PSAC
REGIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS
AND
REGIONAL EQUITY COMMITTEE
HANDBOOK





Public Service Alliance of Canada
Alliance de la Fonction publique du Canada

Table of Contents

Message from the Alliance Executive Committee 2

SECTION I

Forming a Regional Human Rights and Regional Equity Committee 3

SECTION II

Roles and responsibilities of Regional Human Rights and Regional Equity Committees 5

Guidelines for members of Regional Human Rights and Regional Equity Committees 6

Roles of Executive Committee Members 7

Operating Regional Human Rights and Regional Equity Committees 8

Sample Year-end Financial Report 10

SECTION III

Working Together and staying active: Introduction to anti-oppressive processes 11

SECTION IV

Political action 13

Networking and coalition building 13

PSAC National Equity Conferences 15

PSAC Regional Conferences for Racially Visible Members 15

Appendices

Excerpts from the PSAC Constitution 16

Human Rights Timeline 17

PSAC Regional Offices 35

PSAC Structure 38

Message from the Alliance Executive Committee (AEC)

The Public Service Alliance of Canada has a proud history of activism on human rights and social justice by equity-seeking members in the union. Racially visible members, LGBTQ2+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and non-binary, queer, two-spirited) members, Indigenous members and members with disabilities are active in their locals every day. Our accomplishments as a union reflect their vision, energy, and commitment. All members, including our equity-seeking members, keep our union vital and strong.

Although PSAC has a rich history of advancing human rights in our union and in our communities, there is still a ways to go. Even as our membership is becoming increasingly diverse, there are still barriers facing equity groups in their union and workplaces. Sexism, racism, ableism, homophobia, transphobia and ageism continue to perpetuate inequalities for marginalized communities.

Our members from equity-seeking groups have always challenged the union to address complex issues, to develop alternative ways of being effective, and to reach out to those members who, in the past, have been on the margins of union activity. Through their effort and determination, we are building an inclusive union solidly based in principles of justice and equality.

As a focal point for mobilizing equity-seeking members, the Regional Human Rights and Regional Equity Committees are essential to a strong union presence in the regions. They embody the spirit of grassroots organizing and membership participation. Member-based structures such as the Regional Committees are the vehicles that directly contribute to our power, effectiveness and relevance as a dynamic union.

We hope this handbook will be a useful resource to PSAC Regional Human Rights and Regional Equity Committees and to all activists who provide initiative and leadership. We look forward to working with you in solidarity.

Section I

Forming a Regional Human Rights and Equity Committee

Regional Human Rights and Regional Equity Committees are part of the formal structure of the Public Service Alliance of Canada. They receive their mandate and authority from the PSAC Constitution, Section 15 (see page 16). Please note that Regional Equity Committees refer to committees specifically for one equity-seeking group (e.g. Access - Members with Disabilities, Indigenous Peoples – Indigenous members, Pride – LGBTQ2+ members, RVAC/RVC - Racially Visible Members).

In some geographic locations, it may be viable to have an equity committee for specific equity groups, whereas in other geographical locations, it may not be viable. In the latter case, a Regional Human Rights Committee may be established.

These committees serve an important purpose in our union, including increasing the participation of equity-seeking activists and leaders. The Committees provide "safe spaces" for PSAC members from equity groups to identify, strategize and work on issues of particular concern in a local or region. Regional Human Rights and Regional Equity Committees also encourage the development of strong networks of equity-seeking members that cross racial, sexual, gender, ability, and class lines.

Membership in Committees

A Regional Human Rights Committee or Regional Equity Committee can be established within a geographic area serviced by a PSAC regional office. This can be a city or a wider area in which members have common interests.

Membership in a Regional Equity Committee is open to all members who self-identify with that equity group. Regional Human Rights Committees are open to all members who self-identify in at least one equity group.

A local can have one or more members participate on the committee. However, each local is entitled to one official representative on the committee who can vote, for decision-making purposes.

