworks, and a 101-gun salute.

In 1917, the 50th anniversary was marked by a dedication of the Centre Block to the fathers of Confederation and the soldiers who had fought in the Great War.

In 1967, Canada's centennial was launched on Parliament Hill, in the presence of the Prime Minister and the Governor General, with the lighting of the centennial flame, a parade, and fireworks. Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II attended the July 1 festivities on Parliament Hill that year.

• (1210)

The first sound and light show was created as a centennial project. And as you have heard in other presentations to this committee, some national institutions, such as the National Library and the National Arts Centre, were created or relocated in the capital as part of the centennial program.

In 1992 the NCC led the 125th anniversary of Confederation celebrations in the capital region. We coordinated efforts with national museums and institutions to create 125 days of programming to celebrate Canada in the capital. Canada House celebrated Canadian inventiveness and featured Canadian achievements in science, sports, and culture. The aptly named Confederation Park offered daily concerts. The Great Canadian Youth Happening featured Céline Dion.

Canada Day festivities were extended from June 27 to July 1. Among the activities was a performance by the National Arts Centre orchestra, in 1867-period costumes, on the lawns of the Canadian Museum of Civilization and along the Ottawa River. On July 1, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth participated in celebrations on Parliament Hill, along with many dignitaries and leading Canadian artists.

More recently, in 2007, the NCC, through different activities and celebrations, told the story of how, 150 years ago, Queen Victoria chose Ottawa to be Canada's capital.

Now I'll turn it over to Marie Lemay.

**Ms. Marie Lemay (Chief Executive Officer, Executive Office, National Capital Commission):** Thank you so much for having us today. It's such a pleasure to be here to talk to you about something we are so passionate about.

When it comes to the capital, it is so much more than a physical place. It's a place that belongs to all Canadians, whether you live here or not. The capital is both a window on the country and the face we put forward to the world. It is a place where we mark significant national commemorations and celebrations. We welcome, as you know, dignitaries from around the world. And it is in the capital region—this you may not realize sometimes—that the largest diplomatic community in Canada actually lives what I call their Canadian daily experience. They live and breathe our Canadian values, here in the capital region.

More than any other city in this country, the capital has the responsibility to showcase Canada's best and to be the one place that brings together all of Canada.

An important historical milestone like the 150th will need a hub. It will need an anchor, a place to anchor the celebrations that will take place in every community, and to connect with Canadians across the country to celebrate our past and to dream about our future.

[Translation]

Last fall, as part of the review of the Plan for Canada's Capital, the NCC set out to speak to Canadians about their capital. I must say that this was a privilege. We asked them, for instance: What kind of capital do you want for your country? What do you want your capital to say about you, about Canada? During conversations we held in cities across the country and online, we heard some very inspiring ideas. I think we could not have chosen a better moment. Indeed, the Plan for Canada's Capital has a 50-year horizon, but we have a 10-year action plan, and as it happens, 2017 is included in those 10 years.

Thousands of Canadians, including young Canadians, aboriginal representatives and new Canadians, told us they wanted the capital to represent them and what it means to be Canadian. We heard this

everywhere, from coast to coast. Canadians feel that they should learn about their history and learn more about all provinces and territories of the country through their capital. Canadians also think that the capital should be more vibrant, sustainable and representative of our diversity and values, and that it should be a model for the country. They want to be able to see, hear, taste and touch all parts of the country in one place, their nation's capital. We've heard a great deal about the fact that the capital should allow Canadians to experience Canadian culture from every part of the country.

In a national survey conducted by the NCC and the Association of Canadian Studies, Canadians told us what the two most important roles for the capital are: the capital should represent Canada to the rest of the world, and it should represent Canada to Canadians.

I'd like to share an interesting fact with you: Canadians expressed a particular attachment to their capital. Indeed, 89% of Canadians rated their capital positively. That's more positively than the other international capitals surveyed: Washington received a rating of 76%; London, 82%; and Paris, 80%, when rated by their own citizens. However, the figure was 89% of the population in the case of Canada's capital.

• (1215)

[English]

I'd like to share a few lessons we've learned through the NCC's many years of animating the capital. I think these can apply differently to others and in different aspects.

We think we need to focus on a few high-impact activities. We should create a balance between the festive and the educational activities. We need to leverage the strong base that we have. In our case we have strong existing programs at the NCC; we have to leverage those. We can and we should create links with Canadians that foster pride and unity through broadcasts, online, and with new technologies. Just remember: we didn't have those 25 years ago, so we have to take full advantage of that. We must continue to develop strong partnerships with the public and the private sector. Finally, along with festivities, we have to seize the opportunity to create some lasting legacies.

