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**Government Response to the Twelfth Report of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts,  
entitled: *Respect in the Workplace***

The Honourable Kelly Block  
Chair  
Standing Committee on Public Accounts  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1A 0A6

Dear Mrs. Block,

On behalf of the Government of Canada, I am pleased to present you with the Response to the Twelfth Report of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, entitled: *Respect in the Workplace*.

I would like to thank you and the Committee for the Report and Recommendations, which illustrate the ongoing need to facilitate a respectful and healthy workplace free of harassment, discrimination, and violence.

The Government of Canada is committed to providing all its employees with a safe and healthy workplace. All employees deserve to feel valued and to be treated with dignity and respect. Harassment, violence and discrimination will not and should not be tolerated, condoned or ignored. Furthermore, as mandated by the Prime Minister, I remain committed to reintroduce and bring into force legislation to create a review body for the CBSA.

As you are aware, the Government accepted all the recommendations made by the Auditor General, and is pleased to accept all seven Committee Recommendations addressed to the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) and Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) in the Report. Furthermore, both agencies are looking forward to providing the Committee with the requested reports by the deadlines outlined in the Recommendations.

*Actions to Identify and Address Risks (Recommendations 1 and 2)*

The CBSA and CSC accept these recommendations and will submit the reports to the Committee by the requested dates.

The CBSA will provide the Committee with a report that outlines the results of the CBSA's Respectful Workplace Framework, a suite of strategies designed to tackle harassment, discrimination and workplace violence through prevention, improved response and restoration. This strategy builds upon actions the CBSA has already taken to improve employee well-being and workplace culture. The CBSA looks forward to reporting on the positive results of its ongoing efforts and overarching strategy, including performance metrics, through the progress reports.

CSC will provide the Committee with the 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 Workplace Climate and Employee Well-Being Annual Reports, as well as the progress report on its assessment of the creation of a separate and independent office on workplace harassment, discrimination and violence. In support of the national Comprehensive Strategy on Workplace Wellness and Employee Wellbeing developed from this recommendation, CSC has leveraged the work from the Workplace Climate and Employee Well-Being Annual Reports, which establish benchmarks of the current workplace climate and include performance indicators that CSC monitors annually to ensure continual improvement.

*Informal Mechanisms for Resolving Complaints (Recommendations 3 and 4)*

The CBSA and CSC accept these recommendations and will submit the reports to the Committee by the requested date.

As part of the CBSA's report on the progress of its comprehensive strategy to address harassment, discrimination and violence, the Committee will be provided with the number of workplace violence and harassment complaints, the number of cases where informal complaint resolution mechanisms were offered and the number of times these complaints were resolved informally, for 2019-2020 and 2020-2021. Prior to 2019, the CBSA only tracked the overall use of informal conflict management mechanisms and did not track whether it was specifically linked to workplace harassment and violence complaints. This impacts the CBSA's ability to provide the requested data for 2018-19.

CSC will submit a report outlining the statistics related to workplace violence and harassment complaints, the number of cases where informal complaint resolution mechanisms were offered and the number of times these complaints were resolved informally, for 2018-2019, 2019-2020 and 2020-2021. As part of CSC's progress to address this recommendation, a new policy and related guidelines has been developed and communicated to all staff to ensure consistency in informing employees of informal processes to resolve complaints.

*Initial Assessments of Official Complaints and Initial Assessments of Discrimination Complaints (Recommendations 5, 6 and 7)*

The CBSA and CSC accept these recommendations and will submit the reports to the Committee by the requested dates.

As of April 2019, and as a result of the creation of the National Integrity Centre of Expertise (NICE), the CBSA commenced central tracking and management of all harassment, discrimination and workplace violence complaints through NICE to ensure standardization and consistency. Prior to 2019, case data was not consistently collected, impacting CBSA's ability to report, with confidence, the number of times an initial assessment was documented in 2018-2019.

CSC collects data on all received official harassment, discrimination, and workplace violence complaints, and has improved information management processes to ensure data is appropriately recorded. The agency will submit a report identifying the number of official harassment, discrimination and workplace violence complaints filed in 2018-2019, 2019-2020 and 2020-2021, and in how many cases an initial assessment was documented.

Once again, I thank the Committee members for their work on highlighting the important issue of respect in the workplace and keeping the Government accountable. I would like to further reassure the Committee that the Government of Canada takes the health and well-being of its employees seriously and recognizes the importance of fostering a workplace culture that is respectful and free of harmful behaviours, and is committed to continuing to put in the necessary work to build a more diverse, inclusive and respectful workplace for all.

Sincerely,



The Honourable William Sterling Blair, P.C., C.O.M., M.P.  
Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness