Canadian Intergovernmental Conference Secretariat

2019–20

Departmental Results Report

The Honourable Dominic LeBlanc, P.C., Q.C., M.P.

President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs

Table of contents

Minister's message

As Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, I am pleased to table the Canadian Intergovernmental Conference Secretariat's (CICS) 2019-20 Departmental Results Report.

Since its creation in May 1973, CICS's mandate has been to provide the administrative and logistical support required for the planning and conduct of federal-provincial-territorial and provincial-territorial conferences of First Ministers, Ministers and Deputy Ministers across Canada. Improved intergovernmental partnerships are a key policy goal of this government and the multilateral intergovernmental conference plays a pivotal role in ensuring that we achieve our objective. In 2019-20, CICS supported 36 sectors of government activity in 119 meetings, a growing number of which are including discussions with Indigenous Leaders.

One of the major priorities for the Secretariat in 2019-20 was to ensure that its services remained relevant and continued to respond to clients' rapidly evolving needs. This included the promotion of new meeting formats and supporting technologies in conference service delivery including virtual conferencing services. As a component of its Modernization Action Plan, CICS's in-house remote conferencing studio with interpretation facilities – launched in November 2018 – was brought into full operation to handle all virtual meetings supported by the Secretariat.

Having served 48 teleconferences during the year (the fifth year in a row when one third or more of all meetings supported were virtual), the Secretariat was well prepared to meet the needs of its clients in the last weeks of fiscal year 2019-20 as the COVID-19 pandemic impacted negatively on governments' ability to plan, host and participate in intergovernmental meetings.

The Secretariat's ability to realign and retool so quickly in response to such an unforeseen and dramatic shift in its operating environment demonstrated yet again the organization's adaptability and its personnel's resolve and dedication to its vision, "Working together to make it happen", no matter what the circumstances.

_____

The Honourable Dominic LeBlanc, P.C., Q.C., M.P.

President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs

Results at a glance and operating context

Key results achieved in 2019-20
• Developed and implemented a number of guides and tools, including some for use by our clients, to support the effective organization and delivery of conferences, especially during the early planning stages; • Conducted a complete review and upgrade of the surveys used with conference organizers and participants to measure their level of satisfaction with CICS' support; • Developed a new virtual calendar that allows our clients to see CICS availability in near real time.

CICS continued to focus on innovation and delivering high-quality, responsive, and cost-effective conference services to federal, provincial, and territorial governments. The Secretariat made great strides to develop and implement new technologies and processes, with a focus on addressing ongoing technical and other challenges of video-

Actual full-time equivalents
30

and teleconferencing with interpretation. As a result of these modernization improvements, CICS was able to react swiftly and seamlessly to the dramatic impacts of the complete shift towards virtual conferencing due to the onset of the pandemic in early 2020.

The Secretariat provided equipment to all employees in order for them to be fully mobile, and put forward new processes to ensure that its workforce was fully operational outside of the office. In addition, the successful implementation of new policies, tools and procedures will enable the recovery or continuation of vital technology infrastructure and systems following a natural or human-induced disaster.

Actual spending
$5,425,609

CICS provided its services to 119 senior-level intergovernmental conferences, a 5% decrease over the previous year. The number of in-person meetings decreased by 13% (due in good part to the fall 2019 federal election), while the number of teleconferences increased by 12% and represented a record 40% of all conferences served (a direct result of the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020). Overall, client satisfaction levels continued to be very high. For conference delegates, client satisfaction reached 95%, the second highest rating since 2014-15. For conference planners, the 90% target was exceeded once again with a satisfaction rate of 96.8% for in-person meetings, the highest rating in 6 years. Finally, CICS held a Knowledge Exchange Forum (KEF) involving conference organizers from 6 FPT governments and 8 different client-sectors; this KEF allows conference organizers to exchange vital information and best practices from the industry.

For more information on the Canadian Intergovernmental Conference Secretariat's plans, priorities and results achieved, see the "Results: what we achieved" section of this report.

Results: what we achieved

Core responsibility

Description:

The Canadian Intergovernmental Conference Secretariat provides expert planning and archival services and impartial administrative support for federal-provincial-territorial and provincial-territorial conferences of First Ministers, Ministers and Deputy Ministers, throughout Canada.

