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Chair

Mr. Kevin Sorenson

Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security

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• (1100)

[English]

The Chair (Mr. Kevin Sorenson (Crowfoot, CPC)): Good morning, and welcome. This is meeting number two of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security, on Monday, June 21, 2011.

In our first hour this morning we will study the Royal Canadian Mounted Police commissioner selection criteria. Appearing as witnesses we have, from the Department of Public Safety, Graham Flack, associate deputy minister, and from the Privy Council, Patricia Hassard, deputy secretary to the cabinet, senior personnel and public service renewal.

Welcome.

As the chair, and on behalf of our committee, I thank all the witnesses for coming to committee on such short notice. We appreciate your response and your presence here today.

I understand that there will be an opening statement. We would welcome that now. Then we will proceed into our first round of questions.

Madam Hassard, if you would like to, please begin.

We've just now heard a cellphone going off. I would ask everyone to shut down their phones or put them on vibrate. We're able to conduct a meeting much better if these are not going off every minute.

Ms. Patricia Hassard (Deputy Secretary to the Cabinet, Senior Personnel and Public Service Renewal, Privy Council Office): Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Good morning to you and to the honourable members. I'm pleased to appear before you today to consult you on the criteria we propose to use to find the next commissioner of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

I have with me Mr. Graham Flack, the associate deputy minister at Public Safety Canada, whom you've already met.

Section 5 of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Act sets out the statutory requirements related to the appointment of the commissioner by the Governor in Council. Governor in Council—or GIC—appointments are those made by the Governor General on the advice of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada as represented by cabinet.

[Translation]

The government is committed to competency-based, open and transparent selection processes for Governor in Council positions. The Prime Minister has set out his expectations with respect to GIC appointments in *Accountable Government – A Guide for Ministers and Ministers of State*.

The guide states that "it is essential that all appointees be well qualified, and senior government appointees must be chosen through a process that ensures broad and open consideration of proposed candidates."

[English]

Further, it specifies that an important aspect of the appointment process is the desire to ensure that Governor in Council appointments reflect Canada's diversity in terms of linguistic, regional, and employment equity representation, and that all GIC appointments are subject to an assessment process and rigorous background and other checks prior to appointment.

The new RCMP commissioner will be appointed in accordance with the act and in a manner consistent with the practices introduced by the government to improve the transparency and rigour of the appointment system. This guidance was laid out for ministers in 2009 in a document entitled "A Guide to Managing the Governor in Council Appointments Process".

Mr. Chairman, I do have a copy of the guide in both official languages that I would be pleased to provide for the committee should you so wish.

The Chair: Thank you very much for that.

Before we go into the first round of questioning, I would just remind everyone that we aren't here today to look back at past commissioners. We are here to look at criteria. We are here looking at the criteria and the selection process. I would ask that we keep our comments limited to the focus of what this—

Ms. Candice Hooppner (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): On a point of order, Mr. Chair, I don't think the presenter had quite completed her presentation.

The Chair: I'm sorry.

Please continue.

Ms. Patricia Hassard: I apologize, Mr. Chairman. I paused too long.

Voices: Oh, oh!

Ms. Patricia Hassard: The guide on appointments focuses on key elements required for a rigorous process, including overall expectations and appropriate steps for recruitment to ensure the transparency of the process and to maximize access to appointments.

For context, I would like to provide you with a brief overview of the main elements of the selection process before focusing more specifically on the selection criteria for the next commissioner.

● (1105)

[Translation]

Selection processes for Governor in Council appointments are comprised of three main elements.

The first is the establishment of selection criteria to reflect the key requirements necessary for a candidate to be considered qualified for the position.

The second is the development of a recruitment strategy that outlines how candidates for the position will be sought. This can range from a basic recruitment strategy that includes posting the notice of the upcoming position on the Governor in Council appointments website and publishing it in the *Canada Gazette*, to a more elaborate process that includes engaging an executive search firm, implementing a national advertising strategy and, depending on the position, conducting targeted outreach to professional groups or other stakeholders.

The third is the assessment of candidates' qualifications against the established selection criteria. Normally this would involve interviews with a short-list candidates and reference checks.

[English]

For the next commissioner of the RCMP, the government has established a selection committee to steer all aspects of the search. The selection committee's role is to draft the selection criteria for this position, approve the recruitment and advertising strategy, and assess the qualifications of candidates.

The selection committee, with the assistance of an executive search firm, will conduct a national, publicly advertised, and comprehensive selection process to identify the most highly qualified candidates to lead the RCMP. They will then provide recommendations to the government.

As part of the process, the government did commit to consulting your committee on the selection criteria to be used to assess candidates for the position. Your committee's knowledge of the challenges facing the force and your views on the evolving law enforcement needs of society will be helpful to us in finalizing the selection criteria.