[Translation]

The capital is the stage for national events and celebrations such as Canada Day and Remembrance Day. On July 1, artists from across the country perform in front of hundreds of thousands of people, including 40% that are from outside the region. Last year, more than 500 000 people were on Parliament Hill, and as Mr. Mills said, more than 15 million Canadians tuned in to the Canada Day noon and evening shows on television, on radio or on the Web. A 2011 survey indicated that Canadians felt an increased sense of pride when they took part in Canada Day festivities in the capital region, and visitors indicated that this was a great place to learn about the country.

The capital is also the place for national commemorations that are linked to important nation-building moments. Monuments currently under development include the monument to the 100th anniversary of the Royal Canadian Navy, the Canadian Firefighters Memorial and the National Holocaust Monument. A monument will also be dedicated to the war of 1812 as the country marks that bicentennial. We have several other commemoration projects that are at early stages of development.

[English]

The NCC has developed a very strong track record in bringing together partners such as national institutions—and we've had the pleasure of working with the Royal Canadian Mint—and museums in the capital region, as well as municipalities, regional tourism associations, and the private sector to celebrate Canada, our history, our identity, and our culture and values.

By joining efforts, we really feel that we leverage our limited resources and we ensure a higher impact for every dollar invested. For example, this year we're looking at Winterlude. We now have 50 programming partners who contribute to a greater offering of activities. We've actually decreased the budget and have been able, with partnering with the private sector and other organizations, to actually make a larger offer.

We focus on the federal messaging of the festivities. At Winterlude this year, we will mark the 200th anniversary of the War of 1812 and the 50th anniversary of the Canadian Coast Guard. In 2010, Parks Canada launched its 100th anniversary celebrations at Winterlude. We've also worked closely with Veterans Affairs Canada and many other departments to mark significant anniversaries. In 2008, we had the opportunity to mark the 400th anniversary of Quebec City in Canada's capital. In 2009, the capital participated in the Olympic torch relay, which coincided with the annual illumination ceremony of the Christmas lights on Parliament Hill. You may know that we've just finished hosting the NHL all-star celebration, and we've worked very closely with the organizers to be able to present sporting events in Confederation Park and on the Rideau Canal Skateway, bringing global visibility to Canada's capital.

Leading up to the celebration of Confederation in 2017, the NCC will work closely with several federal partners, especially Canadian Heritage, to mark events such as the anniversary of the meeting of the Fathers of Confederation in 1867, the anniversaries of the first and second world wars, and the bicentennial of the birth of Sir John A. Macdonald. With our expertise in the production of public events, our excellent public gathering spaces, and our ability to build partnerships, we can deliver celebrations in the capital region that will highlight the history of our country and the important contributions of great Canadians.

• (1220)

[Translation]

As part of our research this fall, we asked Canadians whether the capital should play a key role in marking the 150th anniversary of Confederation, and the overwhelming response was “yes”.

For the moment, we are in the early planning stage. However, we have many successful programs and partnerships that we can work

with to make 2017 a key moment for the country here in the capital, and ensure that pride is shared across the country.

This national celebration will be a defining moment for communities all across the country. More than any other region in the country, Canada's capital region has the responsibility to showcase Canada's best, and to serve as a window on the country and to the rest of the world. The capital should therefore be the place that connects Canadians all across the country.

In conclusion, we have provided a look at how we work to develop partnerships, at the unifying role that we play, and at the range of activities and events that attest to the success of our approach. We think that the capital, by its very nature, can and must play a central role in our country's celebrations. It must serve as a driving force, to communicate and tell the stories of our achievements, and to generate a sense of pride in Canadians.

We have engaged Canadians in a nationwide conversation about the future of their capital, and 2017 will provide an extraordinary opportunity for the capital to play the role that Canadians expect: to proudly represent Canadian values and diversity, and to unite Canadians from sea to sea to sea in this great celebration. Rest assured that we intend to work very hard for Canada's capital to fulfil this central role in the celebrations of the 150th anniversary of Confederation.

Thank you very much.

[English]

**The Chair:** Thank you to both of you for your presentations.

We will now move to questions and answers for the remaining time of the meeting, beginning with Mr. Armstrong.

**Mr. Scott Armstrong (Cumberland—Colchester—Musquodoboit Valley, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I want to thank you all for your presentations. I found them very interesting.

First, Mr. Hadsipantelis, I saw that in 2010 the Mint had an income of about \$2.2 billion. Was that higher than usual because of the Olympics, or is that roughly what you usually take in?