Results of the planning highlights:

The Conference Services program delivers the Agency's core responsibility and, consequently, conducts the professional, innovative and successful delivery of services to senior-level intergovernmental meetings. With the federal government's commitment to renewed collaboration and improved partnerships with provincial and territorial governments to deliver the real, positive change that it promised Canadians, the number of intergovernmental meetings was very similar to the level we saw in 2018-19. The sustained level of activity for the year as a whole continued to offer an excellent opportunity for CICS to strengthen its relationships with federal, provincial and territorial conference delegates as well as other stakeholders including meeting organizers and permanent secretariats that supported intergovernmental relations in the 36 sectors of activity served in 2019-20.

The challenge, on the other hand, remains to ensure the Agency's capacity to respond to the increasing demand for its broader range of services as well as to ensure its services remain relevant, forward looking and of the highest quality. While CICS must remain responsive to the traditional needs and requirements expressed by its clients and met through a reliable slate of tried-and-true solutions, there is an increasing expectation and opportunity for the organization to proactively lead the way, to advise, guide and encourage its clients to adopt new and innovative approaches to support senior-level intergovernmental meetings and to help maintain strong, open and collaborative relationships between the federal, provincial and territorial governments.

This expanded leadership role that CICS can and should play was largely enabled and fulfilled in 2019-20 through the ongoing implementation of the best practices and the "gold-standard" technologies and methods identified during the modernization exercise that CICS conducted in 2018 and that led to the development of a comprehensive Modernization Action Plan. The changes implemented in response to this plan became even more critical with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020 and the complete shift from in-person to virtual intergovernmental meetings after mid-February. As a result of *Beyond2020* and the modernization improvements made in 2019, CICS

was equipped to react with agility to the dramatic impacts of the pandemic on its operations, and maintained a high quality of support and inclusiveness throughout.

The broad elements of the Modernization Action Plan were integrated in the activities and actions that were undertaken or broadened in support of the following five key initiatives, which are designed to fulfill/advance the Agency's core responsibility:

Key Initiative 1: Proactively connect with intergovernmental stakeholders and other clients	
Planned Activities	• Achieve recognition among governments of CICS as the key conference service provider for senior level intergovernmental meetings. To do so, the organization will expand its methods and networks to ensure that it remains at the forefront of evolving event management technologies and processes. It will also develop or improve client guidance and information documents and forums in order to become a hub for access to timely and innovative event management solutions for the benefit of its clients; • Develop and explore opportunities with new partners; • Market CICS and its services effectively, so that new and existing clients alike are aware of the Agency's service offerings as these are adapted and evolve over time.
Results Obtained	• In 2019-20, CICS supported 119 conferences, a 5% decrease over the previous year. This included 71 in-person conferences (a 13% decrease) and 48 teleconferences (a 12% increase). The 2019 federal election was in good part responsible for the decrease in in-person meetings (with a 50% reduction in the number of conferences served during the usually very busy fall season). The gradual move from in-person to virtual meetings during the last quarter of 2019-20, as a result of the growing COVID-19 pandemic, became a complete shift after mid-March. This also had an important negative impact on the number of in-person meetings for the year, with a corresponding significant upward push on the number of virtual meetings adding to clients' ongoing reliance on this cost- and time-effective meeting format. It is important to note that CICS does not convene intergovernmental meetings but simply responds to decisions taken by host or chairing governments. • The high level of conference activity in the past five years and clients' search for more interactive and efficient meeting formats continued to provide excellent opportunities to strengthen relations with meeting organizers in all 14 client governments in 2019-20. The sharing of information and ideas again focused on issues of common interest such as smaller meeting spaces, new formats/set-ups, and more frequent Indigenous participation and stakeholder involvement.

- The Secretariat made great strides to develop and implement new technologies and processes, with a focus on addressing ongoing technical and other challenges of video- and teleconferencing with interpretation. All the time and efforts invested in this area would prove most auspicious in view of the complete shift towards virtual conferencing starting in mid-March 2020 with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

- The trend towards earlier planning of in-person conferences on the part of CICS clients continued in 2019-20. This is in good part to ensure our availability but also to get our input during the selection of meeting venues/spaces. In turn, this has allowed CICS to provide valuable advice and feedback on meeting aspects such as those mentioned under the previous two bullets, at a stage of planning when new or different approaches, services and technologies can still be taken into consideration and implemented. The development of a pan-Canadian conference venue directory, a set of conference planning guides for clients, and an online calendar of CICS' availability were important additions to the tools that will make the Agency even more effective in its support and guidance especially during the early event planning stages.

