



Strengthening Governance at the RCMP

A report to the Task Force on Governance and Culture

Tim Plumptre
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For further information, please contact:

Tim Plumptre
Institute On Governance
122 Clarence Street
Ottawa, Ontario
Canada K1N 5P6
tel: +1 (613) 562-0090
fax: +1 (613) 562-0097
tplumptre@iog.ca
www.iog.ca

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Table of Contents

Executive Summary	1
Purpose of this report	2
Why a governance body?	2
Governance in the police milieu	2
“Critical Success Factors” for governance	3
The CRA Board	4
Role and responsibilities	4
Issues related to the split mandate	5
Where the board has been helpful	5
Factors contributing to board success	6
Board composition and appointments	6
Role of the board chair	7
Transition Issues	7
Applying governance principles	7
Issues of delegation to be resolved	8
TBS views	8
Post-transition problems encountered at CRA	9
Building management capacity	9
Conclusions	10
Critical assumptions	10
Advantages associated with a board and a new accountability regime	11
Other related matters	13
Board powers	13
Composition	13
Frequency of meetings	14
Conduct, clearances and remuneration	14
Evaluations	14

Executive Summary

This report discusses the possibility of establishing a new governance structure for the RCMP.

It first reviews, briefly, the issues that gave rise to consideration of this possibility and the problems that a board would be expected to address, were one set in place. It discusses different ideas about the kinds of boards that police forces sometimes adopt.

It outlines a list of ‘critical success factors’ for governance. It then considers the approach to governance adopted for the Canada Revenue Agency and the suitability of this approach to the RCMP. It examines key features of the CRA model, including the role of the board and issues associated with this, factors that have contributed to its success, appointments and composition, and key relationships.

It then turns to questions related to the transition to a new governance model, and discusses related issues such as delegation of powers from central agencies and the views of the Treasury Board Secretariat with respect to these possible delegations.

It concludes by highlighting four key assumptions or premises that would have to be met if the establishment of a board were to result in desired outcomes. If these assumptions were met, then there are strong reasons why a board would make a useful addition to the RCMP, and those reasons are set forth in the conclusion.

Subsequent sections of the conclusion comment briefly on various aspects of implementation were it decided to proceed with new governance arrangements

Purpose of this report

In October 2007, the Institute On Governance was retained on behalf of the Task Force on RCMP Governance and Culture to:

- 1) consider the kind of board or oversight body that might be appropriate for the RCMP
- 2) conduct research into comparable kinds of structures in other jurisdictions and possibly other fields that appear related
- 3) consider more specific questions related to such a board, such as its role, relationships, composition, size, etc.

During the course of our work, we were asked to focus our inquiry particularly upon the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) as a possible model for the RCMP. This document presents our findings.ⁱ

Why a governance body?

Governance bodies such as boards of directors or governing councils should be established to meet an identified need or solve a recognized problem. In the case of the RCMP, the 2007 report by David A. Brown, Independent Investigator, *A Matter of Trust*, identified a range of problems requiring attention at the RCMP, notably instances of misconduct and impropriety related to the administration of pensions. Further, the report expressed concern over the lack of an ethical framework for the organization, over a “culture of cynicism and mistrust between management and the rest of the organization” (p.33), and over a range of deficiencies in human resource management, financial management and leadership.

Because of the depth of these concerns, the report recommended a more in-depth examination of the RCMP, focusing particularly on issues of governance and culture. The Task Force established to carry out this work has amplified and deepened its understanding of the above problems, and has also identified concerns related to questions of service delivery. Thus, the question to be addressed in the present report is, what kind of governance arrangements could help to address these problems?

Governance in the police milieu

Over the past decade or so, governance has become a more serious business in both the private, and more recently, the public sector. The role of boards and of the directors who sit on them have become more rigorously defined, their ambit broadened and the fiduciary responsibilities of directors, affirmed.

The study conducted by the Police Executive Research Forum in the U.S.A. in parallel with this one seems to indicate that police forces have been fairly insulated from these developments. Their study *Examination of External Oversight Bodies of Police Forces 2007*) reviews examples of many such bodies both in the U.S. and internationally.