If more than one equity representative attends from a local, then a decision is made from amongst the local's equity members attending the meeting, as to who will be the official representative who can vote.

The PSAC National President and the Regional Executive Vice-President (REVP) will have ex-officio status on the committees and will provide direction and guidance on the functioning of the committees.

Steps to follow

The PSAC Regional Council Representative responsible for equity issues in general or specifically for an equity group, through the Regional Office, is available to assist members who wish to initiate the formation of a Regional Human Rights or Regional Equity Committee. The following are the steps involved:

- Interested members submit a motion to their local, e.g., "Be it resolved that our local initiate steps to form a Regional (type of committee) Committee in (name of region)."
- Members should be prepared to speak in support of the motion. It is also useful to discuss the proposed committee with the local executive officers prior to the motion being presented. This gives the executive an opportunity to ask questions and learn about the role of the committee.
- Where the local belongs to a component, the Local President writes to the Component President to request that the component seek approval from the Alliance Executive Committee (AEC) to form a Regional Human Rights or Regional Equity Committee. The component submits the request to the Regional Executive Vice-President (REVP) responsible for that region.
- In the case of directly chartered locals (DCLs) the Local President writes to the Regional Executive Vice-President responsible for that DCL, requesting approval to form a Regional Human Rights or Regional Equity Committee.
- When at least three components or DCLs have submitted a request from a given geographic area, the responsible REVP places these requests before the AEC for approval. (Note: There may be exceptions to this requirement if there are not enough components and/or directly chartered locals in the geographic area and if there is evidence that the committee can be viable).
- Once approval is granted, all locals in the jurisdiction of the proposed Regional Human Rights or Regional Equity Committee are notified. Also at this time, the Committee may request a start-up grant to cover the expenses of initial organizing activities. A grant of $500 is available for this purpose.
- A founding meeting of the approved Regional Committee is held. At this meeting, the Committee receives its charter and officially becomes an established Regional Equity Committee (e.g. Human Rights Committee or a Regional Indigenous Circle, Regional Pride Committee, Regional Access Committee, or Regional Racially Visible Committee (RVAC/RVC). The members in attendance decide who will be the official representatives from their respective locals. They also choose a Chairperson, Treasurer, and Secretary.

Section II

Roles and responsibilities of Regional Human Rights and Regional Equity Committees

Why Regional Human Rights or Regional Equity Committees?

- To implement and action union priorities and campaigns (e.g. Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, inclusion of trans people in human rights legislation, employment equity, accommodation of members with disabilities).
- To have a safe space where equity-seeking members can discuss their issues.
- To examine, educate and advocate for diverse issues from an intersectional lens.
- To mobilize and empower equity-seeking members to participate in the union, their workplaces and their communities.
- To network and work side-by-side with women, racialized people, indigenous people, LGBTQ2+ people, and people with disabilities to advance equality in their region and the labour movement so that the union is more inclusive.

Some typical projects and activities might include:

- developing action plans to implement union priorities and strengthen campaigns
- collaborating with community groups to hold special events such as demonstrations, marches, conferences, issue forums and other activities designed to focus public attention on important issues
- organizing special events to celebrate or commemorate designated days (e.g., March 21 – International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, May 17 – International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia, June 21 – National Indigenous People's Day, December 3 – International Day of Disabled Persons, December 10 – Human Rights Day)
- working as allies and supporting organizations that focus on marginalized people in our communities
- conducting special education seminars and skills-building workshops
- conducting strategy sessions to advance equity issues in the union and workplaces, such as how to gain support for collective bargaining demands and for convention resolutions.

These are just a few examples of what a regional committee can do to strengthen PSAC equity members and the union's presence in the region. New ideas for building support and promoting activism are encouraged and welcomed. What we do know from experience is that the best results occur when the focus is on actions that are creative with goals that are achievable.