- CICS' website, which can be updated easily and whenever required, is still a prime source of information and method to promote our services to conference organizers.

- A Knowledge Exchange Forum held in March 2020 brought together participants from 6 FPT governments and 8 client sectors. Ideas and solutions were shared about the evolving nature of senior-level intergovernmental conferences including virtual conferencing with interpretation, and updates were provided about a variety of initiatives underway mostly as a result of the modernization exercise conducted by CICS in 2018. The Forum was especially useful to PT participants who do not typically organize intergovernmental conferences and who were invited to this annual event for the first time. It should be noted that this event was held on March 16, the last day before federal employees and those of several PT governments started teleworking from home due to the COVID-19 situation; this timing had a significant impact on participation in spite of the availability of a teleconferencing link.

- The growing demand for video- or teleconferencing with interpretation, either for fully virtual meetings or to link remote participants and presenters to in-person meetings, has required that CICS continue to expand its network of interpretation suppliers to include private sector companies. In the longer term, these new partnerships will also position CICS very well to offer even more effective, efficient and low-cost innovative options to its clients or share this knowledge with them as

	they, too, strive to stay at the forefront of technology and other solutions in this quickly evolving area.

Key Initiative 2: Encourage use of new formats and technologies in conference service delivery	
Planned Activities	• Support/facilitate virtual meetings or the remote/virtual participation of delegates (and others as appropriate) at in-person meetings, through enhanced teleconferencing and videoconferencing capabilities and the development of guides and best practices intended for organizers and participants, all with a view to help achieve the government's desire for greater inclusion and the careful and prudent handling of public funds; • Advance the government's objective to engage in constructive dialogue with Canadians, be more responsive to their expectations, and attain greater openness and transparency, directly and through the media.
Results Obtained	• The use of videoconferencing continues to increase as another cost-effective way (along with teleconferencing) to involve some presenters and delegates whose brief participation in in-person meetings makes travel costs and time investments prohibitive. For fully virtual meetings, though, clients still prefer the convenience, efficiency and low cost of teleconferencing as reflected in the sustained high number of these calls. Improvements are ongoing to further increase sound quality and reduce the risk of hearing injury, ensuring optimal user experience for participants and interpreters alike. • Work progressed on planning guides for event organizers as well as a set of best practices intended for the chairs and participants in intergovernmental video- and teleconferences. • Also in support of virtual conferencing, CICS now benefits from a permanent in-house remote conferencing studio which adds convenience and cost-effectiveness to this critical service while improving its reliability and quality. In 2019-20, all 48 intergovernmental teleconferences supported by CICS were coordinated from this facility launched in November 2018.

Key Initiative 3: Review and refine training strategies for conference service delivery	
Planned Activities	• Ensure that our people, internal processes and technologies are aligned to respond to the current environment, future demands and the changing needs of clients while strengthening CICS' client service mindset.

Results obtained	- Special focus on customer service through training and development; 15 hours per employee from both all-staff sessions and online courses taken by individual employees. - The March 2020 Knowledge Exchange Forum for CICS' federal, provincial and territorial government clients included the sharing of ideas and solutions about current trends and the evolving needs of our clients including the area of virtual conferencing with interpretation. The Forum was especially useful to PT participants who do not typically have a recurring role in organizing intergovernmental conferences and who were invited to this annual event for the first time. - Training continued for technical personnel who support teleconferencing with interpretation from CICS' teleconferencing studio, to ensure the effective and seamless conduct of these calls.

Key Initiative 4: Review and upgrade client surveys, while maintaining a target satisfaction rate of 90%	
Planned Activities	- Review and upgrade client surveys of both conference planners and delegates to ensure their ongoing relevance and usefulness. - Analyze these program evaluation results and use as a primary source of information to determine service improvements and measure success in achieving our overall objective of service excellence and responsiveness.
Results Obtained	- The surveys used to assess client satisfaction were upgraded to maintain their relevance and better address certain service areas, while new surveys were developed for organizers and participants of virtual meetings. Approaches to surveying were also modified especially to simplify participation and therefore increase response rates - Two surveys (one of an annual sampling of conference organizers and the other of delegates after each in-person event) are used to assess client satisfaction, which continues to be very high. - For conference delegates, the satisfaction rate reached 95% in 2019-20, the second highest rating since 2014-15. - The rating from organizers of in-person meetings was 96.8%, higher than any of the previous 5 years. - The satisfaction level of teleconference organizers, measured for four years now, reached 86.7% in 2020, up slightly from 85.7% in 2019. It is

important to note that with the development of new or upgraded surveys for meeting organizers in 2019-20, the comparison of results with those of previous years may not always be entirely accurate.

