



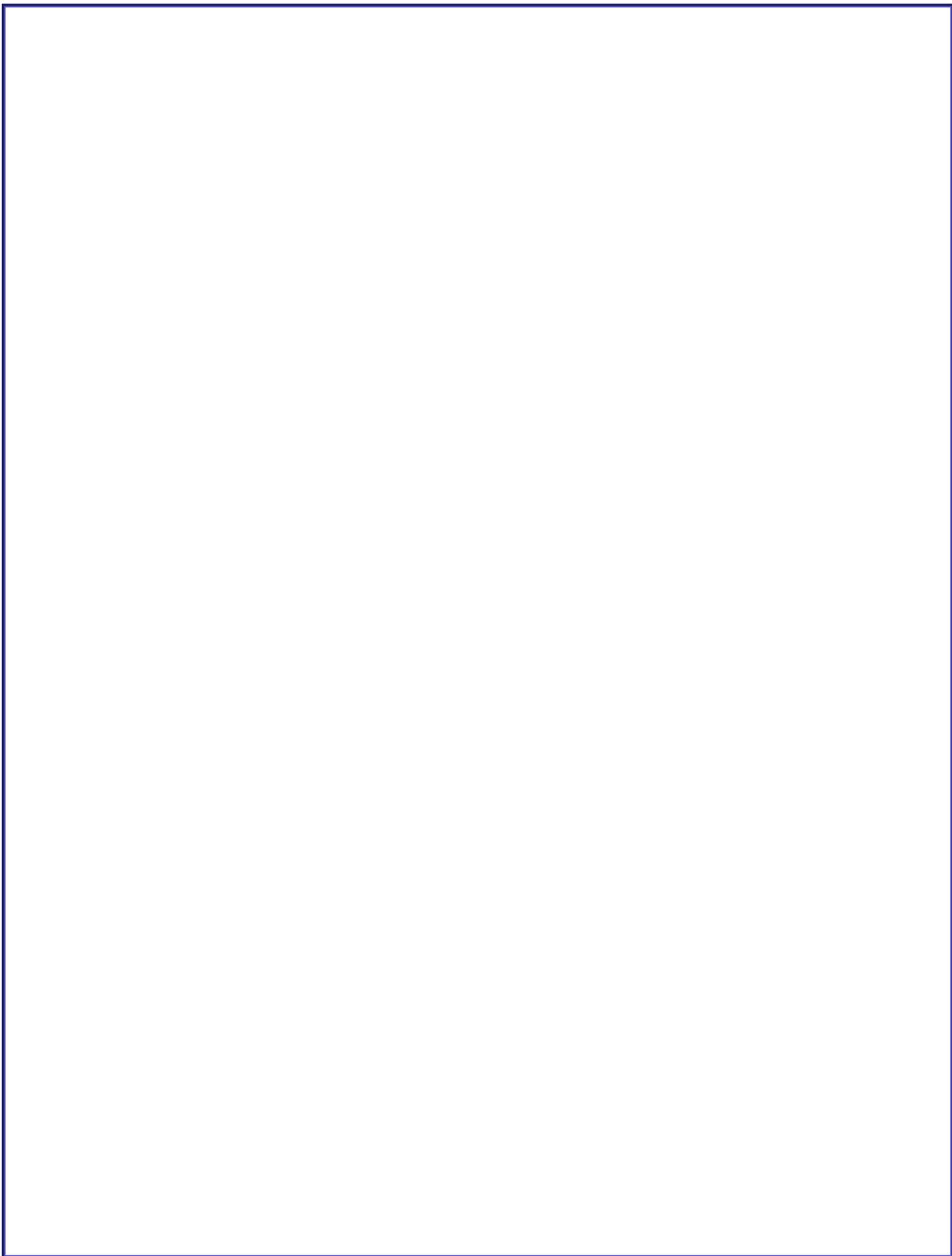
# ANNUAL REPORT 2018-2019

ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSIONAL EXECUTIVES  
OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE OF CANADA