The majority of these bodies, most of which are called Police Commissions, appear to have been created to deal with problems of misconduct, or else with complaints about police behaviour.

This seems to be the tradition in the world of policing. These bodies take an interest in certain aspects of police operations, but mostly with a view to ensuring policies are followed and preventing wrongdoing. They do not generally exercise strategic oversight or set broad direction.

(It is perhaps worth noting that the wording in the Task Force mandate – to consider “a challenge and oversight function” might be interpreted differently by police officers than it would be by individuals more familiar with board governance.)

A board limited to a police commission kind of role would have some powers to become engaged in operational policing matters, but would be constrained in trying to address most of the issues raised by A Matter of Trust. A board with a wider remit, closer to that of a private corporation, but making due allowance for the public sector environment within which the RCMP operates, would be more appropriate to the needs of the Force. (A board of this kind for a police force may, to some degree, be breaking new ground. There do not appear to be many existing police models to learn from.ⁱⁱ)

The board of the CRA provides an interesting example for the RCMP for two reasons: first, because it has quite a wide responsibility for administrative oversight, and thus a wider role than most police commissions, and is somewhat closer to a business board in this regard.

Second it is precluded from examining income tax files, thus has a circumscribed mandate. It is generally agreed that a board for the RCMP should not be able to interfere in or oversee police investigations, so in this respect the CRA board also seems analogous to what the RCMP may require.

In the following sections we discuss various dimensions of CRA governance, as well as the question of what was involved in making the transition to a board-run agency from a conventional government department.

“Critical Success Factors” for governance

Task Force members will be familiar with the guidelines for governance promulgated by the Ontario Securities Commission. A complement to these is a list of “critical success factors” developed by the Institute On Governance. This comprises factors that in our experience need to be addressed for sound governance to prevail, and that the RCMP would need to take into account in moving toward a board-based form of governance:

People. Governance is only as good as the people around the table. Organizations need to determine what characteristics and attributes these individuals need to have. These should be correlated with the organization’s strategic plan, so that recruitment and appointment is undertaken with an eye to the future, not just the present or the past. This factor draws attention to the central importance of a nominating committee, and the need for it to play a proactive role in identifying suitable individuals and encouraging their participation in governance functions.

Leadership. The quality of governance turns on key leadership positions. In conventional organizations, the most important of these is the board chair. Board chairs typically have a powerful influence over many aspects of governance, including the culture around the board

table, the kinds of values at play, board-staff relations and the motivation and performance evaluation of the CEO. Savvy organizations ensure as best they can that their board chairs are appointed with an eye to their suitability to the job and their capacity to carry out their functions effectively. The same considerations apply to the chair persons of important committees or task forces.

Clarity of functions and relationships. Governance works when the mission is agreed, roles are clearly delineated, accountabilities are well understood, as are the relationships between governance bodies such as the board, other representative bodies if they exist, and committees. Conversely, where these relationships and responsibilities are murky, governance suffers, and energy is often consumed needlessly in arguments over turf.

Sound processes to support the board's work. Boards work best when they are effectively supported. The kinds of support boards require include: well-crafted agendas, with a focus on issues of strategy not house-keeping; well-designed and thoughtfully presented oversight information; decision documents that are well researched and clearly written, and that lay out relevant considerations and options lucidly; responsible follow up to board decisions.

Management of key relationships. Most organizations have certain relationships that are critical to their ability to perform and to their reputation. Where governance is sound, these relationships are clearly understood and measures have been taken to ensure that they are nurtured and developed in the interests of the organization.

Sound governance policies. A well-governed organization has paid attention to its governance structures and policies, and will define its expectations in relation to areas such as code of conduct, conflict of interest, board evaluation, terms of reference for task forces, performance management for the CEO, directors' roles and corporate values.

The CRA Board

Role and responsibilitiesⁱⁱⁱ

Inclusions:

- Oversight of the “organization and administration of the Agency and the management of its resources, services, property, personnel and contracts”.
- Development of the business plan
- Making bylaws as required.
- Separate employer status (accorded in Bill C-43).

Exclusions:

- “The Board may not direct the Commissioner or any other person in the exercise of a power or the performance of a duty conferred or delegated under the program legislation or the laws of a province ... on the Minister's behalf....”