- The words professional and efficient were used respectively by 61% and 21% of conference delegates who described the quality of CICS services in post-event surveys. Based on the same polling tool, the ratings received for 7 of the 11 questions about CICS services were the highest in 4 years. Of note were a 99% rating for "competence and responsiveness to requests for assistance" and a 100% rating for "neutrality/impartiality."

- Meeting organizers continued to favor CICS to help them plan and deliver their future meetings. The Secretariat's ability to clearly and comprehensively identify conference logistical and protocol requirements showed the highest increase in client satisfaction in 2019-20.

- All conference organizers gave a rating of 4 or 5 out of 5 to the 3 new or updated questions in this year's survey: the ability to meet needs for the virtual attendance of remote participants; planning that met operational expectations; and on-site service resulting in a conference that was run efficiently.

- For teleconferences, the highest rating from organizers was obtained for the ability to listen to and understand the needs and requirements.

Key Initiative 5: Continue using internal committees and employee input for program decision-making and to continuously innovate

Planned Activities	• Draw on staff's experience, skills and knowledge to constantly generate innovative ideas.

Results Obtained	• The ongoing work of our Innovation Committee (formerly Technology Committee) has again, this year, proven to be very fertile in technological advancements for CICS. Amongst other things, the committee explored and implemented the following projects
	
	    ○ Equipped entire workforce with a complete technological mobile solution (hardware and processes);
	    ○ Implemented tools in order to provide offsite support to CICS personnel;
	    ○ Implemented tools to ensure a quick turnaround in case of disaster recovery;
	    ○ Provided state of the art equipment to offer best possible internet services on conference sites.

	o Implemented new tools to increase productivity and communication amongst all staff • The Eco-mmittee, a new committee that was conceived this year, has also brought innovative ideas to CICS: o Provided staff with new ways to recycle; o Produced a monthly newsletter to provide useful environmental information to all; o Held activities to sensitise staff to ongoing environmental issues. • Seven innovations implemented

Results achieved

Departmental results	Performance indicators	Target	Date to achieve target	2017–18 Actual results	2018–19 Actual results	2019–20 Actual results
R1: Facilitate productive federal-provincial-territorial and provincial-territorial discussions through centralized planning and professionally supported conferences	Conference organizer satisfaction rate[1]	> 90%	March 31, 2020	93.3%	92.6%	96.8%
	Conference participant satisfaction rate[2]	> 90%	March 31, 2020	92.4%	93%	95%
	Percentage change in the number of conferences served by CICS[3]	n/a	March 31, 2020	-2%	-9%	-5%
R2: Continuous innovation in process and service delivery to meet evolving client needs	Number of innovations in technologies and service delivery implemented out of those identified[4]	n/a	March 31, 2020	7	4	7
	Usage rate of key technologies and service delivery innovations by clients[5]	> 75%	March 31, 2020	79%	83%	83%

---

[1] Proportion of respondents who provide a grade of 4 or 5 out of 5 to a series of interview questions.
[2] Proportion of respondents who provide a grade of 4 or 5 out of 5 to a series of survey questions.
[3] Number of conferences served in a given year compared to the previous year.
[4] Number of innovative solutions implemented.
[5] Percentage of innovative solutions being adopted by clients.

Budgetary financial resources (dollars)

2019–20 Main Estimates	2019–20 Planned spending	2019–20 Total authorities available for use	2019–20 Actual spending (authorities used)	2019–20 Difference (Actual spending minus Planned spending)
4,660,730	4,441,998	4,757,308	4,125,601	(316,397)

Human resources (full-time equivalents)

2019–20 Planned full-time equivalents	2019–20 Actual full-time equivalents	2019–20 Difference (Actual full-time equivalents minus Planned full-time equivalents)
25	22	(3)

Financial, human resources and performance information for the Canadian Intergovernmental Conference Secretariat's Program Inventory is available in GC InfoBase[i].