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

MESSAGE FROM THE APEX CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD .....	1
MESSAGE FROM THE APEX CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER .....	2
MEMBERSHIP.....	3
PROFILE.....	3
GROWTH .....	3
APEX MISSION AND VISION .....	4
STRATEGIC PLAN 2018-2021 .....	4
SERVICES, ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS .....	5
ADVISORY SERVICE FOR EXECUTIVES .....	5
LEADERSHIP SYMPOSIUM .....	5
APEX EVENTS .....	6
TOOLS AND INFORMATION FOR THE EXECUTIVE COMMUNITY .....	7
STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS .....	7
2018 APEX AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE .....	8
RECOGNITION OF ENTRY TO THE EXECUTIVE RANKS CEREMONY .....	8
APEX'S ACTIONS WITH RESPECT TO THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS.....	
OF EMPLOYMENT FOR EXECUTIVES.....	9
FOLLOW-UP TO THE APEX EXECUTIVE WORK AND HEALTH SURVEY.....	9
TALENT MANAGEMENT .....	10
MENTORING .....	10
APEX SURVEY OF THE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM FOR EXECUTIVES	11
COMMUNICATIONS.....	11
BOARD OF DIRECTORS .....	12
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM) .....	12
FUNDING OF APEX ACTIVITIES .....	13



# MESSAGE FROM THE APEX CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

Dear Members,

This has been another busy year for APEX. The Board has focused its efforts on ensuring that our organization is reaching out and listening to you. The response to our Executive Cafés, our publications, and our events and services continues to increase and reflects the need for more information and dialogue on many topics.

One of the most consistent concerns expressed over the past few years has been around compensation. As Executives, both we and our staff continue to deal with Phoenix issues. The importance of identifying and understanding our pay issues is underlined by the fact that our events and publications related to compensation were the most attended and downloaded.

The Board is very aware of the compensation issue and will continue to provide you with as much information and support as possible. One particular focus for the Board this year will be to determine what additional role we can play in supporting the discussion on Executive remuneration.

The health and well-being of all our Executives, both in the NCR and the regions, also remains at the forefront of our thoughts. We want to ensure that no Executive feels isolated and can benefit from the strength of our community and what it has to offer.

In closing, I would like to express my sincerest gratitude for Michel Vermette's support and guidance these past four years. With his perseverance, our organization has increased its membership to a record level, participation at our events and the demand for our products and services has increased, and our financial position is sound.

Michel's commitment to APEX has seen him travel across the country to meet with you at your offices. These events have not only improved our visibility within our own community, but also with Deputy Heads. Michel's leadership has ensured that APEX will remain visible, participatory and will continue to act as the collective voice of the Executive community.

Sincerely;



Michael J. Whittaker  
Chair, Board of Directors



# MESSAGE FROM THE APEX CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Dear Members,

This past year has been another busy one for your Association. We held a record number of events, had our highest attendance ever at the APEX Learning Symposium as well as the highest rating ever from Symposium participants. We continued to grow the membership to its highest level ever, and indeed to the highest proportion of federal Executives ever.

In addition, we continued to help hundreds of you through our confidential advisory service – a record 400 of you sought our assistance through that service. And many more benefitted from our informative Guides for Executives and on Retirement. We gathered your views on a variety of issues, and these helped us publish APEX Perspective papers on Talent Management and Performance Management, setting out your priorities for action on these important matters.

Much energy and attention were again focussed on the lack of an economic increase for the Executive community: our advocacy drove an announcement of the increase, and we also pushed for clarity with respect to the timing of the payments which you have not received despite the year that has passed since the Treasury Board decision.

In February 2019 we launched a search for a new CEO. Indeed, after almost 4 years with you, and after 20 years as an Executive in the federal public service, I will soon bring to a close this chapter of my career, which began as a summer student curating coleoptera in 1982.

With your assistance, your forbearance and sometimes your forgiveness, your Association is strong – membership and interest are high, you are engaged in the work we undertake to support you professionally and personally, and the voice we give on matters that affect you is loud and clear. I know that you will continue to participate and share your views as we look to the possibilities that the future holds.

I wish you my best: take care of yourselves and each other, continue to hold the public interest at the forefront of what you do, and ensure that the public service with which you are entrusted continues to be the best in the world.

It has been my privilege to work on your behalf. My thanks to you, to the Board of Directors for its guidance, to the 25 or so Visiting Executives that joined us since 2015 for their ideas and energy, and particularly to the staff of APEX who kept us moving forward.