In closing, Mr. Chairman, the government plans to move as expeditiously as possible to recruit and select a commissioner for this important role. The selection committee has developed proposed criteria, which the minister has forwarded to you. We're here today to seek your views on these criteria. With your help, we will finalize the selection criteria and proceed with the public advertisement of the position.

We would be pleased to hear your views and to answer any questions you may have on the selection criteria for the next commissioner of the RCMP.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

We'll now move into the first round of questions. The first round is a seven-minute round.

We'll begin with Mr. Rathgeber, please.

Mr. Brent Rathgeber (Edmonton—St. Albert, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you, Ms. Hassard and Mr. Flack, for your attendance here this afternoon and for your expertise in this process.

Ms. Hassard, you indicated towards the close of your comments that the government has committed to consulting this committee on the criteria. Is consulting with a committee of the House of Commons an unprecedented technique in terms of a selection process?

Ms. Patricia Hassard: I should say it's not unprecedented, but the only other case I'm aware of was in 2007, when we were looking for the current RCMP commissioner. At the time we sent draft selection criteria to the equivalent of this committee and sought their views.

Mr. Brent Rathgeber: Who is on the selection committee?

Ms. Patricia Hassard: The selection committee is composed of seven members. They have a broad range of experience that's relevant to the selection of an RCMP commissioner. We have the national security adviser to the Prime Minister, who is the chair of the selection committee; two former solicitors general in the federal system; a former RCMP commissioner; the deputy minister of Public Safety Canada; the former chair of the RCMP Reform Implementation Council; and a representative of the government from the Prime Minister's Office. As well, I'm the secretary to the committee.

Mr. Brent Rathgeber: Thank you.

I've had the opportunity to peruse the proposed selection criteria. I'm assuming they were drafted by your office or by the selection committee. Can you tell me briefly who had input with respect to the selection criteria? Were human resource experts consulted? Were security and policing experts consulted? Can you tell me a little bit about the genesis of the proposed selection criteria?

● (1110)

Ms. Patricia Hassard: Yes. Thank you for the question.

I think I should start with the fact that the position was last vacant four and a half years ago. For any of these significant positions, you look back at the selection criteria that were applicable at the time to see whether they need updating. I do think the selection committee was convinced that the criteria did need updating for changes in the environment.

The selection committee itself was made up of people with policing expertise, law enforcement expertise, and at least one lawyer. The human resources aspect I think came from our office, and for those individuals—

The Chair: Just one moment.

I'm told that the French translation isn't working.

We're okay now? All right.

I'm sorry for the interruption. Time won't be taken away from you, Mr. Rathgeber.

You may continue.

Ms. Patricia Hassard: As I was saying, the committee does have quite a broad range of expertise. The committee members are bringing a variety of perspectives to the selection of the new RCMP commissioner. Many of them have a policing or law enforcement background, and legal expertise, but all of the members of the committee also have senior management experience.

So I think they are well qualified as a committee to guide the selection process.

Mr. Brent Rathgeber: In terms of the proposed selection criteria, is this a generic boilerplate model for hiring and recruiting senior members of the civil service, tailor-made to the commissioner of the RCMP, or were these criteria developed specifically for this specific recruitment and hire?

Ms. Patricia Hassard: Mr. Chairman, I would say that we started with the selection criteria from 2007. The selection committee did meet and it actually carefully considered each one of the requirements in the document. As you can probably guess, there were some updates to the document.

So it is not boilerplate; I would say it is tailored specifically for the needs of the organization at the time, in accordance with the views of the selection committee.

Mr. Brent Rathgeber: You mentioned, toward the close of your opening comments, some timelines. What are the timelines in terms of doing this recruitment, this selection?

I understand that the current commissioner is going to be vacating that position relatively soon. What type of timeline does the committee have to select, recruit, and ultimately hire the new commissioner?

Ms. Patricia Hassard: The committee is on track for a nomination of a candidate, an appointment by the government, in October of 2011. This is an important process. It requires careful consideration. A thorough national search will be done. There will be an assessment to develop a short list for interviews, and then reference checks will be done after that. So it will be a very thorough process.

Mr. Brent Rathgeber: Thank you. I appreciate that.

If the selection is to be made in October of 2011, I'm assuming that the advertising has to go out almost immediately.

Ms. Patricia Hassard: Yes, that's a good assumption.

Mr. Brent Rathgeber: So you're on short timelines.

Ms. Patricia Hassard: I think to put the selection criteria out, we should be trying to do that in the next week or two.

Mr. Brent Rathgeber: Just getting back to the selection criteria, you told me some of the...or you didn't tell me the individuals, and I'm not interested in specific names; I'm just curious with respect to

the human resource professionals who were retained or employed with respect to the selection criteria.

Could you tell me a little bit about their backgrounds? Are they from inside the civil service? Did you hire from outside with respect to human resource professionals to help you develop the proposed selection criteria?