Internal Services

Description

Internal Services are those groups of related activities and resources that the federal government considers to be services in support of programs and/or required to meet corporate obligations of an organization. Internal Services refers to the activities and resources of the 10 distinct service categories that support Program delivery in the organization, regardless of the Internal Services delivery model in a department. The 10 service categories are:

- ▶ Acquisition Management Services
- ▶ Communication Services
- ▶ Financial Management Services
- ▶ Human Resources Management Services
- ▶ Information Management Services
- ▶ Information Technology Services
- ▶ Legal Services
- ▶ Material Management Services
- ▶ Management and Oversight Services
- ▶ Real Property Management Services

Results of the planning highlights

The Internal Services program supports the agency in meeting its mandate through sound management and careful stewardship of assets, financial and human resources, and information technology services. CICS constantly strives to stay at the forefront of technology and continues to innovate in areas where technology has permitted. Focusing on mobility in the workplace in order to have a fully mobile workforce, innovating in its processes to be fully independent of location of its employees while reforming new methods to provide Web Conferences and Teleconferences, CICS was in a good position to confront what became the new normal workplace in early 2020.

The Secretariat reviewed, improved and streamlined internal processes to be end-to-end, integrated and efficient. In 2019-20, an independent accounting firm was hired to build a cost estimating tool for conference planning purposes. This tool uses a database of past conferences in order to establish an estimate for the costs of future conferences. Treasury Board Policy Suite renewal instruments were also reviewed and CICS' instruments were updated accordingly. Shared services agreements that were negotiated in previous years with other organizations for integrated service delivery were reviewed, updated and maintained, in order to stay in line with the government's policy on internal service agreements, to minimize cost and ensure high quality services. These initiatives allowed CICS to deliver a high number of conferences without increasing overall operating costs.

The Secretariat is committed to cultivating a continuous learning environment and values employees' input. CICS created a mentoring program, which allows for employees to broaden their knowledge base by learning from their mentors. In 2019-20, 2 mentees were matched with mentors. Additionally, the average time allocated to training for each employee was 15 hours (2018-19: 38 hours and 2017-18: 13 hours). Additionally, significant efforts were made to renew the workforce by reviewing current staffing and succession plans to better address operational needs and take the current demographic context into account. CICS increased the number of students hired, completed proactive staffing actions and created multiple pools of qualified candidates.

Finally, to foster a healthy workplace and promote mental health, weekly mindfulness and meditation sessions were hosted at lunchtime in the office conference room. Recognition awards, including the Secretary's Award of Excellence and the Employees Choice Award, were highlighted at all-staff events, and innovative staffing approaches such as career fairs and partnerships with universities and colleges were implemented.

Budgetary financial resources (dollars)

2019–20 Main Estimates	2019–20 Planned spending	2019–20 Total authorities available for use	2019–20 Actual spending (authorities used)*	2019–20 Difference (Actual spending minus Planned spending)
1,482,587	1,417,252	1,499,064	1,300,008	(117,244)

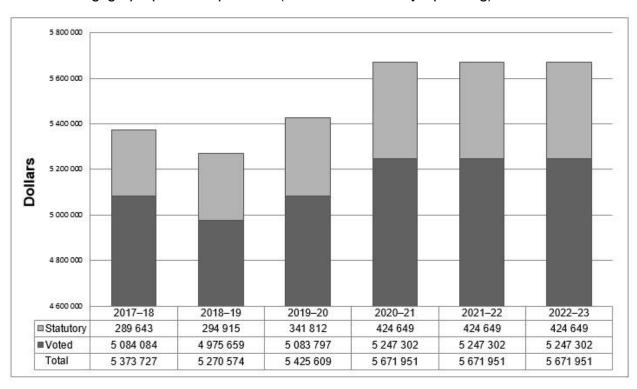## Human resources (full-time equivalents)

2019–20 Planned full-time equivalents	2019–20 Actual full-time equivalents	2019–20 Difference (Actual full-time equivalents minus Planned full-time equivalents)
7	8	1

Analysis of trends in spending and human resources

Actual expenditures

Departmental spending trend graph

The following graph presents planned (voted and statutory spending) over time.