Michel G. Vermette  
Chief Executive Officer



# MEMBERSHIP

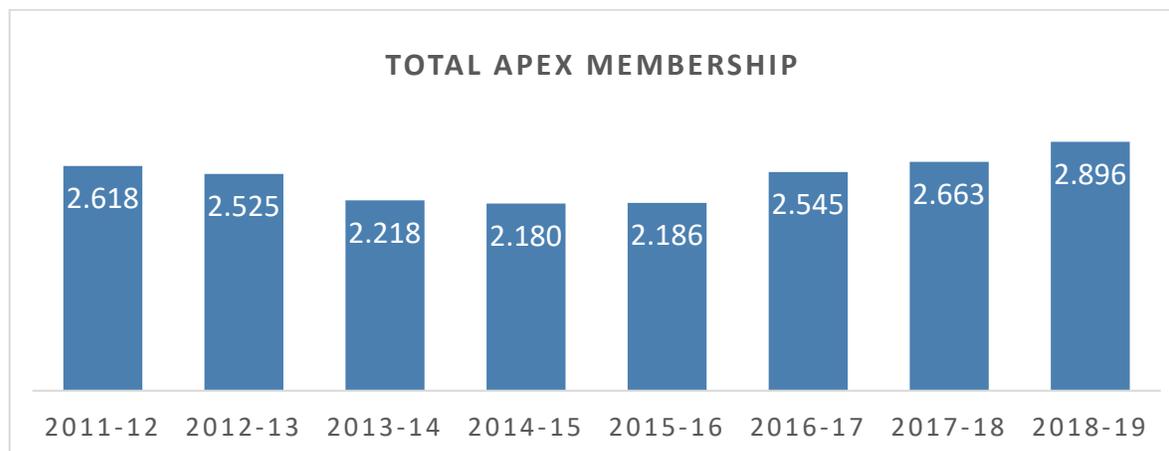
## PROFILE

Total APEX membership is comprised of regular members, associate members and new Executives who joined our community over the past year. This includes Executives located in the National Capital Region (NCR), in the regions and at the international level. APEX's total membership currently represents approximately 40% of the Executive community in the Federal Public Service.

## GROWTH

APEX continues to achieve year-over-year growth in the number of regular members, with a total of 1857 regular members as of March 31, 2019, our highest number ever, exceeding last year's total of 1754 and our historic high of 1811 on March 31, 2013 (prior to the 10% reduction in the Executive community following the Deficit Reduction Action Plan). When the membership categories are combined: regular (1857), associate (308), new Executives (628), and new LC members (103) this figure totals 2896 members, compared to 2663 last year. Total APEX membership over the past 8 years is outlined in the table below.

These increasing numbers attest to the ongoing confidence that Executives have in the Association's leadership and the quality of the events, activities and support it provides. It is also the result of sustained efforts to keep our members informed through our various communications products (including our newsletter and social media), our outreach and consultation activities with departments and agencies, both in the National Capital Region and across the country, and our continuing efforts to promote the interests of Executives among Central Agencies and in public, particularly with respect to remuneration, workplace health and terms and conditions of employment.



## APEX MISSION AND VISION

APEX's mission is to strengthen leadership practices, promote the well-being of Executives and their working environments, and develop a mutually supportive national leadership community.

The APEX vision is to be recognized by all stakeholders as a strong leader and advocate for Executives in the Public Service of Canada; for its substantial membership to be engaged and to participate actively in the events it offers, contributing to the livelihood and learning of the Executive community; and to be recognized as being a source of information and support for Executives of the Public Service of Canada.

## STRATEGIC PLAN 2018-2021

APEX's Strategic Plan for 2018-2021 outlines three broad objectives to support leadership excellence:

**Supporting Executives at the individual level:** The development and promotion of information sharing and learning events and the development of information tools and resources to support Executives. Activities in support of this objective include the development of tools and guides, the organization and provision of learning and development events (including the annual Leadership Symposium) and the provision of confidential advisory services for Executives.

**Strengthening the Executive community:** The fostering of networks among Executives, sharing information within the community and working to increase membership and create a sense of belonging. Activities in support of this objective include the APEX Awards of Excellence, the Recognition of Entry to the Executive Cadre Ceremony, the Survey of New Executives and the organization of dedicated information sharing and networking events.

**Being the voice of the Executive community:** The engagement of members, the gathering of their views and perspectives and the undertaking of research to promote the interests of the community in relation to specific topics. Activities in support of this objective include NCR/regional outreach and engagement, the development of positions and recommendations on talent management and leadership development, the promotion of healthy workplaces and Executive health, and the provision of guidance and advice with respect to the terms and conditions of employment. The results of this research and engagement form the basis for APEX's advocacy on behalf of the interests of the Executive community.