**Mr. Patrick Hadsipantelis:** I'll let my colleague, our chief operating officer, Bev Lepine, answer that question.

**Ms. Beverley Lepine (Chief Operating Officer, Royal Canadian Mint):** Thank you.

Certainly the Olympics did contribute to it, but it was not the largest part of it. As Patrick described, the four business lines contributed significantly to that number.

We have had an increase, certainly in profitability and business line operating profit, of about 200% over the last five years, so there has been a continuous growth in terms of the four business lines.

**Mr. Scott Armstrong:** Congratulations on that. I'm sure that exceeded any goals or anticipation you had when you started the process of trying to monetize the interest of Canadians in coins.

**Ms. Beverley Lepine:** It did. Thank you.

**Mr. Scott Armstrong:** Who decides what events are commemorated by the Mint, and what kind of process do you use to do that?

**Mr. Patrick Hadsipantelis:** We use a pretty extensive process through market research. That's the first cornerstone of the process, and obviously dialogue with many of our federal partners, namely, Canadian Heritage. We do annual research on commemorative themes. We actually have now complemented that by going biannually and testing themes ahead of time.

Our process to produce coins is done well in advance and takes anywhere from 12 to 18 months, so we're a little bit ahead of the game. Every year we have a list of themes that can range across approximately 50 different categories, and we go out to the Canadian public to measure the interest and appeal of the coins that we would then depict.

**Mr. Scott Armstrong:** So you project about 18 months into the future.

**Mr. Patrick Hadsipantelis:** Pretty much so.

**Mr. Scott Armstrong:** Have you determined any commemorative events between now and 2017 that the Mint's going to take a special interest in?

**Mr. Patrick Hadsipantelis:** For 2014 and beyond, some of them were mentioned by our colleague. The year 2012 is a very rich year in commemorative events that we're actively engaged in. The one that was mentioned for 2014, for the 150th anniversary of Charlottetown, is a big one on our radar.

We try to balance the themes both nationally and regionally, because we do realize that when we go out regionally we're quite successful in connecting with Canadians. I think the example with the Saskatchewan Roughriders that was given in the presentation was a great example to showcase that. We had people lining up for hours to be able to connect and own a keepsake of that moment.

So while it's still early to commit to what will be depicted on the coins for 2013—because they do require approval from the Ministry of Finance—we have a good understanding of the high-profile events for those two years.

• (1225)

**Mr. Scott Armstrong:** Have you ever commemorated tragic events? I'm thinking, in my area, of the Halifax explosion in 1917, which coincides with our sesquicentennial. I mean events like that. You don't really want to "celebrate" tragic events, but they are historical events. How do you handle that, and have you done any of those before?

**Mr. Patrick Hadsipantelis:** We have.

It's a question of balance, because we want to be careful about that. What we have most recently commemorated with what I call a collector coin is probably the Highway of Heroes. We did that in Trenton, and actually the work we put into rendering the design was something we took to heart. It went through many iterations. We wanted to depict the view that would be seen by those actually going along the Highway of Heroes.

It was also a moment for us to mourn and to showcase how Canadians have rallied through a grassroots movement, and how

important that movement was for them. Again, it was very regional in nature, but it appealed to the vast majority of Canadians. So we have done that, carefully.

**Mr. Scott Armstrong:** You talked about the regional aspect. What are your plans for 2017 for the sesquicentennial? Are you going to regionalize some of these events, or is there going to be a national coin collection?

**Mr. Patrick Hadsipantelis:** Our view on that is to have a balance and to do it well.

The program that was done in 1992 is a good reflection of what can be done. There were 10 or 12 coins to depict all of the provinces and territories. I really believe—and I know that my colleagues at the Mint feel the same—that it's an opportunity to connect both nationally and regionally. When we do that well, I think we create the most success for ourselves, but we also tap into an opportunity to resonate and create more pride.

So in answer to your question, yes, that would be our intent.

**Mr. Scott Armstrong:** Thank you.

Moving on to the National Capital Commission, roughly what type of a budget did you have for the 2011 Canada Day celebrations?

**Mr. Guy Laflamme (Senior Vice-President, Capital Experience, Communications and Marketing Branch, National Capital Commission):** Overall, the NCC invested in the order of \$1.2 million. The overall budget was more in the order of \$3.7 million or \$3.8 million if we include the amount contributed by other government departments and sponsors making up the overall investment.

**Mr. Scott Armstrong:** So it was just under \$4 million?

**Mr. Guy Laflamme:** That's right.

**Mr. Scott Armstrong:** I thought it was a tremendous celebration. I didn't attend it, but I watched the events on television and the reactions of the people, and the huge crowds that you drew. You must have been very satisfied with how that event went.