	2017–18	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23
☐ Statutory	289 643	294 915	341 812	424 649	424 649	424 649
■ Voted	5 084 084	4 975 659	5 083 797	5 247 302	5 247 302	5 247 302
Total	5 373 727	5 270 574	5 425 609	5 671 951	5 671 951	5 671 951

Budgetary performance summary for Core Responsibilities and Internal Services* (dollars)

Core responsibilities and Internal Services	2019–20 Main Estimates	2019–20 Planned spending	2020–21 Planned spending	2021–22 Planned spending	2019–20 Total authorities available for use	2019–20 Actual spending (authorities used)	2018–19 Actual spending (authorities used)	2017–18 Actual spending (authorities used)
Intergovernmental Conference Services	4,660,730	4,441,998	4,301,525	4,301,525	4,757,308	4,125,601	3,990,884	4,084,661
Internal Services	1,482,587	1,417,252	1,370,426	1,370,426	1,499,064	1,300,008	1,279,690	1,289,066
Total	6,143,317	5,859,250	5,671,951	5,671,951	6,256,372	5,425,609	5,270,574	5,373,727

It is important to note that CICS does not convene intergovernmental meetings. The Secretariat responds to decisions taken by governments to meet on key national or specific issues. The location, number, timing and duration of meetings are factors that are beyond the control of the Secretariat. CICS does exercise due care and probity in the expenditure of its funds to meet its mandate.

There has been a small decrease in conference activity (2019-20: 119 conferences and 2018-19: 125 conferences). CICS continues to ensure a relevant, responsive service delivery model while ensuring an effective and efficient use of resources. For the fifth consecutive year, savings were generated from a significant number of teleconferences. Because jurisdictions participate remotely, these types of meetings significantly reduce costs for CICS. This was especially the case during the last weeks of 2019-20 as the COVID-19 pandemic was starting in Canada. In fact, all 14 conferences served after February 20 were held by teleconference while several in-person conferences (including a First Ministers Meeting) were cancelled or postponed and converted to a virtual format.

Actual human resources

Human resources summary for core responsibilities and Internal Services

Core responsibilities and Internal Services	2017–18 Actual full-time equivalents	2018–19 Actual full-time equivalents	2019–20 Planned full-time equivalents	2019–20 Actual full-time equivalents	2020–21 Planned full-time equivalents	2021–22 Planned full-time equivalents
Intergovernmental Conference Services	22	20	25	22	25	25
Internal Services	7	6	7	8	7	7
Total	29	26	32	30	32	32

CICS human resources have increased in 2019-20 due to the staffing of vacancies. Turnover also decreased in the year compared to the two previous years. To proactively address potential departures, the Secretariat continues to implement measures such as the creation of various pools of qualified candidates, and also internal career development opportunities including mentorships, acting assignments, and rotations for current employees.

Expenditures by vote

For information on the Canadian Intergovernmental Conference Secretariat's organizational voted and statutory expenditures, consult the Public Accounts of Canada 2019–2020.[ii]

Government of Canada spending and activities

Information on the alignment of the Canadian Intergovernmental Conference Secretariat's spending with the Government of Canada's spending and activities is available in GC InfoBase.[iii]

Financial statements and financial statements highlights

Financial statements

The Canadian Intergovernmental Conference Secretariat's financial statements (unaudited) for the year ended March 31, 2020, are available on the departmental website.

Financial statement highlights

Condensed Statement of Operations (unaudited) for the year ended March 31, 2020 (dollars)

Financial information	2019–20 Planned results*	2019–20 Actual results	2018–19 Actual results	Difference (2019–20 Actual results minus 2019–20 Planned results)	Difference (2019–20 Actual results minus 2018–19 Actual results)
Total expenses	6,416,270	6,119,422	5,777,283	(296,848)	342,139
Total revenues	0	0	0	0	0
Net cost of operations before government funding and transfers	6,416,270	6,119,422	5,777,283	(296,848)	342,139

Total expenses were approximately $6.1 million, $342 thousand more than the previous year's expenses. This variance is mainly due to an increase in salaries and employee benefits expenses ($360 thousand increase) resulting from a greater number of FTEs, closer to the planned amount. A small reduction in operating costs occurred ($17 thousand dollars).

It should be noted that expenses are recorded on an accrual basis in the Financial Statements and include charges paid on our behalf by other government departments. The $297 thousand variance between the planned results and actual results is mainly attributable to ongoing vacancies throughout the year. CICS does not convene intergovernmental meetings and responds to decisions taken by governments to meet on key national or specific issues.