Guidelines for members of Regional Human Rights and Regional Equity Committees

STRUCTURE

a. Local representation

The Constitution (Section 15, sub-section 3) reads:

"Regional [...] Indigenous People's, Racially Visible Persons, Pride, Access […] or Regional Human Rights Committees shall consist of representatives who should come from each Component with members in the jurisdiction of the [...] Indigenous Peoples, Racially Visible Persons, Pride, Access […] Committees".

All locals within the geographic area shall be notified in writing of Alliance Executive Committee approval and should be requested to select equity representatives to the Regional Human Rights or Regional Equity Committee.

A local can have one or more equity-seeking members participate on the Committee. However, each local is entitled to one official representative on the committee who may vote, for decision-making purposes (e.g. recorded vote; election for positions on committee and area council; or delegate selection for conventions and conferences).

If more than one representative attends from a local, then a decision is made from amongst the equity members from that local attending the meeting, as to who will be the official representative who can vote.

For all other matters, all committee members in good standing can fully participate and have voice in the decisions made by the committee.

The representative from each local shall be responsible for liaising with their local, their component representative on the PSAC National Human Rights Committee and their regional representative, ensuring all of the above are informed of the Regional Committee activities.

Each committee shall elect a Treasurer and a Secretary. The Committee may elect a Chairperson, or may rotate chairing of the meeting. If there is a rotating chair, then the Treasurer or Secretary will be the lead contact on the committee for the purposes of corresponding with their respective REVP. The Committee may designate other positions and may structure sub-committees if required. The term of office shall be for one year.

b. Observers

Observers who self-identify from the specific equity group for the Regional Equity Committee or any equity group for the Regional Human Rights Committee, shall have voice but no vote, unless the Committee decides for specific periods that they shall not have voice.

c. Allies

In order to provide a "safe space" for equity-seeking members to discuss their issues, meetings are not open to allies, except when invited by the Committee (e.g. guest speaker, an event organized to raise awareness, etc.). When allies do attend meetings then they do so as observers.

d. Meetings

As per Section 15(4) of the PSAC Constitution, Regional Equity Committee or Regional Human Rights Committee meetings shall be held at least four (4) times a year. One such meeting shall occur prior to the PSAC National Equity Conferences.

The Committee will determine which meeting expenses will be reimbursed and will do so from the operating budget submitted to and approved by the responsible REVP.

Each meeting should have a financial report that includes: current bank balance, expenses and revenue received since the last meeting. Any other issues that need to be reported to the committee should be included and recorded in the minutes.

Meeting notices should be sent out a minimum of two weeks in advance to ensure time for circulation. The notice should indicate if any decisions need to be made.

It should be noted that Regional Human Rights and Regional Equity Committees should select/elect a representative to their respective area council, unless there is already a process in the Region or by-laws that outlines who sits on Area Councils. This representative will have full voice and vote at Area Council meetings.

e. Minutes

Minutes of the meetings shall be forwarded, within 30 days, to the Regional Executive Vice-President and the Regional Council representative responsible for Human Rights and copied to the assigned Regional Office and the National PSAC Human Rights Program Officer responsible for that Committee's portfolio.

Minutes will be finalized by the Committee at their next meeting.

Roles of Committee Executive Members

Chairperson(s)

The Chairperson(s) shall be responsible for the affairs of the regional committee between meetings.

The Chairperson(s) will be responsible to liaise and provide reports to the REVP, Regional Council representative (if not the representative themselves), and the regional staff assigned to the Committee, after each meeting.

The Chairperson(s) will facilitate any meetings of the regional committee held during their term.

The Chairperson(s) will ensure that committee members are provided with information from the REVP, Regional Council representative or staff in a timely fashion.

The Chairperson(s) will be responsible for the agenda and the callout for agenda items in advance of the meeting date.

Secretary

The Secretary shall be responsible for taking the minutes at all regular and special meetings which will be provided to the Chairperson(s) for approval and distribution at the next meeting.