**Mr. Guy Laflamme:** Thank you. We were, and CBC recognized that it was probably one of the best years in terms of the ratings on national television. We were always extremely focused on ensuring top-quality products in terms of national outreach.

We have to deliver top quality for people who have the chance to attend in the capital, but one of the main focuses is on the outreach component. As Madame Lemay indicated, last year generated record crowds with our international stars, the royal couple, being present. Over 500,000 people gathered in the capital, with 40% of those coming from outside the capital region.

**Mr. Scott Armstrong:** It begs the question of how you're going to top it in 2017. What type of a budget is it going to take to do that? Do you have any thoughts or ideas on how you're going to build towards 2017? I would see the Canada Day celebrations in 2017 being a pivotal event in our overall celebrations.

**Ms. Marie Lemay:** Of course it is a little early to have definite ideas, but we've been thinking and talking about it.



There was a road to Confederation, obviously, so we were hoping to build the momentum. I'll give you an example of some of the ideas that have been talked about, and they are not necessarily new. Perhaps Canada Day 2017 could be a 17-day celebration. For the 125th anniversary, there were 125 days of celebration.

Could we find a way of having 150 days of celebrations? It will definitely be a pivotal moment for us. The change we've made and the realization we've come to through different events we've had and different initiatives is that it is important to use social media to reach out to the rest of the country.

We've been very successful. If we look at just our plan for Canada's capital, we've reached out to 20,000 people. So social media is really one way. The other thing we were thinking about is whether we could do live sites. Is it possible that we could have Canada Day celebrations happening in different places at the same time and connect the parts together?

These are ideas we're starting to think about.

• (1230)

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Armstrong.

We'll go on to Mr. Nantel.

[Translation]

**Mr. Pierre Nantel (Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher, NDP):** Thank you.

First I would like to thank you for your patience. It is very relevant that you are here to testify on the study of the 150th anniversary. The people from the Royal Canadian Mint are here essentially to help us corroborate these celebrations. As for the representatives of the National Capital Commission, they went through a consultation process I would describe as extreme, and this is much to their credit.

In the course of the commission's work and the major public consultations it carried out, certain facts emerged, for instance the fact that some people would like to see streets named in honour of some of the legendary first nations chiefs. One can see the benefits of consultation here. However, I wonder how much autonomy you have with regard to the commemoration of the War of 1812. It has been folded into the Winterlude celebrations that are about to begin. I have some questions in that regard on your autonomy, on the consultative dimension which is absent in other regards. I wonder among other things if you would have the necessary freedom to erect a monument in honour of Tommy Douglas, who, according to a recent survey, is considered to be one of the most outstanding Canadians.

My question on consultation is for Mr. Hadsipantelis. Have you considered a method that would allow you to consult people on the choice of themes? We have often heard the term "from the ground up" mentioned here, and the fact that people should own the celebrations of the 150th anniversary. Consequently it would be good to have consultations on the overarching themes.

Some themes have been suggested. For instance, I remember that when a consultation was held on the 150th anniversary at the NAC, people said that the health insurance system was important to them

and they wanted it to be commemorated, even if government representatives would like to see it disappear.

Do you consult the population on the choice of themes?

**Mr. Patrick Hadsipantelis:** Consultations are held in connection with the research we conduct. We do in fact survey Canadian public opinion on a regular basis. Our surveys reach more than 1,000 Canadians. We do this periodically. They are now done online. It is a way of surveying the population on the relevance of our themes. One of the highest-ranked events in this research was the 2012 commemoration of the War of 1812.

I think we could go even further. You talked about ways of including a larger part of the public in the consultation process. I mentioned two programs wherein we invited young Canadians to submit designs for commemorative coins. That is a good example.

At the Royal Canadian Mint, these are lessons that we have taken to heart and we consider them important in our preliminary discussions. We think more could be done to increase communication with the public. We have yet to determine exactly how to do that, but it is clear to our minds that this is very relevant. We would like to find a way to involve people in the process of theme selection, and in the choice or preparation of designs. We would even consider finding a way of including them in the selection process. We did so in the context of the Olympic program. We invited Canadians to vote for the 10 greatest sports achievements of the Canadian Olympic Games. We chose the top three results, with the intention of making commemorative coins to mark those events.

In our opinion, involving people in a much more proactive way is a key factor in our success.

**Mr. Pierre Nantel:** Thank you.

Do you think you will chose your own themes, or do you hope, to some extent, that the people in charge of organizing the 150th anniversary will suggest specific themes to you?