Condensed Statement of Financial Position (unaudited) as of March 31, 2020 (dollars)

Financial information	2019–20	2018–19	Difference (2019–20 minus 2018–19)
Total net liabilities	601,883	810,616	(208,733)
Total net financial assets	963,667	694,775	268,892
Departmental net debt	(361,784)	115,841	(477,625)
Total non-financial assets	50,666	199,624	(148,958)
Departmental net financial position	412,450	83,783	328,667

Total liabilities were approximately $602 thousand, a decrease of approximately $209 thousand (26%) over the previous year. Accounts payable and accrued liabilities make up the largest component, representing 67% of total liabilities. The decrease is mainly due to a decrease in ongoing accounts payable and accrued salaries.

Total net financial assets were approximately $964 thousand as at March 31, 2020, an increase of around $269 thousand (39%) over the previous year. The overall increase is mainly attributable to higher accounts receivable for refunds of program expenses resulting from circumstances related to the COVID-19 pandemic and the related impact on normal business operations.

Departmental net debt was ($362) thousand, a decrease of approximately $478 thousand over the previous year. The decrease is mainly attributable to a decrease in ongoing accounts payable, a decrease in accrued salaries and wages and an increase in amortization of tangible capital.

Total non-financial assets were approximately $51 thousand as at March 31, 2020, a decrease of some $149 thousand (75%) over the previous year. The decrease is mainly due to $134 thousand increase in accumulated amortization of capital assets and a $5 thousand loss on disposal of tangible capital assets. The remaining decrease of approximately $10 thousand relates to prepaid expenses.

Additional information

Organizational profile

Appropriate minister: The Honourable Dominic LeBlanc

Institutional head: André M. McArdle

Ministerial portfolio: President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs

Enabling instrument[s]: The Canadian Intergovernmental Conference Secretariat was established pursuant to an agreement reached at the May 1973 First Ministers' Conference and was designated a department of the federal government by an Order-in-Council dated November 29, 1973.

Year of incorporation / commencement: 1973

Raison d'être, mandate and role: who we are and what we do

"Raison d'être, mandate and role: who we are and what we do" is available on the Canadian Intergovernmental Conference Secretariat's website.

For more information on the department's organizational mandate letter commitments, see the Minister's mandate letter.

Reporting framework

Canadian Intergovernmental Conference Secretariat's Departmental Results Framework and Program Inventory of record for 2019–20 are shown below.

Supporting information on the program inventory

Financial, human resources and performance information for Canadian Intergovernmental Conference Secretariat's Program Inventory is available in GC InfoBase.[iv]

Supplementary information tables

The following supplementary information tables are available on Canadian Intergovernmental Conference Secretariat's website:

- ▶ Departmental Sustainable Development Strategy
- ▶ Gender-based analysis plus

Federal tax expenditures

The tax system can be used to achieve public policy objectives through the application of special measures such as low tax rates, exemptions, deductions, deferrals and credits. The Department of Finance Canada publishes cost estimates and projections for these measures each year in the Report on Federal Tax Expenditures.[v] This report also provides detailed background information on tax expenditures, including descriptions, objectives, historical information and references to related federal spending programs. The tax measures presented in this report are the responsibility of the Minister of Finance.

Organizational contact information

Canadian Intergovernmental Conference Secretariat

Mailing Address
P.O. Box 488, Station 'A'
Ottawa, Ontario
K1N 8V5

Location
222 Queen St., 12th Floor
Ottawa, Ontario
K1P 5V9

General Inquiries: 613-995-2341

Fax: 613-996-6091

E-mail: Info@scics.ca

Appendix: definitions

appropriation (crédit)

Any authority of Parliament to pay money out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund.

budgetary expenditures (dépenses budgétaires)

Operating and capital expenditures; transfer payments to other levels of government, organizations or individuals; and payments to Crown corporations.

core responsibility (responsabilité essentielle)

An enduring function or role performed by a department. The intentions of the department with respect to a core responsibility are reflected in one or more related departmental results that the department seeks to contribute to or influence.

Departmental Plan (plan ministériel)

A report on the plans and expected performance of an appropriated department over a 3-year period. Departmental Plans are usually tabled in Parliament each spring.

departmental priority (priorité)

A plan or project that a department has chosen to focus and report on during the planning period. Priorities represent the things that are most important or what must be done first to support the achievement of the desired departmental results.

departmental result (résultat ministériel)

A consequence or outcome that a department seeks to achieve. A departmental result is often outside departments' immediate control, but it should be influenced by program-level outcomes.

departmental result indicator (indicateur de résultat ministériel)

A quantitative measure of progress on a departmental result.

departmental results framework (cadre ministériel des résultats)

A framework that connects the department's core responsibilities to its departmental results and departmental result indicators.