The minutes must be provided to the REVP, Regional Council representative and staff assigned within 30 days after the meeting.

Treasurer

The Treasurer shall provide up-to-date financial information for the Committee to the Chairperson(s) and the rest of the Committee at each meeting.

The Treasurer will prepare and present an annual financial report to the Committee and submit it to the REVP, Regional Council representative and staff assigned to the Committee.

The Treasurer will present an annual budget, to be approved by the Committee before it is presented to the Regional Council representative for approval.

Support for the Committee

Regional staff

PSAC staff assigned to the Committee will provide logistical and technical support (i.e. booking meeting rooms, translation requests, etc.) and assist the Committee to fulfill its mandate.

National staff

Terms of Reference and minutes will be sent to the National Human Rights Programs Officer responsible for the Committee's portfolio. The National Human Rights Program Officer will review the minutes to gather information on the current issues relevant to equity seeking members and identify trends across committees. If common issues are identified, the National Human Rights Program Officer can facilitate cross committee and cross regional discussions and can develop tools and resources for the committees.

Operating Regional Human Rights and Regional Equity Committees

Although regional committees are decision-making bodies, there are certain requirements that apply to aspects of the Committee's operations; specifically, meetings, minutes, votes, operating budget, and other sources of funding.

ANNUAL BUDGET

Central to a Committee's effective operation is the annual budget. This determines the amount of funds the Committee will require to carry out its activities.

What's in a budget?

The budget should be prepared for a fiscal period January 1 to December 31, and should include meeting expenses, operating expenses, including lost wage requirements, and project costs. Project costs should be itemized separately and priorities identified if more than one project is planned.

To whom and when do we submit the budget?

The proposed budget as adopted by the Committee is submitted to the Regional Executive Vice-President. In some regions, the proposed budget will also need to be submitted to the Regional Council Representative responsible for that equity group or human rights. The proposed budget should be copied to the assigned regional office and the National PSAC Human Rights Program Officer. Once approved, funds are disbursed to the Committee.

The budget should be submitted as soon as possible after the Committee is established. For subsequent years, the annual budget should be submitted, along with the year-end financial report and bank book balance. Check with your regional office or REVP about established timelines and deadlines.

A budget or a specific funding proposal may be submitted during the year to the REVP for approval if an issue or event occurs after the budget was initially approved. For example, the Regional Human Rights or Regional Equity Committee may become aware of a union campaign that needs to be actioned by them in a timely way, and thus, the Committee may need to resubmit a budget to undertake the actions or activities required for the campaign.

Approval by the REVP is required prior to the committee seeking other sources of funding.

Accounting and reporting

The regional committee should maintain a chequing account with a financial institution. A minimum of three members, one of whom is the Treasurer, should be selected as signing officers for the account. Cheques must have two signatures. A signatory should not include the person who the cheque(s) is/are made out to. Proper records of receipts and disbursements MUST be maintained throughout the year, including a record indicating the breakdown for each cheque and expense.

When preparing to issue cheques, the following should be considered:

- Is the expense related to an activity that is on your approved annual budget allocation? If not, has approval for the expense been requested from the REVP office?
- Was the expense approved at a committee/ council meeting (either by vote or consensus)?
- Do you have documentation such as a receipt or email to attach to your financial records?

The Regional Human Rights or Regional Equity Committee is also responsible for preparing and submitting annual financial reports for the year ending December 31 to the REVP and Regional Council representative responsible for that equity group or human rights. The annual report should record expenditures for the year and indicate how they compare with the total budget. All bank statements for each month must also be attached to this report.

Continued funding in any given year is only granted upon presentation of a budget or proposal, the prior year's financial reports and meeting minutes in the appropriate format, and any other document required by the REVP.