In addition to the above, APEX implements and maintains sound management practices with respect to its communications, information management and financial and human resources. APEX's key activities and deliverables, many of which support and contribute to more than one of these organizational objectives, are outlined in detail below.

## SERVICES, ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

### ADVISORY SERVICE FOR EXECUTIVES

The Advisory Service for Executives (ASE) provides free confidential support to all public service Executives, including those outside the National Capital Region and abroad. The service was initiated in 2003 with financial support from the Deputy Head community, and complements existing services provided through departmental Executives Services Groups, Ombudsmen and Informal Conflict Offices. In 2018-19, over 400 Executives contacted the service (an increase of over 30% from last year) to seek guidance and advice on a wide range of workplace issues including mental health, relationships with supervisors, career management and transition and terms and conditions of employment. ASE Reports highlighting the work of the unit and the thematic trends raised are available on the APEX website.

### LEADERSHIP SYMPOSIUM

The 2018 APEX Leadership Symposium, *Innovative, Mindful, Inclusive* was highly successful and achieved a record attendance of 819 paid participants, the highest registration level since the first APEX Symposium over 30 years ago. The event's Co-chairs, Deputy Ministers Christiane Fox and Chris Forbes welcomed Executives spanning the EX-01 to EX-05 ranks from 66 federal organizations, as well as participants from two NGOs, one Crown Corporation and two provincial governments. Overall, 93.3% of participants who responded to the survey rated the Symposium as either good or excellent, with numerous speakers and panels receiving rating scores of over 90%. The Symposium's ongoing success continues to result from the high quality of speakers, the majority of whom were given very positive individual ratings from participants.

Keynote presentations included *Mindful and Compassionate Leadership* (Dr. Shauna Shapiro and Dr. Rich Fernandez), *Public Sector Leadership in an Age of Disruption* (Dominic Barton), *Understanding the Rights of Indigenous Communities* (The Right Honourable Beverley McLachlin) and *The WE Generation: New Models of Social Impact* (Craig Kielburger) while concurrent sessions included *The Role of Government and Accountability: The Westminster Model* (Mel Cappe), *International Trade: What's Next for Canada* (a panel of experts

moderated by the Centre for International Governance Innovation) and *Innovation and Disruption: Transformation in the Financial Sector* (Chadi Habib). The 2018 Symposium featured a total of 48 speakers, 43 of whom were from outside the federal government.

The Exhibit Hall for this event was sold out, with over 30 exhibitors from the private and public sectors and sponsorship increased to 16 sponsors, including key sponsorship from Sun Life Financial, Accenture, The HR Reporter, Desjardins and Cavendish. Several hundred Executives also took the opportunity to join APEX's CEO, the Clerk of the Privy Council and Deputy Ministers at the end of Day 1 as part of an official reception to recognize the six recipients of the 2018 APEX Awards of Excellence.

## APEX EVENTS

APEX hosted more than 50 events for Executives in 2018-19. These events featured topics such as the accessibility agenda, digital government, cybersecurity, the role of Executives in government transitions, reconciliation and privacy in a digital era. There was a continued emphasis on Executive wellness through the organization of events where Executives could receive practical advice on work-life balance, recognizing and adapting to different leadership styles, employing mindfulness techniques and becoming an influential leader.

To assist Executives with meeting their 2018-19 corporate commitments, several events focused on the sharing of good practices related to a healthy workplace, building a diverse workforce and reducing the number of pay related problems. Attendance at APEX events increased by roughly 30% in 2018-19, with approximately 1,198 Executives attending this year's events (compared to 869 in 2017-18). Of the 2018-19 total, 776 Executives participated on-line while 422 attended in person.

As part of its regional outreach, APEX brought together a total of 107 Executives to discuss their top-of-mind issues. Events held in Moncton, Charlottetown, St-John's, Miramichi, Bathurst, Toronto, Montreal, Winnipeg, Saskatoon and Edmonton helped connect Executives and strengthen their sense of belonging to the Executive community. Additionally, 307 Executives in the NCR took part in follow-up discussions regarding the Executive Health and Wellness Survey or in meetings of departmental Executive Services Groups and APEX organizational representatives (the latter of which help us stay informed on issues of interest to Executives).