Issues related to the split mandate

A board of this type, with a split mandate, is a fairly unique phenomenon. Only the Bank of Canada and the CRA are analogous federally, and there is unlikely to be any kind of comparable board in the private sector.

According to interviews, the dividing line between what the board can address and what it cannot is not impermeable – that is, it is open to interpretation. There are areas where the board, exercising its responsibilities for “management”, can influence income tax operations significantly. **It is therefore critical to the successful operation of the board that both the chair and the commissioner clearly understand the intent behind the legislation, and govern the affairs of the board accordingly.**

The RCMP carries out more functions than the CRA, and does so in multiple jurisdictions. **Careful attention will be needed in framing the legislation for an RCMP board to define what it can concern itself with, and what would be outside its mandate.**

Where the board has been helpful

The effectiveness of the board turns to some degree on how it is viewed by, and interacts with, the CEO. According to interviews, different CRA Commissioners dealt differently with the board. Initially there was apparently some reluctance to engage the board in meaningful discussions, due in part to an inexperienced chair and the lacklustre quality of some early appointments to the board (small town accountants have little experience with national tax collection issues).

As appointments improved somewhat, and perhaps also as successive Commissioners became more comfortable with the board, it has apparently played a role of growing value. Examples include:

- As a backstop on difficult or politically sensitive decisions. (We were told of three occasions where the presence of the board led to acceptance of a recommendation by the Commissioner which would in all likelihood have been overridden had it been left up to the Minister acting alone. When the Minister wishes to override a decision of the board acting in its area of jurisdiction, (s)he is required to do so in writing.)
- Improvements in cash management and budgeting.
- Fending off micro-management forays by Treasury Board staff.
- Pushing CRA ‘on the strategic side’ – encouraging staff to address strategic issues they might otherwise have ignored.
- Insisting on implementation of decisions and following through.
- Improvements in risk assessment and risk management.

- Collaboration in building a conceptual framework and methodology for strategic oversight, and in improving human resource management practices and policies.

Factors contributing to board success

The fact that the board's role is grounded in legislation is critical to its success. Also critical to the general success of the CRA experiment, in the views of those associated with the CRA, is **its status as a Separate Employer.** This provides it with flexibility in the sphere of staff deployment, travel policies, promotions, compensation, classification schemes, incentive pay and other areas. Success here depends, of course, upon the ability of the CRA HR officials to deal with these new responsibilities, a considerable challenge (see below, Transition).

Board composition and appointments

- The CRA board = 15 individuals including the Commissioner. Each province is represented, plus territories collectively.
- The original idea – that each province would advance three candidates of which the federal Minister would select one – has not stood up in practice. Apparently most provinces now simply propose a single candidate, who is always accepted by the federal government.
- Since provinces have a stake in RCMP decisions, and since they have been complaining about insufficient consultation with respect to RCMP decisions that have a bearing on issues in their jurisdiction, several persons have suggested that there should be provincial representation on a board established for the RCMP. **It will be necessary to determine whether each province would be entitled to a single seat, or whether, as do some national organizations, a regional approach to representation might work** (provinces with smaller populations would be clustered, as occurs in the CRA legislation with respect to the territories).
- **It would be advisable to articulate criteria (knowledge, aptitudes) that appointees should meet, linked to the organization's strategic plan.** If the board's mandate were to be similar to that of the CRA, then it may be desirable to provide a place on the board for directors with functional expertise in areas such as HR management, labour relations, IT or financial management. During the transition period, change management experience would likewise be important. Assuming a board of about 15 is the desirable maximum, this builds the case to cluster smaller provinces.
- **CRA staff have built relationships with counterparts in the provinces** to encourage them to put forward qualified candidates. This has helped improve the quality of appointments.
- **Building relationships with the officials responsible for GIC appointments in the PCO, and also with relevant political assistants in the PMO, may help assure sound appointments.**

Role of the board chair

- Current chair at CRA has apparently taken part in determination of criteria for appointments and in reviewing candidates – she may have made this a condition for her own appointment.
- Chair has a direct interest in suitability of appointments since the board has significant fiduciary responsibilities and the chair shares those with her colleagues – so she needs to be assured that they are up to the job.
- Chair also plays a key role in setting the board agenda and in performance reviews of the Commissioner. Criteria for the selection of the chair are advisable.