SAMPLE YEAR-END FINANCIAL REPORT

Year-End Financial Report of the (name of region) Regional (type of committee) Committee

Revenues:	Regional committee allocation (must name sources) (e.g. national funding)	$3,000.00
	Other (name sources (e.g. donation from Local 1234 for AB project)	$275.00
		$3,275.00

Expenses:	Meetings (breakdown of expenses such as food, per diems, taxi, etc.)	$575.00
	Newsletter	$175.00
	Education (on employment equity on June 1, 2018) *	$1,050.00
	Travel (for xx event on Feb. 14, 2018) *	$175.00
	Loss of salary (for xxx event on Feb 14, 2018)	$425.00
	Coalition work (with ABC group) *	$385.00
	Administration (e.g. bank costs)	$3.00
	Total Expenses	$2,788.00

* Financial reports should be accompanied by summary activity reports which would give more details on the expensed items.

Excess of revenues over expenditures	$497.00

Reconciliation:	Bank balance at December 31, 2018	$732.00
	Less: Outstanding cheque #5	($60.00)
	Less: Outstanding cheque #8	($175.00)
		$497.00

Note: Proper records of receipts and disbursements MUST be maintained and may be requested to accompany any report at any given time by the REVP or PSAC National President.

Section III

Working together and staying active: Introduction to anti-oppressive processes

One of the main goals of Regional Equity Committees is the empowerment of PSAC members from equity-seeking groups. Working together, marginalized members have the opportunity to grow as individuals and as a collective. For empowerment to happen in a meaningful way, it is important that members be conscious of how they work together. This is called "process" and it is just as important to the end result as the specific tasks involved.

The way in which members work together reflects our beliefs about how democracy is practised. There are many ways to practise inclusive decision-making and it is up to each committee to decide the process that works best for them.

ANTI-OPPRESSIVE PROCESSES

Many activist groups choose to practise alternative forms of democracy by using anti-oppressive processes. This is a method of working together and an approach to organizational structure that seeks to foster participation and inclusivity. Anti-oppressive process is based in the principle of equality. It emphasizes shared goals, authority, responsibility and accountability.

The advantage of using anti-oppressive process is that it is inclusive, rather than exclusive. Power is shared by many, not concentrated in the hands of a few. Differences are incorporated, not suppressed. The growth of individuals is seen to strengthen, not threaten, the collective. Unity and solidarity flow from the process; they are not forced or demanded. Where anti-oppressive process is consciously followed, members are more likely to feel good about themselves, each other, and the work they accomplish together.

How can Regional Committees put anti-oppressive processes into practice if they so choose?

- Work towards inclusiveness. Work with the regional office, with locals and with PSAC Regional Human Rights and Regional Equity Committees to make contact with members who may be interested in participating on the Committee. Make outreach an ongoing activity of the Committee once it is established.
- Clearly identify your common goals.
- Establish a group agreement which sets out what members expect and need from each other in order for the Committee to be a safe, inclusive and empowering forum in which to work together.
- Explore the issue of power within the group. How is power distributed? Do the members have equal power? What influences how much, or how little, power individual members bring to the group? What is the effect of dominant culture? The purpose of this analysis is to determine what changes the group may need to make in order to share power equally.
- Pay attention to individual needs. Do the physical arrangements of meetings enable all to participate? Are necessary accommodations made? Has the Regional Committee enquired with the regional office about assistance from the PSAC accommodation fund to help offset costs?
- Rotate the process of chairing committee meetings. The practice of rotating chairing responsibilities helps distribute workload and develop facilitation skills amongst members.
- Choose a decision-making process that works best for your committee. Some committees will choose to make decisions by consensus. This requires that all members of the committee agree with a decision before it is taken forward. It can be effective for fostering cooperation and compromise. (For more information on

consensus based decision-making, see this guide from Seeds for Change: seedsforchange.org.uk/consensus.) However, consensus-based decision-making can also be time consuming. Some committees may find that traditional decision-making by voting is more efficient. It is up to your committee to establish what is the most inclusive system for them.