**Mr. Patrick Hadsipantelis:** We hold ongoing consultations with the representatives of Heritage Canada, for instance. We prepare a list of the most important commemorative events and we include them in our research. We work in cooperation with them. We expect that our partners will cooperate with us. It is more effective in the final analysis because in that way, we have a better halo effect. For instance, we work very closely with Canada Post. We even have joint products, with similar themes.

Ms. Lemay mentioned the program involving the monarchy, the royal couple. Last year, we created two coins that were extremely well received by the population. We also designed products jointly with Canada Post. We believe in collaborative efforts.

• (1235)

**Mr. Pierre Nantel:** You are right. I honestly believe, in fact, that nothing has a more unifying effect in a country than its currency. Everybody is constantly exchanging it and identifies with it. I kept most of the limited edition coins I came across for my children and nephews.

However, in order to produce a coin, you need to set an advance timeframe. If, in the context of the organization of the 150th anniversary celebrations, certain themes were chosen and you wanted to see them used at some point in this event, what would be the deadline to submit themes to you?

**Mr. Patrick Hadsipantelis:** We are constantly working to improve that deadline. The process can be a long one; it can be as long as 24 months, and it is preferable that suggestions be submitted as early as possible. We are quite a flexible organization and we can make adjustments, given our commercial nature. Sometimes we do virtual somersaults to reduce that deadline, but basically we need a 12-to-24 month window; that is probably a good reference point.

**Mr. Pierre Nantel:** Well, you certainly have an excellent spokesperson for your advertising in Quebec. That is very effective, and I congratulate you.

And on those words, I will yield the floor to Tyrone.

[English]

**Mr. Tyrone Benskin (Jeanne-Le Ber, NDP):** Sure. I have a quick question.

First off, for the Mint, congratulations on the work you do. I actually had the pleasure of doing the narration for the Vimy television ad you put out, and it was a very good ad.

I'm going to dive into it. I guess this goes out to both of you. As we're heading into Black History Month, I'm wondering what kinds of efforts are being made to focus not so much on picking people out of a lineup but on events and the contributions of the people of African descent who helped found Canada, going way back to the black Loyalists. I'll put that out there for you, first off.

**Mr. Patrick Hadsipantelis:** I'll start. We haven't done much, really, to be quite honest. I think you've raised an opportunity for us to reflect on how extensively we address different communities. We try to do so. We've done a lot, I think, more recently, with the first nations. We've been proactive there, mainly with the Olympic program. We actually used Corrine Hunt, the artist behind the medals, for a commemorative coin program, more recently, for our nature series. We do it very extensively with the Asian community. We've commemorated the lunar series and more recently the year of the dragon.

We welcome those ideas, and we're actually very open to trying to see how we can actually complement our plans to reach out to more communities.

To be fair, I don't think we've done very much in that area. And that's something we take great pride in addressing, so I appreciate your raising it with us.

**Ms. Marie Lemay:** Maybe I could just add, from our end—

**The Chair:** Be very brief, because we're out of time on that question.

**Ms. Marie Lemay:** Actually, it was raised specifically in our consultations, so that's a very good point. The notion of larger representation is something we're actually looking into. Diversity is an extremely important issue in everything we do. But that was a specific issue that was raised, which we will be considering.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Benskin.

Mr. Simms.

**Mr. Scott Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor, Lib.):** Thank you, sir, and thank you to our guests.

I'm a very big fan of the Royal Canadian Mint for the collections you've put out there and for all the themes you strike. One of the reasons is that it's actually educational. It's only a coin, but still, it means a lot as far as a reflection of what the country is. It's a regional reflection, but the distribution is national and international. I love to hear about individual provinces and individual persons being represented on the coins. For instance, I think the Saskatchewan Roughriders coin is a fantastic idea. It's a big part of our history. I even enjoyed the fact that I picked up a coin with a Montreal Canadiens emblem, and I'm a Boston Bruins fan.

**Voices:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Scott Simms:** That was 25¢ well spent.

I guess a Boston coin is out of the question, right?

I think what it does, too, is allow the opportunity to tell a story in a very specific way. Is it more like a popularity contest, as such? I'm kind of worried that there's a certain reflection of a region. Let's say you have a coin about the Royal Newfoundland Regiment, because it's existed since the late 1700s. How does one go about getting that on a coin? I know that not a lot of people know about it, but I think for me, and for many Newfoundlanders, it would be a great thing to see.

•(1240)

**Mr. Patrick Hadsipantelis:** That question has a few things I would suggest as answers. We do get a lot of requests from the public. We do get a lot of requests from Canadians with regard to topics, and we take them very seriously. We usually tend to add them to our annual research to ensure that we have an understanding of the level of appreciation of that theme among Canadians at large but also more regionally. It's a balance. As a crown corporation with a mandate for profit, we try to balance the role we have to both educate and to foster a healthy, profitable Mint. When we do so, we do initiatives that are regional in nature.