Transition Issues

Applying governance principles

The RCMP appears to have some interest in the “Principles of Good Governance” promulgated by this Institute. In our experience, these principles provide touchstones that are helpful in dealing with governance design, but they leave many questions unanswered, and the devil is in the details. The chart below summarizes the principles and lists related complex questions that may have to be answered as thinking on governance moves forward.

Principles of Good Governance (Institute On Governance, 2003)	
Principles	Related questions that may require answers as a governance regime is elaborated
1. Legitimacy and Voice	Who should have a voice in governance decisions of the RCMP? Who should have input to recommendations to the board? Who should be involved in policy decisions related to police operations? Who should have a seat at the board table? Who should appoint the Commissioner?
2. Direction	What process should be used to develop the RCMP’s strategic plan? What role should provinces or territories play? What staff capabilities would the RCMP require to develop its strategy or its positions on issues of public policy that may affect it?
3. Performance	What constitutes “good performance” for a complex organization like the RCMP? What criteria should be used to assess the performance of a national police force serving multiple purposes in multiple jurisdictions?

4. Accountability	<p>What accountability relationships are critical for the RCMP? How should each be given effect?</p> <p>What other relationships (e.g. answerability) are important?</p> <p>How in practice could the board give effect to its oversight role?</p> <p>What level of transparency is appropriate for a police force?</p>
5. Fairness	<p>Rule of law: what measures need to be in place in the RCMP to give effect to the rule of law?</p> <p>What does the concept of equity imply with respect to the management of RCMP personnel?</p>

Issues of delegation to be resolved

If the RCMP moves in the direction of a new governance regime, several significant issues will have to be resolved having to do with its relationship to the “centre” of government. These issues have to do with separate employer status and financial flexibility (notably “block funding” and carry-over authority from one fiscal year to the next).

- Separate employer status accords significant operational flexibility to CRA, and is seen by all associated with CRA as key to its success. Securing this status, according to one of our interviewees, was the subject of a “big fight” with TBS. Within this “fight”, we were advised that an issue of particular concern to the first Commissioner of the CRA, Rob Wright, was whether the CRA would be required to come to TB for a negotiating “mandate” when new negotiations with unions were in prospect. The Commissioner took a strong line that he was not prepared to report concurrently to two boards in the sphere of HR management, and eventually he was able to prevail. Rob Wright is now DM of Finance, a fact that may be helpful to the RCMP were it to seek authority analogous to that accorded to CRA.
- “Block funding” is not a concept generally understood in the government. Asked about this authority, most individuals believe it to mean, according an agency the right to transfer funds voted by Parliament between votes.
- Carry-over authority refers to the power accorded to the CRA to carry unexpended funds from one fiscal year into the next, instead of having those funds “lapse” and return to the Consolidated Revenue Fund.

TBS views

Discussions with senior TBS officials in the preparation of this report suggest that TBS has hardened its view of what powers should be accorded to an agency such as CRA (or the RCMP). There seems to be a sense that the Board was too lenient in its negotiations related to the CRA.

As a rule, central agencies are very reluctant to turn over powers to agencies such as the RCMP, or to diminish the level of parliamentary control over appropriations. Discussions with officials from Treasury Board Secretariat indicated that they would look for a well-documented ‘business case’ to support any requests for delegation in the area of financial or human resource management. Areas of particular concern relate to any lessening of parliamentary control over

votes and the prior approval of mandates for all RCMP labour negotiations by Treasury Board were the Force to be accorded Separate Employer status in law. Treasury Board Secretariat officials are also concerned, as they should be, to ensure that the RCMP has the managerial and operational capability to take on any new responsibilities before they attempt to do so, and they see a need for strengthening in several administrative areas.

In general, as noted below, the prevalent philosophy in the federal civil service, which takes its policy direction from the political level, is toward an *increase* in control and oversight, not a diminution.