Overall, 3,146 Executives participated in APEX-led events, attesting to the relevance and topical nature of APEX's programming and the desire of the community to keep informed on matters that affect the work and well being of federal Executives.



## TOOLS AND INFORMATION FOR THE EXECUTIVE COMMUNITY

To meet the growing need for information among Executives, we drafted and published two Guides for Executives.

The *APEX Guide to Understanding the Implications of Resignation of Employment* is a reference guide which summarizes, from authoritative sources, the implications of resignation from employment for Executives. This includes the specific impacts of resignation on a variety of Executive benefits and entitlements such as compensation, performance pay, severance pay, vacation leave, the Public Service pension plan and other benefit plans (health care, dental care, supplementary death benefit and the Public Service Management Insurance Plan). The guide is available in the Members' section of the APEX website.

The *APEX Guide to Retirement from the Federal Public Service* was developed to simplify the process of contemplating and initiating retirement. It contains information from authoritative sources regarding the composition and value of a public service pension benefit, other possible sources of retirement income, key information for survivors and post-retirement obligations.

In addition, several other guides have been drafted over the past year, including a guide regarding leave without pay. Once finalized, these documents will be published on our website.

## STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

Building on the success of last year's pilot project, APEX and Deloitte co-delivered the *Executive Knowledge Series* to another cohort of Executives in the fall of 2018. The three sessions in the series focused on the challenges and characteristics required of new public service leaders; artificial intelligence and its expected impacts; and the role of Executives in government transitions.

Deputy Heads identified 43 Executives to participate in the series. They engaged in discussions with renowned speakers from academia and the private and public sectors, and were provided with an opportunity to learn from concrete examples and success stories on each of the key topics in the series. Overall, the program was designed to help broaden Executives' knowledge and professional acumen, while allowing them to expand their professional networks.

APEX has also developed partnerships with various private sector companies as part of its Affinity Program, which benefits the membership through negotiated promotions and special offers on a variety of professional services, including recreational activities, health care and home and vehicle insurance.



## 2018 APEX AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE

The APEX Awards of Excellence provide a unique opportunity to nominate Executive colleagues who have made significant contributions to the federal Public Service. A total of 51 nominations were received in 2018 for 6 award categories. The recipients were announced on the APEX website, social media, and at the official Awards of Excellence Ceremony in May.

### 2018 Recipients:

- Mr. Michel Doiron, Leadership Award
- Mr. Steve Verheul, Career Contribution Award
- Ms. Lily Abbass, Healthy Workplace Award
- Mr. Christian Riel, Partnership Award
- Mr. James Tebrake, Innovation Award
- The Right Honourable Beverley McLachlin, Public Service Citation

## RECOGNITION OF ENTRY TO THE EXECUTIVE RANKS CEREMONY

On November 7, 2018, APEX welcomed 360 new Executives (out of a total of 602 newly appointed EXs reported by Departments to APEX in 2018-19) at the Canadian Museum of History in Gatineau as part of the Recognition of Entry to the Executive Ranks Ceremony. The program for the ceremony included presentations by the Chief Human Resources Officer, Nancy Chahwan, on the *Role of Executives in the Federal Public Service*, Dr. Brynn Winegard on *Managing Through Others* and how to be an effective leader and influencer and a discussion featuring two Deputy Ministers, Nathalie Drouin, Deputy Minister and Deputy Attorney General, Justice Canada and Walter Natynczyk, Deputy Minister, Veterans Affairs Canada.

In the evening, with the Clerk of the Privy Council and numerous Deputy Ministers and Deputy Heads participating, new Executives from various departments and agencies were presented with certificates recognizing their appointment to the Executive group. In the months leading up to this event, all new Executives were personally contacted by the APEX team to welcome them to the community and to offer the Association's support in their new role.

All new Executives appointed between July 2017 and June 2018 were also invited to participate in the 2018 Survey of New Executives to share their views on entry into the Executive group, including their motivation for becoming an Executive, their perceptions of the work and some of their specific challenges and experiences. The survey results were



summarized in a report shared electronically with individual respondents and presented to departmental Organization Representatives and Heads of Executive Services. This report is available on the APEX website.