Ms. Patricia Hassard: In my office we have human resource professionals who are very familiar with the requirements in the federal public sector. That expertise was brought to bear in the development of the selection criteria.

I would add that we are engaging an executive search firm. That firm, of course, will have deep experience in selection processes for senior leadership positions.

Mr. Brent Rathgeber: Now, from your experience, can you help this committee with respect to what specific executive assets best enable an individual to lead such a complex organization, such a diverse organization, and such a decentralized organization as the Royal Canadian Mounted Police?

• (1115)

Ms. Patricia Hassard: Certainly. If you would turn to the proposed selection criteria, it probably would be easier if I referred to that.

What we are looking for is significant management experience at the senior executive level, although we have highlighted that this should be experience that would have been during a time of constraints on financial and human resources, where those were important factors. We are conscious of the fact that there are resource constraints for all of the federal public sector organizations.

We also want demonstrated experience in strategic management and organizational change in motivating employees to reach corporate objectives.

A new criteria that we have added this time is experience in developing and implementing a framework for talent management. As you're probably aware, most large organizations, such as the RCMP, are going through a bit of demographic change. There are concerns about members retiring and the retention of corporate knowledge, the development of new recruits, essentially succession planning. We are looking for someone who has a demonstrated capacity in that area.

The Chair: Thank you. We have to break there. We will go to the official opposition.

Mr. Sandhu.

Mr. Jasbir Sandhu (Surrey North, NDP): Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the witnesses for coming here today.

Today we are studying the selection criteria for the next commissioner of the RCMP.

Mr. Chair, I am a little puzzled as to the selection criteria that we received last Wednesday. That was changed again this morning. We only received the new criteria about an hour ago.

The Chair: The ones you received this morning are not the new ones. We provided those as a courtesy to you. Those were the 2007 criteria for choosing a commissioner back then. What you received was the previous criteria so you could compare them with the new criteria that you were given last Wednesday.

Mr. Jasbir Sandhu: That would be my first question. What was updated from 2007, and why?

Ms. Patricia Hassard: Overall I would say we have streamlined the selection criteria considerably. We have made them shorter and we've made them sharper and clearer, in my view. We have also added a number of new criteria to reflect the current operating environment for the RCMP.

As I was mentioning, the RCMP, just like other large organizations, is going through some demographic challenges. We are looking for a leader who has expertise in that area.

We did add three criteria in relation to demographics and talent management. One is experience in developing and implementing a framework for talent management that focuses on recruitment, succession planning, and knowledge transfer. You see that under "Experience". We've added as a criteria the ability to develop and implement a corporate vision and provide the leadership and strategic direction required for the organization to fulfill its mandate and attain its objectives. We've also added the ability to focus the energies and talents of RCMP members and employees to motivate them to achieve corporate objectives.

Also, there are a number of additions in relation to the complex operating environment and the accountability regime the RCMP is subject to and the challenges of change that they're faced with. We are looking for someone with the ability to lead in a complex accountability environment, with experience in implementing modern corporate governance principles and best practices, and with the ability to anticipate emerging issues, manage risk, and lead organizational change in order to promote good governance and organizational performance.

You will see in the personal suitability characteristics that we are looking for a strategic and innovative leader and team builder who is motivated by challenge and change.

I believe, Mr. Chairman, those would be the major additions to the 2007 selection criteria.

• (1120)

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Sandhu.

Mr. Jasbir Sandhu: My second question is on this selection committee that was set up. Just to be clear, there was no outside HR consultant or organizational consultant used for this.

Ms. Patricia Hassard: No, unless we're going to count the executive search firm that will be from the outside.

Mr. Jasbir Sandhu: I mean, we aren't there yet for the selecting criteria.

Ms. Patricia Hassard: No.

Mr. Jasbir Sandhu: Okay. We've all seen that there have been serious problems with the RCMP over the years. It has taken a

beating in public accountability and transparency. There have been many, many cases over the years where the public has been very forthcoming with regard to whether they can trust some of the things going on in the RCMP.

Again, I don't see any selection criteria that demonstrates a new commissioner's commitment to improving community relations, and also public accountability in policing. Are there criteria in there that would use that?

Ms. Patricia Hassard: Specifically, Mr. Chairman, I would point to the second criterion under "Knowledge", which says:

Understanding of Canada's social and cultural fabric and a sensitivity to the issues relevant to the diversity of the Canadian population.

I would also point to the fifth bullet under "Experience", which is:

Experience in building and maintaining productive and effective multipartite relationships with partner organizations and diverse stakeholders.

And to the member's accountability point, we have criterion under "Abilities", which indicates we are looking for an "ability to lead in a complex accountability environment".

Mr. Jasbir Sandhu: I'll ask my question one more time. There is a difference between ability and demonstrated commitment. I don't see anything in the proposed selection criteria that the person we are choosing as our next commissioner would have demonstrated commitment to improving community relations and public accountability. That's not part of the criteria. Am I correct?