To avoid confrontations between central agencies and the RCMP, **it would be important for the Task Force in its report to make it clear what delegation of powers it considered necessary to realize its objectives.** These recommendations, if accepted, would lead to the enshrining of the necessary delegation in legislation, thereby reducing the need for negotiations on these matters between officials of the Secretariat and senior RCMP management.

Post-transition problems encountered at CRA

Despite overall positive views of the transition to agency status, the process occasionally ran into difficulties, according to individuals from the agency. **Two problems mentioned to us, in addition to those associated with transition, were:**

- **Lack of specificity in the legislation regarding certain spheres of CRA authority:** e.g. IT issues, contracting policies, union negotiations. For example: CRA is part of the government with respect to financial administration but separate as an employer. The IT policies it adopts have a bearing on financial administration, and thus may have implications for the government at large. There have been difficulties reaching agreement on the question of how much authority CRA has to make its own decisions in the IT area.
- **Pressure on CRA to be a ‘team player’.** CRA finds that people inside the federal government (e.g. PWGSC) think of CRA as ‘part of government’, which results in expectations, implicit and sometimes explicit, to toe the line of government policy or procedures. This is not a problem where the approach CRA would adopt on its own is similar or identical to government practice, but it can be difficult when CRA wishes to follow a different path.

Building management capacity

With respect to the last two points, there is no doubt that **building capacity to assume new responsibilities** in either HR or financial management – or for that matter in contracting – **will require substantial effort on the part of the RCMP, and will involve a process that will take years, not months.**

The ADM responsible for managing the legislative transition at CRA told us, for example, that in the sphere of HR management, “Every existing policy had to be thought through again.... Putting the agency in place made huge management demands, resulting in significant pressures

on operational managers within CRA” as to ensure operational suitability, these individuals had to be consulted with respect to all significant HR policies to be instituted at the new agency.

As one example of what was involved in the transition, the CRA apparently decided to completely reform the civil service pay system which they characterized as “antiquated”. The task was said to be “enormous” but it resulted, once completed, in “huge savings” in administration.

Among other responsibilities associated with transition is the need to find the right people to support the new board, which may include some “high profile personalities” with large egos. In particular “keeping the Chair happy” was seen as key. The secretariat that supports board operations has a significant job. **A good secretariat will help to define the line between what the board can do and what it can’t, and will gain the confidence of both the board and management on matters of legislative interpretation.**

To assist with the process of transition and help establish stronger management cadres, the government seconded one of its top officials to join the staff of the new agency. **Possibly a measure of this kind could be negotiated by the RCMP.**

We were also told that CRA adopted a phased approach to drawing down various powers accorded to it in their legislation. For example, it has the capacity under section 67 (2) of its legislation to appoint its own legal officers and it may also retain legal services outside the Department of Justice. However we believe CRA has not chosen to exercise this authority as yet. **A phased approach to the assumption of new powers would also seem to make sense in the case of the RCMP.**

Conclusions

The adoption of a governance model involving a board of directors could present a range of benefits to the RCMP, and would address many of the problems that gave rise to the appointment of the Task Force. However, this comment is based on four critical assumptions.

Critical assumptions

First, board members with appropriate qualifications and attributes would be appointed. The selection of the chair would be especially important.

Second, a new accountability regime, legislatively mandated and better adapted to the operational needs of the RCMP, would be established. Such a regime would involve the delegation of new authorities to the board, and through it, to the Force, giving it flexibility to deploy its members more effectively.

In the private sector, a well-established ‘best practice’ the field of corporate governance is that those responsible for governance (the board of directors) should not micro-manage the corporation under their stewardship, nor should they interfere in operational matters. To do so would confuse the role of board with that of staff and pervert the chair’s ability to hold the CEO accountable for performance. The oversight of operations is achieved by ensuring sound systems of management and control, but not through over-regulation.

A well-designed accountability system balances the need for strategic control with the need to afford adequate operational latitude to the CEO. In recent years, however, in the federal government the word “accountability” has become a synonym for “control”. “Increasing accountability” is usually understood to mean, “increasing the level of detailed direction and regulation” imposed on the public service. The need to respect the concept of balance in accountability arrangements, and to situate control at a strategic rather than an operational level, is not widely understood.