- Share tasks equitably.
- Conduct frequent check-ins.
- Build in shared accountability through a process of Committee evaluation. Members have the opportunity to identify what is working well and what needs improvement. Regular evaluations keep the Committee vital and relevant. Timely and necessary adjustments can be made before problems become major or even destructive.

Many members are new to anti-oppressive process and, through practice, we learn how to use it effectively. This is not necessarily easy and mistakes are made along the way. However, by being patient with each other and persisting in the face of setbacks, we can create committees that are more truly reflective of our democratic principles.

Staying active

Even the most active and well organized committee can go through periods when members feel exhausted or depleted. People put a lot of time, effort and personal commitment into their work for social change. For this reason, it is crucial that members attend to the health of the Regional Committee.

It is often most effective to focus on a few key union priorities and/or campaigns rather than trying to tackle too much too quickly. Committees should pick two to three top priorities for the year and aim to accomplish those. Severe burnout can be avoided if measures are taken to maintain and, when necessary, revitalize the Committee.

Maintaining the Committee

To keep a committee active, it is important that information flow easily and quickly, that potential new members be identified and encouraged, that skills be developed, and that tasks be simplified and shared. This will happen when the Committee has:

- an up-to-date membership list with addresses, telephone numbers, and emails
- a strategy for ongoing outreach
- a speedy communications system
- a schedule of well publicized meetings
- a newsletter or bulletin published at regular intervals
- attention to and accommodation of special needs
- orderly files and records that are kept up to date
- a well thought-out and comprehensive "plan of action"
- a system of sub-committees to focus energies and interests on specific tasks such as recruitment, education, communications, community outreach, resources, social events, etc.

Most of these ideas reflect the need for basic planning and organizing. They might seem bureaucratic and mundane, but they will save a committee valuable time and energy which are more productively spent on the issues and strategies that will advance the Committee's goals.

Section IV

Political action

Political decisions have a major impact on our daily lives. They can bring into effect policies and programs that advance social and economic equality for equity-seeking groups. Policy changes can also have adverse effects and statistics reveal that these tend to fall disproportionately on women and equity-seeking groups. Women and equity-seeking groups therefore have a significant stake in the political decisions that are made in this country. It is important to step into the wider political arena and speak out on issues that are decided at the municipal, provincial, and national levels.

Area Councils

PSAC Area Councils are made up of members from different locals to engage with PSAC campaigns at a political level. Members come together to lobby their political representatives and raise awareness of issues affecting our members, workers and the Canadian public.

Like Regional Human Rights and Regional Equity Committees, Area Council members work with their community partners, and build links with other labour groups.

Each Regional Human Rights and Regional Equity Committee is entitled to one delegate at their local Area Council. Each committee will appoint a member to be the official representative on their respective area council. This representative will be responsible for ensuring that priorities and issues raised by their respective committee are integrated into the work of the area council and vice versa.

Networking and coalition building

Regional Human Rights and Regional Equity Committees do not operate in isolation of the rest of the union or of the social justice movement inside and outside the labour movement. It is important to build ties with groups, both inside and outside PSAC, who share the goals of the committees. This creates opportunities to cooperate on strategy, share information, provide mutual support and pool resources.

Within PSAC

Regional Human Rights and Regional Equity Committees will want to work together with these bodies:

- PSAC National Human Rights Committee (NHRC)
- PSAC National Indigenous People's Circle (NIPC)
- PSAC Regional Women's Committees
- Area Councils
- other Regional Human Rights and Regional Equity Committees in the region

Within the broader labour movement

Regional Human Rights and Equity Committees will want to outreach and mobilize on issues of concern to working equity-seeking groups with:

- Regional human rights and regional equity committees of local sister unions
- Human rights and equity committees of district labour councils
- Human rights and equity committees of provincial federations of labour

COALITION BUILDING

Regional Human Rights and Equity Committees are part of a larger social justice movement. At the national, regional, and local levels there are many organizations and groups actively seeking social, economic, and political justice for equity-seeking groups. By making links with these organizations, Regional Human Rights and Equity Committees become part of a broader, stronger power base and mutual support network.

