

PS hires temps as most effective staffing solution

**Re: \$300M on temp workers
a PS failure, Oct. 6.**

Maria Barrados, president of the Public Service Commission, refers to federal departments skirting the rules by their reliance on temporary help agencies, and temporary workers getting an unfair advantage in competitions for permanent jobs.

The report referred to the Public Service Commission's examination on the use of temporary help services in the context of the Public Service Employment Act, and while Barrados statements regarding the increased use of temporary help agencies is correct, the conclusions she reaches are open to interpretation.

It is clear that the federal government relies on the contribution of the temporary staffing industry; however, we wish to provide necessary clarification on a few key points.

The Association of Canadian Search, Employment and Staffing Services (ACSESS) represents 80 per cent of staffing firms across Canada. The temporary staffing industry plays a vital role in Canada's labour market, fulfilling a wide variety of staffing needs for a broad range of employers — including the federal government.

As we recover from the deepest recession in many years, the government might indeed be applauded for the use of a flexible workforce as a cost-effective and efficient way in which to augment their staffing.

In addition to the finding that use of temporary staffing continues to grow, the PSC study confirms that many temporary workers are highly skilled, talented individuals.

These workers have been screened, interviewed and tested and comply with all federal and provincial employment rules, and it is for these reasons among others that managers in the public service often use temporary workers as the most effective staffing solution.

If a temporary worker through their experience and commitment qualifies for consideration as an indeterminate employee should this be of concern?

It is after all a cost-effective, win-win situation for both the employer and the employee that also removes the need for additional testing and training.

Barrados also referred to temporary workers doing jobs that amount to full time work. ACSESS agrees that managers need directives regarding the extended use of temporary help.

However, it is difficult to dispute the benefits of retaining the same worker — temporary or otherwise — to bring specific projects to conclusion.

The PSC recognizes the need for temporary help services to meet short term, immediate requirements. As a key stakeholder, ACSESS has been invited to provide input on the findings of this important study.

We are pleased to see that government recognizes the role flexible staffing plays in meeting department mandates.

Temporary staffing is providing a dynamic staffing solution and creating opportunities for competent skilled workers to qualify themselves as Canada's public servants of the future.

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