The example that comes to mind is a coat-of-arms series we're doing in gold coins. They're not high mintages, but they reflect our appreciation for history. Also there are some diehard collectors who appreciate those types of thematics.

**Mr. Scott Simms:** Sorry to jump in like this, but I don't have a lot of time.

Is there not a series you're starting with the arrival of the Vikings on the east coast?

**Mr. Patrick Hadsipantelis:** Yes, we are. We have a series on great explorers that's just starting now.

**Mr. Scott Simms:** Okay.

**Mr. Patrick Hadsipantelis:** Actually, I think we should probably offer to our members the opportunity to get our Mint catalogue so that you would have a good appreciation of all of our products.

We have 150 products in our plan for next year, so we do a wide variety about themes. We do it educationally, to mark historic moments, but also to try to engage Canadians and international customers—because we're very successful internationally as well—to try to resonate the appeal of the coin from a design standpoint, but also to share a piece of the story. I think that's one area we've tried to focus on to try to educate everyone.

**Mr. Scott Simms:** Yes, but on the series for 1867, the individual animals, it almost seems like it's quite a “hey, look what I got!” thing. There was a wide distribution at the time, but they've been around for quite some time. A lot of people I know who collect coins have that collection from the centennial, but they didn't buy the collection itself. They got it through circulation. Would you consider doing one type of coin for the entire year for the entire country in mass distribution for 2017?

**Mr. Patrick Hadsipantelis:** Well, it's a bit early to commit to what we should be doing, but our thoughts are, again, to try to appeal to a wide range about national pride, about regional communities, and to try to create that connection with Canadians, but also, that series is iconic for us. So to some extent we think there's probably value in bringing that back, either through a commemorative program or.... But those are some of the things that we still have to flesh out. There are a lot of opportunities and probably more to consider, but we take a lot of pride in trying to connect with our history, as well—

**Mr. Scott Simms:** Yes, I just wanted to put it in there to be mindful, because I think you're right: it was iconic. I think maybe 2017 would be the time to do that.

I apologize. I have more for you, but I want to get to the NCC.

I've always wanted to promote the idea that everybody in this country should see the national capital, given the fact that we spend so much money on museums and everything else, and on what you do, all for a good reason—don't get me wrong—but when it comes to 2017, there are two things.

Obviously there are the live events that would take place throughout the year: do you have anything in mind right now? Themes aside, the events themselves...? Obviously there are those centred around Parliament Hill, and Canada Day, and I get that, but through events like Winterlude...?

Also, what kind of outreach do you look at in doing this? You say you take pride in the 40% of visitors during the royal visit who came from outside the capital region. For me, I would love to see 60% to 70% of the people come from outside, because I think everyone should see what it is you're doing.

**Ms. Marie Lemay:** Maybe I could start by answering that one of the things we heard from Canadians across the country is that everybody should have a chance to see their capital, whether it's physically or virtually, because at one point we have to start thinking how we make the best use of this technology.

One of the areas on which we've focused a lot in the last little while is youth. When you're talking about some of these projects and trying to think of the year, a number of ideas have been floated.

There's maybe a two-pronged approach in the way we look at this. I'll call it the experience legacy, the part where people create lasting

memories, so these are the festivities and what I was talking about in extending and maybe connecting with youth.

We even thought about whether or not there is some way that we could have special programs where we have youth travel to the capital. Or do we do something with youths who turn 17 in 2017? Are there things like that which we should be trying to tap into to kind of generate...?

Then there's the harder side, I'll say, of the legacy, or the more lasting legacy associated with the infrastructure type of legacy. It's another area in which there has been a lot of discussion about ideas.

But in terms of the reaching out, we have been very successful with the last consultation we've done, and we intend to build on that and the network we've built across the country in reaching out to at least 20,000 people one-on-one in the last little bit.

• (1245)

**Mr. Scott Simms:** Do you advertise that “this is what's going on in the national capital and we want you to come here”? Do you link up with private hotels, maybe, and that sort of thing, to entice people to come to Ottawa? Or is that something you specifically avoid?

**Ms. Marie Lemay:** Well, thank you for the question, because it's always a delicate balance. We're not in the tourism industry. We promote the capital and we create the experience in the capital. We deliver messages. We use the festivities to be able to have the educational component. It's not just about the party part; it's about the message, about the educational, historical, and Canadian identity messages that have to come across.

But we do have to partner. That's why we've been so successful, I think, in developing partnerships: we have no way of succeeding in doing what we do without having those partnerships.