The accountability regime accorded to the CRA involved significant *delegation* of authorities in the field of human resource management, personnel and contracting. The breadth of these delegated powers, especially those associated with the CRA’s status as a Separate Employer, are widely viewed as fundamental to the progress it has achieved since its new legislation came into effect. In this respect the CRA is broadly a model for the RCMP. The specific nature of delegations to the RCMP might vary somewhat from those accorded to the CRA due to differences in the organizations’ mandates, but the general concept of enhanced delegation subject to board oversight must be preserved.

It would make little sense for the government to put a new board in place without a meaningful transfer of powers. Such a move would leave the new board with no substantive responsibilities to discharge, and this in turn would make it difficult for the government to be able to attract qualified directors.

The *third* assumption is that appropriate measures would have been taken to establish the managerial capacity in the RCMP necessary to take on the new powers. This would involve both staffing and training activities over a period of months in some cases, years in others.

The *fourth* assumption is that the delegation of authority would be accompanied by financial resources necessary to cover the costs associated with transition and the ongoing functions thereafter. It would defeat the purpose of a change in the accountability regime of the Force if major costs associated with change had to be financed out of their existing operating budget.

Advantages associated with a board and a new accountability regime

In the course of this project, we interviewed a former senior official with extensive experience in dealing with matters of security and intelligence. This individual commented that typically, the minister responsible for the RCMP is never really able to exercise meaningful oversight of its activities.

Given the assumptions outlined above, the advent of a board would introduce a new player into the relationships of the RCMP, with the following benefits:

- More intensive and informed oversight of the Force than at present; a more rigorous and more balanced accountability regime better suited to the nature of the organization.

- A source of advice to the Commissioner on strategic management issues not currently available.
- Diminution of direct ministerial control on resource management matters; less likelihood of interference by the minister or ministerial staff in operational decisions.
- Strengthening of the position of the RCMP in negotiations that may arise from time to time with the Treasury Board Secretariat or the Privy Council Office, with the Department of Public Safety or with PWGSC on contracting matters.
- A more exacting performance management relationship for the Commissioner personally. A former Commissioner described his performance review process as “the most rigorous he has ever received”.
- Clarification, and limitation, of the role of the Commissioner as Accounting Officer for the RCMP (less likelihood of being drawn into political or policy debates in appearances before parliamentary committees).
- Potentially, improved relationships with provinces or territories as a consequence of their participation in RCMP governance and an increase in their voice in relation to decisions that affect them.
- Greater administrative flexibility arising from delegations from the ‘centre’, better suited to operational requirements
- Constructive independent advice from board members to senior RCMP officers regarding the administration of the Force; exposure of RCMP to the experience of other organizations
- Support to RCMP in its dealings with ‘central agencies’ in government and with the minister. Clarification of accountability relationships on administrative matters vis-à-vis the minister’s office, coupled, in all probability, with a diminished likelihood of ministerial interference in operational matters for political purposes.
- Strengthening of RCMP ability to undertake strategic planning and risk management, and to participate in policy issues at federal level.
- Improvements in relationships with provinces and territories, assuming appointments to the board from these other jurisdictions.

The potential challenges facing the RCMP relate particularly to the four assumptions set forth above. **A strong commitment from the political level of government should be sought with respect to these areas of concern.**

The foregoing also points to the need for the RCMP to:

- take steps to ensure that it has, or that it acquires, the leadership ability to manage the complex negotiations associated with the planning and transition process, and
- to acquire through contracts, staffing or a combination of both, the personnel with the expertise required to lead the change management process, to handle the associated communications challenges, and to build up required new functions within the Force.

Other related matters

Board powers

With respect to the powers of the board, here again the CRA provides a sensible model. The board's mandate should be focused on administrative matters as is that of the CRA. As noted above, care in legislative drafting may help to avoid some of the difficulties encountered by CRA in interpretation in later years. Also, appointment of both a chair and a CEO with sensitivity to the legislative intent in early years would help to make sure the board got off on the right track. The board would, of course, be precluded from involvement in police investigations and any related matters.

The board's relationship to the minister would replicate that in the CRA legislation.