Ms. Patricia Hassard: I'm not sure I would interpret it that way, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Jasbir Sandhu: The government, back in February, pointed out that they would take an extensive consultative approach to this, but it doesn't appear to be that. I think this process is being rushed.

We were sent a draft list by Minister Toews—and I would like to thank him for doing this—but I would have liked to have known in more detail the criteria and how they were chosen.

My next question—

The Chair: Actually, you'll have to wait for the second round. Our time is up on that.

We'll now move to the second round and to the government.

Madam Hoepfner.

Ms. Candice Hoepfner: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

I want to begin by thanking the witnesses for being here. All of us really appreciate the opportunity to look at the criteria and to ask you questions and delve a little deeper into the criteria surrounding this important appointment.

Could both of you very briefly for the committee tell us your expertise? Tell us how many of these kinds of appointments and selection criteria models you have worked with and been a part of. Could you do that for us briefly?

Ms. Patricia Hassard: Thank you for the question.

I was trained as a lawyer, and I have been working in my current position as deputy secretary for senior personnel and public service renewal for four and a half years. I was here the last time the RCMP commissioner was selected and through many senior appointments over the years. I would say that I have fairly extensive experience in the selection of senior leaders.

• (1125)

Ms. Candice Hoepfner: Thank you.

Mr. Flack.

Mr. Graham Flack (Associate Deputy Minister, Department of Public Safety): Bill Baker is the individual from Public Safety who is on the committee. Bill is in Iqaluit right now with the other deputy ministers of public safety and justice. The federal-provincial meeting is on right now.

Bill has extensive experience as a senior public servant in hiring other senior public servants, including work with an external management board at the Canada Revenue Agency.

In terms of my background, I'm a lawyer as well. I have been involved in the national security and public safety area, and I have been involved in appointments at the senior level of the public service. But personally I haven't been involved in external appointments—appointments involving organizations at arm's length, like the RCMP.

Ms. Candice Hoepfner: Thank you very much.

I noticed several references in the criteria. “Demonstrated experience in strategic management and organizational change, and in motivating employees to reach corporate objectives” is one example. “Ability to develop and implement a corporate vision, and to provide the leadership and strategic direction required for the organization to fulfill its mandate and attain its objectives” is another. And I could go on. Several of the criteria talk about leading people and leading individuals and groups of people.

You talked about a “complex accountability environment”. I'm wondering, if you're looking at these criteria, what characteristics you would be looking at for an individual to be able to lead people. We all know if you're a good leader, it means people are following you. And they're not following you because they have to but because they believe in you, and they believe in what you're doing. How do you, then, take these criteria and translate them into actual characteristics?

Ms. Patricia Hassard: Mr. Chairman, I would refer again to the selection criteria themselves. The selection committee has actually added seven major criteria to the selection criteria. Each and every one of them speaks to the kind of leadership that the committee felt the RCMP will need going into the future. This is a very forward-looking set of selection criteria focused very much on leadership in a “complex accountability environment”, on leadership of people, on developing a corporate vision, and on aligning staff behind that.

Mr. Graham Flack: Maybe I could give an example on the complex accountability side.

Many in Ottawa see the federal face of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. But it is not just a national police service; it is also a

police service that is present on hundreds of aboriginal reserves in Canada, where it's the primary police service provider.

There are close to 200 municipalities in Canada that use the RCMP as their police service. It is the police service for eight of the 10 provinces and three territories at the provincial and territorial levels. And it is active internationally, working with international organizations, for example, most recently in Haiti.

So the accountabilities are, indeed, as you suggest, highly complex, because in those different environments it's operating in different contexts and even with different legal accountabilities in terms of its regimes.

So it is a highly decentralized, sophisticated, and complex organization that requires an individual to be able to balance those accountabilities and meet stakeholder needs in that very broad range of environments.

Ms. Candice Hoepfner: According to the criteria, you would be looking for someone who has demonstrated that type of experience. Obviously, they have to have demonstrated that at some point in their careers.

Ms. Patricia Hassard: That's right.

Ms. Candice Hoepfner: I also want to ask you for a moment about implementing a corporate vision. I know Mr. Sandhu talked about the whole idea of reaching out to the community. And we're always very concerned with victims' right. Your criteria don't talk about having someone who has a strong knowledge of the corporate vision and mandate of the RCMP—which include all of those things—and then implementing it and making sure that vision is carried out throughout the entire organization.

Ms. Patricia Hassard: I would point again to the one about “Understanding of Canada's social and cultural fabric and a sensitivity to the issues relevant to the diversity of the Canadian population”. In the criteria from 2007 there were brackets, with a number of additions: racial, cultural, linguistic, sexual orientation, etc. The selection committee did not feel it was necessary to elaborate in that kind of detail since it could have gone on at some length. But that criterion is meant to cover the type of competency you were discussing.