Guy, I don't know if you want to expand on some of them....

But that's our way of doing business. There's nothing we can do alone as the NCC. That's our mode of operation.

**The Chair:** Mr. Gill.

Oh, sorry, Mr. Laflamme, maybe for ten seconds. Then we'll move to Mr. Gill. I want to respect everyone's time.

**Mr. Guy Laflamme:** We work with national media properties. We work with federal partners as well as with the local tourism industry to leverage our investment and take advantage of their outreach opportunity, as well as private sponsors who will help us use their networks to reach out to Canadians to invite them to visit their capital.

**The Chair:** That's right on the ten-second mark. Well done.

Mr. Gill.

**Mr. Parm Gill (Brampton—Springdale, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I want to thank the witnesses for coming out.

My first question is for the Royal Canadian Mint. You had a great physical presence in Vancouver for the 2010 Olympics. Do you have something similar planned for the 150th celebration across the country?

**Mr. Patrick Hadsipantelis:** The answer to that is not yet. We're currently looking at our retail distribution strategy. We've earmarked a few cities where we intend to make some inroads. It's a balance also of making sure that the investment we put in place makes sense for us as a crown corporation with a for-profit mandate. But it's high on our radar currently to look at how we can actually make the Mint more accessible to Canadians, and being in their communities we think is a key piece to that success.

**Mr. Parm Gill:** Thank you.

My next question is for the NCC. On your website you have a document outlining your Horizon 2067, a plan for Canada's 200th anniversary. What influence will this have on your planning for the 150th in 2017?

**Ms. Marie Lemay:** As we embarked on this very important exercise we were very conscious that we were targeting a 50-year vision, but the reality is that we need a 10-year action plan, because this plan is normally renewed every 10 to 15 years. So 2017 being within that 10 years, we figured if we're going to go out and talk to Canadians about what they would like their capital to represent, we have to talk to them a little about their aspirations for 2017. So we've gathered a lot of really good information in the conversations we've had.

It will definitely influence and help us as we prepare for 2017.

**Mr. Parm Gill:** I would like to share my time with Mr. Hillyer.

**Mr. Jim Hillyer (Lethbridge, CPC):** Thank you.

Patrick, I want to ask what the technical or legal requirement is, not just to put forth a commemorative coin, but to actually change the standard or the official coin. Right now we have the loonie. So the first question is what are the technical or legal requirements to change it? Let's say we wanted it to be something else, like the Parliament buildings or something.

I'll follow that up with what it would actually take.

• (1250)

**Mr. Patrick Hadsipantelis:** I'll ask my colleague Ms. Lepine to answer that.

**Ms. Beverley Lepine:** If we're talking a change to a circulation coin, of which you have seen a number over the years, that requires a decision by Parliament in terms of approval process, and then a cabinet decision in terms of changing composition and/or approving designs. If we're talking commemorative numismatic or collectible coins, many of which Patrick has referred to, that requires a submission to our minister, who is the Minister of Finance, which then gets approved and that permits us to go forward. We do that, as Patrick indicated, with advanced planning in both of those strategies, obviously not trying to do one coin at a time, but putting forward a portfolio for a year.

**Mr. Jim Hillyer:** Are you involved with the paper money as well?

**Ms. Beverley Lepine:** No. We do only the coinage.

**Mr. Jim Hillyer:** Thank you. That's all I have.

Do we still have time?

**The Chair:** You have three and a half minutes.

**Mr. Parm Gill:** I have a couple of questions for the NCC.

How do you plan on further developing your virtual capital and capitalizing on the technological trends, such as the social media?

**Mr. Guy Laflamme:** We have started a joint project with the Department of Canadian Heritage, involving over ten different government agencies, to develop a virtual capital project to showcase some of the key commemorations and commemorative monuments and to showcase national institutions present in the capital region.

We also have an extensive network with schools across the country. We can outreach up to 4,000 teachers; we did that through *Canadian Geographic*. We will often work with private sector organizations to outreach schools across the country. We also have a network with Classroom Connections that will have allowed us, over the course of five years, to outreach four million students across the country.

The virtual and online component is also very important. We have just completed the renewal of the NCC website, which is now much richer. It has fully embraced the Web 2.0 approach by having a lot of content provided by users visiting the site, and having a lot of interactive platforms on the website for people to be able to virtually visit the capital.

**Mr. Parm Gill:** Can you also talk a bit about how you are engaging private partnerships in the planning of some of these celebrations?