Departmental Results Report (rapport sur les résultats ministériels)

A report on a department's actual accomplishments against the plans, priorities and expected results set out in the corresponding Departmental Plan.

experimentation (expérimentation)

The conducting of activities that seek to first explore, then test and compare the effects and impacts of policies and interventions in order to inform evidence-based decision-making, and improve outcomes for Canadians, by learning what works, for whom and in what circumstances. Experimentation is related to, but distinct from innovation (the trying of new things), because it involves a rigorous comparison of results. For example, using a new website to communicate with Canadians can be an innovation; systematically testing the new website against existing outreach tools or an old website to see which one leads to more engagement, is experimentation.

full-time equivalent (équivalent temps plein)

A measure of the extent to which an employee represents a full person-year charge against a departmental budget. For a particular position, the full-time equivalent figure is the ratio of number of hours the person actually works divided by the standard number of hours set out in the person's collective agreement.

gender-based analysis plus (GBA+) (analyse comparative entre les sexes plus [ACS+])

An analytical process used to assess how diverse groups of women, men and gender-diverse people experience policies, programs and services based on multiple factors including race ethnicity, religion, age, and mental or physical disability.

government-wide priorities (priorités pangouvernementales)

For the purpose of the 2019–20 Departmental Results Report, those high-level themes outlining the government's agenda in the 2019 Speech from the Throne, namely: Fighting climate change; Strengthening the Middle Class; Walking the road of reconciliation; Keeping Canadians safe and healthy; and Positioning Canada for success in an uncertain world.

horizontal initiative (initiative horizontale)

An initiative where two or more federal organizations are given funding to pursue a shared outcome, often linked to a government priority.

non-budgetary expenditures (dépenses non budgétaires)

Net outlays and receipts related to loans, investments and advances, which change the composition of the financial assets of the Government of Canada.

performance (rendement)

What an organization did with its resources to achieve its results, how well those results compare to what the organization intended to achieve, and how well lessons learned have been identified.

performance indicator (indicateur de rendement)

A qualitative or quantitative means of measuring an output or outcome, with the intention of gauging the performance of an organization, program, policy or initiative respecting expected results.

performance reporting (production de rapports sur le rendement)

The process of communicating evidence-based performance information. Performance reporting supports decision making, accountability and transparency.

plan (plan)

The articulation of strategic choices, which provides information on how an organization intends to achieve its priorities and associated results. Generally, a plan will explain the logic behind the strategies chosen and tend to focus on actions that lead to the expected result.

planned spending (dépenses prévues)

For Departmental Plans and Departmental Results Reports, planned spending refers to those amounts presented in Main Estimates.

A department is expected to be aware of the authorities that it has sought and received. The determination of planned spending is a departmental responsibility, and departments must be able to defend the expenditure and accrual numbers presented in their Departmental Plans and Departmental Results Reports.

program (programme)

Individual or groups of services, activities or combinations thereof that are managed together within the department and focus on a specific set of outputs, outcomes or service levels.

program inventory (répertoire des programmes)

Identifies all the department's programs and describes how resources are organized to contribute to the department's core responsibilities and results.

result (résultat)

A consequence attributed, in part, to an organization, policy, program or initiative. Results are not within the control of a single organization, policy, program or initiative; instead they are within the area of the organization's influence.

statutory expenditures (dépenses législatives)

Expenditures that Parliament has approved through legislation other than appropriation acts. The legislation sets out the purpose of the expenditures and the terms and conditions under which they may be made.

target (cible)

A measurable performance or success level that an organization, program or initiative plans to achieve within a specified time period. Targets can be either quantitative or qualitative.

voted expenditures (dépenses votées)

Expenditures that Parliament approves annually through an appropriation act. The vote wording becomes the governing conditions under which these expenditures may be made.

Endnotes

[i] GC InfoBase, https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/ems-sgd/edb-bdd/index-eng.html
[ii] Public Accounts of Canada, http://www.tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca/recgen/cpc-pac/index-eng.html
[iii] GC InfoBase, https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/ems-sgd/edb-bdd/index-eng.html#start
[iv] GC InfoBase, https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/ems-sgd/edb-bdd/index-eng.html#start
[v] Report on Federal Tax Expenditures, https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/services/publications/federal-tax-expenditures.html