• (1130)

Ms. Candice Hoepfner: Thank you very much.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Hoepfner.

We'll now move to Mr. Scarpaleggia.

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.): Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Welcome to the committee. I think dealing with this issue is a great way to start our work as a committee.

I'm wondering what went wrong the last time. Obviously mistakes were made. The new selection criteria are interesting but seem to really be just vague terms that you would normally subsume under the rubric of “leadership”.

First of all, what went wrong the last time? And second, how do the new criteria help us to avoid repeating the same mistakes?

Ms. Patricia Hassard: Mr. Chairman, I'm a bit at a loss on this one. I understood that we were going to talk about the selection criteria for the new commissioner. I don't feel that my colleague and I are in a position to comment.

The Chair: I think because we have been given both criteria, maybe the best way is to explain in a little more detail why there is a difference in the criteria between 2007 and 2011.

Ms. Patricia Hassard: Okay, Mr. Chairman.

The Chair: For one thing, I'll let you answer it. I won't take this time away from you. You've mentioned succession planning. I know in the last Parliament that was one of the issues that came out of our committee. That definitely is one, bringing up leadership and that type of thing. If you could point out again some of the differences between the two criteria and perhaps some of the reasons they've been added.

Ms. Patricia Hassard: Certainly, Mr. Chairman.

I think we would go back to the concept of the context and the operating environment in which the RCMP finds itself in 2011 versus 2007. In particular, I would cite its report on planning and priorities, which states "the RCMP is facing a period of intense resource pressure as the effects of the economic downturn have caused the Government of Canada to closely review spending and resource allocations."

Like all other federal organizations, the RCMP is subject to constraints. To meet that challenge, one of our requirements for the next commissioner is significant management experience at the senior executive level, including in circumstances where there are constraints on financial and human resources.

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: I'd like to pursue that, actually.

It seems to me that one of the problems with the last commissioner was that he wasn't seen to be an advocate for the force. What you're setting out in your new criteria is that you want someone who will be there to implement the government's agenda on budget cuts. How would someone who fits that mould be able to be an advocate for the force? As you know, the Auditor General just came out with a report saying there are significant resource problems that are forcing the force to abandon some of its core duties. What the government is saying in the criteria is that what is needed is somebody who will impose greater limits on resources.

Is this the first time there's been a selection committee for choosing the commissioner, or was there one the last time? You may have mentioned it, but I didn't catch that.

Ms. Patricia Hassard: There was a selection committee the last time as well.

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: You didn't give any names of the members of the selection committee. I'd be interested to know, for example, who the two former solicitors general are.

Ms. Patricia Hassard: Mr. Chairman, one of them is James Kelleher and the other is Jean-Jacques Blais.

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: Could you remind me what their former political affiliations are?

Ms. Patricia Hassard: I think they represent two opposite perspectives.

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: Mr. Blais, of course, represents the Liberal tradition.

You mentioned that the new commissioner will have to operate in a complex accountability environment. How has that environment changed from four and a half years ago? We have the same government with its accountability message and package in place. How has the accountability environment become more complex? The RCMP was already operating in Haiti, or at least some national police forces would send officers down to Haiti. I don't quite understand how that has changed.

An additional question would be, do these criteria leave room for someone who does not have previous experience in a police force? If you read the criteria, it seems pretty difficult to imagine, given these criteria, that you could have someone from outside the policing area. Is your intent to restrict it to someone from a police force?

Third, and then I'll let the witnesses answer, Mr. Chair, if one of the candidates had expressed opinions on policy issues publicly, for example, if a candidate said that he or she believes in the gun registry, would your selection committee put that person aside or would that candidate have a likelihood of still going forward?

• (1135)

Ms. Patricia Hassard: Mr. Chairman, I think I will start with the second question and then ask my colleague to deal with the first and perhaps the third.

I think the question was, is policing experience one of the requirements? I think you will find that we have actually not specified direct policing or law enforcement experience as a stated criterion, although of course it's highly desirable for this position. We're looking for a strong leader, with a good understanding of the RCMP mandate and their operating context, and an individual who will provide strategic direction and position the force for the future.

Again, referring to the selection criteria, under "Knowledge", it is stated that we are expecting knowledge of the RCMP mandate, challenges, accountabilities, and operating context. In the same section, we are looking for "an understanding of criminal law, the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and the legal and institutional context of police work".

So it is clear that the government is looking for the best candidate to lead the RCMP, whether they come from inside or outside the force.

Mr. Graham Flack: I could speak to the resource limits question and the accountability questions. Maybe the most useful lens to put on this would be that we're currently conducting what will be the largest contract in Canadian history, which is the contract policing negotiations with the provinces and municipalities. That ends at the end of the fiscal year in 2012.

That environment has highlighted to us very clearly how the fiscal context is a context that's facing not simply the federal government, but all policing jurisdictions in Canada. All are under significant pressure to allocate resources very effectively, given the dynamic environment in which they're operating. They need to prioritize among the resources.