## APEX'S ACTIONS WITH RESPECT TO THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT FOR EXECUTIVES

In the Spring of 2018, APEX surveyed the Executive community on the terms and conditions of employment. In total, APEX received 846 responses with over 2000 detailed comments, from which it identified and assembled key concerns and opportunities. This information has informed and supported APEX's position and engagement with TBS-OCHRO on a variety of issues including compensation, leave harmonization with other public service classifications and updates and changes to a variety of terms and conditions of employment.

APEX continues to engage the Treasury Board Secretariat's Office of the Chief Human Resource Officer on the terms and conditions of employment for Executives and has been actively lobbying them, as well as Public Services and Procurement Canada on the resolution of retroactivity related to the June 2018 announcement of a retroactive, multi-year wage increase and the addition of one personal day of leave.

Research also continues on other areas of interest to the Executive Community, and includes seeking the views of Executives both on salary and other terms and conditions of employment to facilitate our advocacy role. This includes promoting the need for a benchmarking exercise comparing Executive salaries to other public services and the private sector as well as recommending the development and adoption of an objective and arm's length process for the establishment of Executive compensation.

## FOLLOW-UP TO THE APEX EXECUTIVE WORK AND HEALTH SURVEY

In January 2018, the results of the 2017 APEX Executive Work and Health Survey were released. The overall report was published on the APEX website and reports (where numbers permitted) for 31 organizations were shared with the Deputy Heads of those organizations.

The survey paints a picture of an Executive population that feels pride in its work, respected by superiors and increasingly committed, despite a high-stress, demanding work environment with constant time pressure and an increasing workload. There continue to be, however, some worrisome trends that are negatively impacting individual and organizational health over time: 35% of Executives report working 55 or more hours per week (25% in 2012); 70% have thought about leaving their current position at least monthly



in the past 6 months; the prevalence of chronic conditions (musculoskeletal, mental health, gastrointestinal, and cardiovascular) has increased significantly; and Executives feel obligated to respond to work-related emails outside working hours.

Engagement sessions across organizations continued through the spring and early summer of 2018. In all, almost 1900 Executives in close to 60 events participated, focusing attention on issues identified in the survey, organizational next steps and significantly increasing the visibility of APEX. Many Deputy Heads and organizations have identified specific issues to tackle and APEX efforts have also been informed by the results of the survey.

## TALENT MANAGEMENT

The APEX 2017 Executive Work and Health Survey revealed that 22% of Executives were either satisfied or very satisfied with “the possibilities offered by the Executive Talent Management process to meet career goals and aspirations”. Through the summer and fall of 2018, in collaboration with the Treasury Board Secretariat’s Office of the Chief Human Resources Officer, a series of half day *Talent Talks* sessions were organized to examine the results and help determine how to move forward with improvements to talent management. Almost 180 Executives shared their thoughts about what worked well, what did not, and how to improve the approach and process.

Building on these sessions, and what APEX has heard from the community through a variety of other fora (either in person engagement or surveys), APEX published a draft *APEX Perspective: Talent Management*. Setting out draft actions to improve talent management, the document was released in January 2019 for comment by Executives prior to being finalized. The draft *APEX Perspective: Talent Management* was also shared with key Central Agencies and will inform APEX discussions with Deputy Heads and Executive Champions across government.

## MENTORING

On February 7, 2019, APEX collaborated with the Interdepartmental Executive Learning Network to deliver its first ever Speed Mentoring event. Based on a need identified across the community for access to mentors, this event had two objectives: to offer Executives (at the EX-01 to EX-03 level) an opportunity to engage with a mentor to discuss top of mind issues and to provide a networking opportunity.

Overall, this event was highly successful with 18 Assistant Deputy Minister mentors providing 49 Executives with insight and advice through 20-minute mentoring sessions. Evaluations revealed that participants were very satisfied with the event and would recommend it to colleagues.

## APEX SURVEY OF THE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM FOR EXECUTIVES

In September 2018, APEX asked Executives to provide feedback on their most recent experience with the Performance Management Program. The goal of the survey was to understand the community's concerns with the process so that advice and recommendations could be formulated and shared with various stakeholders.

Based on 819 completed responses from Executives at all levels, APEX drafted a *Perspectives Paper on the Performance Management Program for Executives*, which was shared with the Executive community for comments and feedback. A copy of the Paper was also shared with the Chief Human Resources Officer for the Government of Canada, the President of the Public Service Commission and the Deputy Minister community given their unique positions and roles with regards to the performance management cycle and the nature of some of the specific concerns and issues raised.