The question of how complaints concerning police conduct should be handled was not an issue that we were able to consider in any depth in this report. However a brief review of a study conducted by PERF suggests that there prevails a strong tradition in the world of policing of internal reviews on citizen complaints. That is, police examine police conduct in a manner that tends to preclude any public accountability.

There are no doubt strong reasons why this tradition exists. However in a world where there is an increasing tendency to distrust established authority, and where there are growing demands for more transparency and openness in government, the tradition of reviews that are internally mandated and internally conducted may bear examination. The outcome of reflection on this matter could have implications for the role of the board of directors, but this was not a matter addressed in the present study.

Composition

There was not time in this brief study to consider the matter of the board's composition in any depth. There seem, on the face of it, to be strong arguments in favour of provincial/territorial representation on the board. A board of a maximum of 15 directors would be manageable.

Boards of federal agencies face the usual dilemma: should all jurisdictions including the smallest have a seat, or should seats be reserved for larger provinces only? Or for those where the RCMP has an agreement in place to provide policing services? There would seem to be some merit in clustering some of the smaller provinces/ territories together, perhaps with provision for rotation of membership over time from one cluster member to another. There would be political downsides to this; on the other hand, restriction of the number of constituency-based seats affording regional representation would open the door to the appointment of some other board

members who could bring needed expertise in such areas as finance, IT, communications or human resource management, or other functional areas yet to be identified.

Provinces could put forward candidates for appointment based on criteria put forward by the federal government and the RCMP. Informal consultations with the province in question prior to the proposal of a candidate would help to ensure quality candidates suited to organizational needs. Existing provincial police officers or civil servants should be precluded from taking a seat on the board.

Frequency of meetings

Concerning the frequency of meetings, there are always tradeoffs between having the meetings more often, which deepens the board's understanding of the organization and its capacity to do its job, and having them less frequently, which diminishes the likelihood of their engagement in operational matters. Not to be overlooked are the costs involved in board gatherings, as well as the substantial amounts of staff support and senior management time required to make a board meeting successful.

It would probably make sense to provide for somewhat more frequent meetings in the early transitional years – perhaps five times per year – once initial arrangements for a board secretariat have been put in place. If possible, a person should be hired to run the secretariat who brings substantial prior experience of a comparable nature. Many boards find that starting with a more informal dinner gathering the night before, followed by a full day of meetings, is a sensible formula. Once the rhythm of meetings has been established and directors and staff are more comfortable with each other, a lesser frequency of meetings might make sense.

Conduct, clearances and remuneration

Board members should be required to sign an oath of secrecy, a code of conduct and conflict of interest agreement, and should be provided with a well-thought through orientation on appointment to the board. They should of course be subject to very careful personal security clearances. Consideration should be given to providing a reasonable level of remuneration to board members in addition to the usual travel expenses, taking account of comparable practices in other public boards such as the CRA itself and perhaps some Crown corporations.

They should likewise be briefed on the nature of their fiduciary responsibilities to the RCMP as directors, and the chair should try to ensure that these responsibilities are respected in the conduct of board deliberations. The RCMP would be well advised to ensure that it establishes and knowledgeable and effective secretariat to service the needs of the board and help guide new board members.

Evaluations

A 'best practice' increasingly common in the corporate world is the conduct of a professional and thoughtful performance appraisal of the CEO. It would be helpful to both the board and the CEO for the board to review and approve an appropriate performance appraisal process for the CEO taking into account the establishment of performance goals as a basis for subsequent review later in the year. Another 'best practice' is board evaluation, and a policy on this matter should be adopted in due course.

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ⁱ To carry out this project, we interviewed several members of the Task Force; two senior officers of the RCMP, several federal government officials with experience in dealing with the RCMP or in working at the Canada Revenue Agency, including a former Commissioner, and a number of current employees of CRA. We also met with two senior officials of the Treasury Board Secretariat to discuss their views of the CRA 'model'.

ⁱⁱ It is not entirely clear from the PERF report which jurisdictions have police oversight bodies with a wider remit. Some possibilities seem to be the City of Los Angeles, the city of Milwaukee, some of the police commissions in Alberta, and the Cities of Toronto and Ottawa.

ⁱⁱⁱ As set out in Bill C-43, assented to April 29, 1999.