I think you won't find a police organization in the country that believes they're over-resourced in terms of the needs that are out there, but all governments at all levels are putting a very close eye on cost containment in order to get the highest possible value from the resources the taxpayers are providing for policing. At all levels that has been a dominant theme in the contract policing negotiation and it is one of the reasons why there's such high attention on the ability to operate in a constrained fiscal environment.

Even if police resources were to increase, they certainly aren't going to increase to the degree to which that dynamic operating environment might find.... We find that's true with international partners as well: they're having to make clear choices around where to allocate resources in this dynamic environment. That's a core reason for that criteria.

Partly in the contract policing negotiations—

The Chair: Very quickly, please.

Mr. Graham Flack: Yes. The accountability environment is changing as well. One of the key interests of the provinces in this new contract policing environment is a number of the resources that were expended.

For example, on the accommodations function of the RCMP, they want greater oversight over the spending, which will entail greater accountability from the RCMP and the RCMP commissioner over how that spending is going. That's just one example of a changing accountability environment that's becoming more complex.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

We'll now go back to Mr. Sandhu.

You'll do a split in this five-minute round.

Mr. Jasbir Sandhu: That's right. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

One of the things pointed out in the Auditor General's report was that the government has failed to negotiate a contract with the provinces. Also, it has failed to define the roles and responsibilities of the RCMP as to how they're going to be funded. They have failed to negotiate that with the provinces over the years. That has been consistent over many, many years, and that's one of the major findings of the AG's report.

Here's my question. In the 2007 criteria, there's a specific mention of "experience in multipartite negotiations and liaison in order to develop productive relationships with other federal law enforcement agencies", provinces and municipalities.... If one of the roles for the new commissioner is that they are going to be able to negotiate roles and responsibilities, define them with the provinces, and negotiate a funding formula whereby we can have a functional force that is able to fight organized crime and the drug wars out there, why is this leaving out having the experience to deal with the provinces and municipalities? I don't see that in the new criteria.

• (1140)

Ms. Patricia Hassard: Mr. Chairman, I'll start that, and I'll split my answer with my colleague here.

Under "Experience", we are looking for experience in building and maintaining productive and effective multipartite relationships with partner organizations and diverse stakeholders. I believe the

selection committee felt it wasn't necessary to go into a great level of detail because there are many partners and many different organizations that the RCMP would consider part of their stakeholders. I believe the experience requirement is there even if it does not particularly specify that level of government.

Mr. Graham Flack: With respect to the contract policing negotiations, there is a very detailed contract in place with contract policing jurisdictions, and this is one in a long line of those. Contract policing has been in place in Canada for over a century now and has been governed by contractual relationships with the provinces in terms of how those services are delivered. We are doing a major revision of that agreement in these contract negotiations we are currently undertaking in the province.

The Auditor General's focus was on federal policing services, many of which are provided not necessarily on a cost recovery basis to provinces. I give the example of forensic science as one where over time the federal government has been providing services to other jurisdictions, and the Auditor General called for further clarification around who the payers of those services were going to be and on what basis those services were going to be provided. So there is a major renewal on the contract policing side in terms of the relationship with the provinces, but there is also an enhanced look at federal policing services to define what those core services are and how they are going to be funded.

The Chair: Mr. Sandhu.

Mr. Jasbir Sandhu: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

It's pretty clear this process is being rushed here. I think we're going to be choosing our next commissioner, so we need to slow down a little bit and flesh out the criteria a little bit. I point to what Madam Hassard said, that great details are not part of the criteria.

At this point I'd like to move a motion that the committee hold an additional meeting to hear from witnesses outside the Department of Public Safety and PCO for the purpose of studying potential selection criteria for the next RCMP commissioner.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Sandhu.

That does go contrary to the motion we just finished passing at our last meeting, so it speaks contrary to the motion that we're operating under here today. I'll leave that with the clerk.

Do we have a copy of the original motion. Can I see your motion? Do you have it written out?

I've been checking with the clerk to make sure that's in order. The difficulty here is that the motion we're operating under today is the motion that we have one meeting to discuss this. Because of the timelines here, I'll just refer to the parliamentary expert here.

• (1145)

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Andrew Bartholomew Chaplin): I would see it as not being receivable because they have agreed. It does—

The Chair: That's all I need to hear.

The motion is out of order based on the fact that we've just passed the former motion.

Your time is up, so we'll move to Mr. Norlock.

Mr. Rick Norlock (Northumberland—Quinte West, CPC): Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

And thank you to the witnesses for appearing here today.

I have some degree of knowledge on policing issues, having spent 30 years with one of the country's major police forces. Whenever we make comments, we need to take a look at a person who will be leading one of the most trusted and respected police forces on the face of God's good earth. One of the first things I look at is what the vision is for the RCMP.