**Ms. Marie Lemay:** Maybe I could respond to this.

Before I go to the private partnerships, I will first say that we are a complex region, with several municipalities and the NCC. We're trying to look at a regional approach, so we are engaging with the mayors of the two large cities, Ottawa and Gatineau, on one front. They will have their own projects that they're working on that are very exciting. We are also chairing a group of federal partners, so we're looking at the federal component as well.

What we are looking at doing is something we've done at a number of events we were involved in, including the Junos and other events, where we create what we called the "host committee" at the time. That means bringing together partners; that's when we can have the key private players involved in the organization. We intend to do that early on, and not to wait until we're halfway through the planning.

These are some of the thoughts that we have as to how to engage the partners at that level. As we said earlier, we do—on a daily basis and in everything that we do—now engage the private sector. That's the way we found that we're able to maximize our federal dollars and to have a better offer at the end of the day. It's been very successful.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Gill.

We will now go to Madame Boutin-Sweet.

[Translation]

**Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet (Hochelaga, NDP):** Good day. Thank you for being here today.

My question is for Mr. Mills.

Part of your mission includes land use and conservation plans. Ms. Lemay was saying earlier that Canadians want the capital to be, among other things, more ecological, and they want it to be a model for the entire country. I read some of the things you said recently concerning the greenbelt around Ottawa.

How could the capital stand out as an environmental leader, in the context of the celebrations of our 150th anniversary? Do you have any projects in this regard?

• (1255)

[English]

**Mr. Russell Mills:** I can answer to some of that, but I'll also ask Marie to deal with that.

Over the last few years, the NCC has tried to be a leader in environmental movement by working toward being carbon-neutral in our festivities and by eliminating waste from these huge gatherings that we have in the city. Also, the NCC is the largest holder of land in the national capital region, with Gatineau Park and the greenbelt, as you mentioned. We try to use those areas to show advanced protection of sustainability and of the environment.

I would see us increasing that during the course of the celebration of the 150th because the focus would be more on the capital.

Marie, could you add to this?

[Translation]

**Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet:** But more specifically, do you have any particular projects? Have you begun to think about this?

**Ms. Marie Lemay:** Yes. Our environmental strategy was put in place in 2009. I believe it extends to 2017. The important years for us were 2012 and 2013. The strategy includes five areas of action.

As Mr. Mills was saying, our events are now carbon neutral. Our events this year include Canada Day, Winterlude, the Rideau Canal and the Fall Rhapsody Program. There is also the matter of waste at the landfill site. If I remember correctly, our target was 70% and we are now at 50%. So, on several levels, we have the best practices. We also do green demolition, for instance.

We now have an integrated approach. We should not forget the aspect Mr. Mills emphasized, that is to say in places such as Gatineau Park, where we have a master plan that puts environmental needs above recreational objectives. All of our efforts in the park will be ongoing.

We have charted our environmental strategy from now until the year 2017, and we are going to stay the course.

**Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet:** How do you communicate that to the public? Is the public aware of all that?

**Ms. Marie Lemay:** This is done when the public attends Canada Day celebrations, for instance. I think we were among the first to have water stations where people were invited to bring their bottles. Unfortunately, I don't have the figures here with me, but we eliminated an incredible number of bottles.

We also called on the services of many volunteers, and without them we would not be able to hold all of these events. The volunteers help us with diversion, recycling, etc.

I should also mention bicycles. We have parking areas for people who want to come on their bicycles. And so we do this type of promotion through our events.

I believe that with regard to parks for instance, whether it be Gatineau Park or the greenbelt, our position is very well known.

**Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet:** I have another question for the NCC representatives. I am a francophone and since the elections, I come to Ottawa more often. When I go to restaurants, for instance, I am rarely spoken to in French, and rarely am I understood. I know that the NCC is very active in this regard, but how could you encourage greater use of French, and enhance real bilingualism in the national capital?

**Ms. Marie Lemay:** Of course, that aspect is very important to us. We have all sorts of partnerships, for instance with the Regroupement des gens d'affaires. In addition, we can have a great deal of influence on our tenants. Our leases clearly spell out that services must be offered in both languages. There has to be a follow-up.

This aspect of things is very important to us. When you work at the NCC, you don't know which language you are speaking, since we speak French and English all the time. The linguistic environment is completely bilingual at the NCC, which is very important for the capital.

• (1300)

**Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet:** Do you have other financial partners you could encourage to provide services in French when you hold events?

**Ms. Marie Lemay:** Indeed, that condition is included in all the agreements concerning events that are held on NCC lands.

[English]

**The Chair:** Thank you to our witnesses. We appreciate you taking the time to be here. Sorry for the late start. We look forward to the important role that you're each going to play as we celebrate Canada's 150th birthday.

The meeting is adjourned.





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