In April 2019, APEX published a final version of the *Perspectives Paper* which will be used to pursue opportunities for ongoing advocacy on behalf of the Executive community, including discussions with the Treasury Board Secretariat's Office of the Chief Human Resources Officer as part of the finalization of the review of the Executive Policy Suite and potential modifications to the existing performance and talent management programs and processes.

## COMMUNICATIONS

APEX continues to ensure timely and informative communications with the Executive cadre. It also provides ample opportunities for Executives to communicate with us regarding their top of mind issues.

In 2018-19, APEX made a significant and concerted effort not only to communicate outwardly, but to provide opportunities for Executives to be heard. Specific efforts in this regard include the implementation of a regular schedule for newsletters and event communications as well as an increased presence on social media (i.e. Twitter) and LinkedIn. Consultations were undertaken with Executives across the country and numerous APEX Café sessions were held throughout the NCR. These initiatives and activities have enabled us to provide information directly to the membership and to hear directly from the Executive community.

The number of people who follow us on social media continues to grow, and our Twitter audience has increased year over year, by over 40% - with over 2000 followers in March 2019. Our Twitter account allows us to promote and report on our events and communicate to the membership on areas of interest such as Talent Management and Executive Compensation. Year over year, the number of visits to our website has seen an increase in visitors and visits. Topics of interest to this audience in 2018-19 (based on the



pages viewed) include the Leadership Symposium, Compensation, Learning Events, the EX Work and Health Survey, APEX Newsletters, Advisory Services for Executives, APEX Awards and the Compendium of EX Resources.

Through a combination of event and regular newsletter communications, we have reached out to our membership on nearly 40 occasions this past year. While event communications provide our members with up-to-date listings and registration information for all our learning and development events, our Newsletter covers broader issues around Executive health, terms and conditions of employment and other issues of interest to the Executive community, including updates regarding compensation and the status of economic increases. Our newsletters now also include a “Did You Know” feature, which provides Executives with fast facts and generates interest in topical issues.

Over the past year, the CEO conducted several media interviews and Executives were able to obtain news and updates through our communications channels. In addition, through APEX’s media interviews and the sharing of key information, Executives were able to read in popular media about issues such as non-advertised appointments, the termination of non-performing Executives, Executive compensation and the significant delay in the implementation of the economic increase finally announced in June 2018.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The 15 members of the APEX Board of Directors are elected by APEX members at the Annual General Meeting. The Board has nine regular members from the National Capital Region, one regular member from each of the five regions and one associate member. The Board of Directors plays a key role in setting the organization’s strategic direction.

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM)

The APEX Annual General Meeting was held on October 2, 2018, during which a slate of candidates to fill vacancies on the Board of Directors was proposed and adopted. The nominees elected to the Board were **Sheriff Abdou (NCR)**, **Angela Bate (Pacific and Yukon Region)**, **Daryell Nowlan (Atlantic Region)** and **Lori Streefkerk (NCR)**.

A resolution to approve the audited financial statements for the period ending March 31, 2018, was moved, seconded, and unanimously carried, as was a resolution to continue using the services of the audit firm Marcil Lavallée for the 2018-19 fiscal year.

The 2017-18 audited financial statements were among the documents made available to all APEX members at the Annual General Meeting.



## FUNDING OF APEX ACTIVITIES

APEX is grateful for the support it receives from the Deputy Minister and Deputy Head community. In addition to their engagement in our work, their support of attendance at events like the Leadership Symposium and Recognition Ceremony for New Executives, Deputy Ministers and Deputy Heads support our work in two other important ways. One is their support for Interchange Agreements, which allow Visiting Executives to join the Association for defined periods to undertake important work on behalf of our members.

In addition to this support, the Association generates revenue through major annual events such as the Leadership Symposium, the Induction Ceremony for New Executives as well as other activities, memberships and sponsorships. APEX is a not-for-profit organization and these revenues provide the key funding required to support our operations. APEX is particularly grateful to its corporate sponsors for their generous support in 2018-2019, including Sun Life Financial, Accenture, Desjardins, Ipsos, PWC Canada, Nelligan O'Brien Payne, Johnson Insurance, Ravenlaw, Industrial Alliance, Deloitte and the Telfer Center for Executive Leadership.





THE ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSIONAL EXECUTIVES OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE OF CANADA  
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