I notice in the first part of the vision statement of the RCMP that it is an organization that is committed to "be a progressive, proactive and innovative organization". When I look at those words, I can think of many, many different facets, but one of the things that comes to mind in this ever-changing world, especially when you begin to get up in age a little bit, is the pace of change that society goes through.

Having begun my first career in the seventies, the changes seem to be speeding up, especially for those who had 25 years more experience than I, but then near the end of my career the change was, one would say, almost exponential.

You used to be told there are two sure things in life, death and taxes, but there's actually a third, and that's what we really try to deal with all over our society, and that is change.

I notice in the criteria, under "Abilities"—and it has to do with the vision for the RCMP—is the "Ability to anticipate emerging issues", and of course "manage risk". We all do that in various ways.

But with regard to "lead organizational change", I wonder what, Ms. Hassard or Mr. Flack, you can add. What do you see, what do you look for, what will be looked for in the individuals and their background and what they say to you in answer to questions that leads you to believe they are very adaptable to change and able to perform within the vision statement and able to produce an organization that is able to adapt to change?

Mr. Graham Flack: Maybe I can start by talking about the context, and I think you've rightly identified how it's changing.

It's changing in terms of an increase in the complexity of the law enforcement environment, the degree to which many of the major criminal challenges we're facing involve an international dimension, the appearance of a cyber dimension linked to many of those crimes. Take child sexual exploitation as an example and how that has been transformed by the availability of materials on the Internet, how that has transformed how you police that, in terms of the need to involve other international organizations because the crime knows no borders. And as you rightly highlighted, it's not just the complexity increasing, but the speed with which organizations are adapting in response to all these new changes is also increasing.

So it's both more complex and a higher pace of change, which means it's very difficult to encapsulate what an organization should look like in some kind of static sense. One of the criteria for the commissioner, as you've pointed out, and indeed for the organization, is a need for it to show a great deal of dynamism because it is going to have to continually respond to the changing environment.

There may be a couple of other examples there.

Even in the last decade the RCMP had record class sizes, in terms of the number of individuals Depot was graduating. So there's a big input in terms of new recruits coming on board as a result of policing demands increasing, not just at the federal level but at the provincial and municipal levels as well. But in addition, as in many policing organizations in the country, there's a demographic that is retiring very quickly at the senior executive level, which puts real stresses on all of our policing organizations that are seeing that demographic change, where the senior leadership cadre is leaving.

So it's a very, very dynamic environment into which the new commissioner will have to operate, which is becoming even more dynamic. That's why, as you've highlighted throughout the criteria that are laid out, innovation and the ability to operate in a dynamic environment are critical, because it's very difficult for any of us to clearly identify in a static way all the challenges the organization is going to face in a concrete way. Those challenges are dynamic and evolving.

And this is not unique to the RCMP. Certainly when we have conversations with other police organizations internationally or with our provincial colleagues, we hear this is being felt across the board.

So I think you're right in highlighting the dynamism of the environment and the need for a leader who doesn't just have a vision but has a vision that builds in innovation and dynamism in the drive of the organization.

● (1150)

The Chair: Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Norlock.

Mr. Garrison, you have five minutes.

Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, NDP): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you to the witnesses for appearing here today.

Our concern is that the selection process be both thorough and transparent, as we see this as essential to ensuring the confidence and trust of the public in the RCMP and also to restoring the confidence of the rank and file in the RCMP in their leadership.

My own experience, at the local level, in hiring a chief constable as a member of a police board and also making recommendations for policing in Afghanistan for an international human rights organization, taught me that there needs to be a balance in criteria between management and leadership. The criteria before us are very heavily weighted toward management, so I'd like to ask two questions that I think are important to restoring public confidence in terms of leadership.

The first is a very specific question. Do the witnesses see any downside in adding a criterion very specifically stating that we would like to see an RCMP commissioner with a demonstrated understanding of and commitment to victims' rights?

The Chair: Madam Hassard.

Ms. Patricia Hassard: I don't think it's an omission in the selection criteria, but by the same token, if this committee is going to make that suggestion, then we will consider it seriously.

Mr. Randall Garrison: Thank you.

I have a second question, then, with regard to diversity.

I would have to say, personally, that I'm disappointed in the change in the draft to take out the very specific mentions of diversity. As drafted, I think the criteria now seem to imply that diversity is an external issue. It talks about diversity issues as if they're outside the RCMP. So, once again, my question is, would there be any downside to adding a specific criterion that would ask that the successful candidate have a demonstrated commitment to continuing progress in gender equity and diversity within the RCMP?

The Chair: Madam Hassard.

Ms. Patricia Hassard: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I do not think that one is a necessary addition. The RCMP is subject to the overall government policies under which the government is committed to employment equity and ensuring that appointments, both within the RCMP and outside, are reflective of Canada's diversity.

Mr. Randall Garrison: May I pass the rest of my time to Mr. Chicoine?

The Chair: Yes.

[Translation]

Mr. Chicoine, you have three minutes.

Mr. Sylvain Chicoine (Châteauguay—Saint-Constant, NDP): Good morning.

I want to thank the witnesses for being here today.

I would like to ask a question about the process that was chosen. The criteria are pretty similar to the ones that existed during the previous commissioner's term. The criteria are exactly the same. So maybe it's in the process that there have been some gaps in the past.

Do you intend to do things differently than in the previous process, in 2007?

• (1155)

[English]

Ms. Patricia Hassard: Mr. Chairman, what I can say is that we have actually substantially changed the selection criteria. I think it is an indication that we are looking forward to the future for the type of leadership the RCMP requires in its current and future operating environment.

[Translation]

Mr. Sylvain Chicoine: If I've understood correctly, there are different criteria. Things are going to be done differently than in the previous process.

[English]

Ms. Patricia Hassard: Yes, I would summarize by saying that there are at least seven new criteria in the selection criteria for 2011.

[Translation]

Mr. Sylvain Chicoine: How will you integrate these criteria into the new selection process?

[English]

Ms. Patricia Hassard: We do an assessment of a candidate's capacities in many ways. There is a variety of tools that we have available to us. The search firm will do an extensive campaign right across the country looking for candidates who would meet the selection criteria. They will do pre-interviews and then present an initial report to the selection committee. The selection committee's role, at that point, is to review what we call the "long list of candidates" and narrow it down to the top few whom the committee feels are closest to the selection criteria, and they would be invited for interviews by the selection committee.

Of course, interviews are not the only way that people are assessed, but they are a good way to assess how people present, what their issues are, and we will be developing questions that will get at some of those issues the honourable member has raised.

We also do extensive reference checking after interviews for the leading candidates.

The Chair: Thanks very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chicoine. Your time is up.

We'll go to Mr. Aspin.

Mr. Jay Aspin (Nipissing—Timiskaming, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you to the witnesses for appearing today.

At the outset, I am really pleased that one of my predecessors, the Honourable J.J. Blais, a former member for Nipissing—Timiskaming and a good Liberal, is a member of the committee. He is a very learned individual and a very fair individual.

My question to the witnesses is this. What characteristics would you recommend an executive possess in order to build a positive and respected public image of this particular institution?

Ms. Patricia Hassard: Thank you for the question.

The selection committee is interested in finding a leader for the RCMP who is very capable of communicating with all different types of audiences. That is one of the key characteristics. And you will see, under the "Abilities" heading, that we're looking for:

Superior communication skills, both written and oral, and ability to represent the RCMP with members, the public, governments and other organizations, including law enforcement organizations in Canada and internationally.

I believe that particular criterion was added so that the individual who leads the RCMP is able to put the force in a position of being a trusted institution.

Mr. Jay Aspin: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Thank you.

You have a few more minutes if someone wants to question on your time.

Ms. Candice Hooppner: I have just a very quick comment.

The Chair: I should just interrupt for one moment. They are scheduled to be here for one hour, so this will be the last question, and then we'll move in camera and have a discussion among our committee members.

Ms. Candice Hooppner: Thank you. I will just take a brief moment.

I do find it interesting to hear the NDP speaking up on behalf of victims. It's unfortunate that every time they have the opportunity to vote in support of victims, they vote against that legislation.

This actually brings me to my question. There are several references to the RCMP mandate: "to fulfill its mandate and attain its objectives"; and "corporate objectives". There are many references to the RCMP's overall mandate. I would say that this would include standing up for victims. Obviously, when you're enforcing laws, you're protecting law-abiding Canadians and you're protecting victims. Front-line police officers tell us that the best way to protect victims is to make sure that criminals are in jail and that they stay in jail. Certainly, the criteria talk about achieving the RCMP's mandate, but for all of us, one of the ways we can help do that is to make sure that criminals and violent offenders stay in jail. So it's great that the NDP will be standing up for victims.

Am I correct in assuming that the mandate includes victims' rights and standing up for victims?

• (1200)

Ms. Patricia Hassard: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

I think I made the point earlier that the selection committee worked hard to shorten the selection criteria and sharpen them, which means that some of the detail has been left out from the previous version. But in the end, I think what you want is to put the key characteristics in your selection criteria and perhaps ask questions about other aspects of the mandate in the interviews.

The Chair: I want to thank both of you for coming and helping us understand a little bit better the criteria the selection committee will be looking at.

We are going to now meet and discuss this as a committee. We're going to move in camera, so we would ask each one to exit.

Each member is allowed to have one assistant there.

Thank you very much for attending, Mr. Flack and Ms. Hassard. Thank you.

We will suspend for about three or four minutes to allow them to exit. If you guys want to grab some lunch, there is lunch available there.

[Proceedings continue in camera]

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