What's a coalition?

A coalition is a group of organizations that agree to adopt a common strategy and work together in order to further their shared vision, values and goals. The individual groups feel it is in their best interest to join a coalition because they recognize either an opportunity to gain or a threat to lose something they each value (e.g., programs and services, legislation). The coalition may be organized around a single issue or for long-term objectives.

Some examples of coalitions that PSAC Regional Human Rights and Equity Committees have joined or social justice organizations that we have worked with closely in the past are:

- Assembly of First Nations
- Coalition of Black Trade Unionists
- Asian Canadian Labour Alliance
- The Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC)
- Canadian Council for Refugees
- Council of Canadians with Disabilities
- EGALE
- Local and regional advocacy organizations

What is advocacy?

Advocacy is any effort to influence, shape or change a particular issue in society. This can include lobbying politicians, writing letters to businesses or elected officials, running social media campaigns, developing public awareness materials, organizing rallies and a host of other actions.

As part of the broader social justice movement, Regional Human Rights and Equity Committees can and should undertake advocacy and political action. In identifying priority issues to address, the Committee should consider who is most affected by the issue and where the Committee has the greatest potential to influence.

Often the issues that we are tackling affect marginalized communities. It is important that our advocacy is supportive and that we are advocating with instead of for. Frequently, marginalized people are spoken over or their voices and perspectives are dismissed. So, in all of our efforts, labour activists should be taking the lead from those who are most affected by an issue and doing what we can to support their positions. When we hold more power and are not part of the group(s) that are most affected, then it is important to listen and amplify marginalized voices rather than making the mistake of putting ourselves front and centre.

National Equity Conferences

PSAC National Equity Conferences are held every three years. The National Equity Conferences include: Access Conference; Pride Conference; Conference for Racially Visible Members; Indigenous People's Conference and the Women's Conference. The Conferences bring together PSAC equity-seeking members from across the country to, among other things, discuss and adopt resolutions on issues and policies that affect them. These resolutions reflect the direction and action that equity-seeking members want to take to further the status of equity-seeking groups in the union, at the workplace, and in society.

Two equity delegates to the PSAC Triennial Convention are elected at each of the PSAC National Equity Conferences.

The National Equity Conferences are also an opportunity for PSAC equity-seeking members to share with and learn from each other, to create networks, and to feel empowered through workshops and speakers. It brings the union closer to equity-seeking members and vice versa. It is a time for learning, for decision-making, and for celebration.

Regional Conference for Racially Visible Members

In 2015, a resolution was adopted by the PSAC Convention delegates that requires, once every three years each region to organize a Regional Conference for Racially Visible Members. Regional conferences have traditionally served as introductory union events to newer activists and have more of an educational focus to them.

They can also submit resolutions to the National Conference for Racially Visible Members.

Contact your REVP and Regional Council representative responsible for racially visible members for more information on Regional Conferences for Racially Visible Members.

Excerpts from the PSAC Constitution

SECTION 15

REGIONAL COMMITTEES

Sub-Section (1)

The organization and operation of Regional Women's, Indigenous Peoples, Racially Visible Persons, Pride (LGBTQ2+ Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Persons, Queer, Two-Spirited, +), Access (Persons with Disabilities) and Young Worker (persons 35 years of age and under) Committees should be encouraged by the PSAC as a matter of policy, provided that not more than one Regional Women's, Indigenous Peoples, Racially Visible Persons, Pride, Access and Young Worker Committee may be organized in any area that can be reasonably encompassed by one Regional Women's, Indigenous Peoples, Racially Visible Persons, Pride, Access and Young Worker Committees.

Sub-Section (2)

a) Women's, Indigenous Peoples, Racially Visible Persons, Pride, Access and Young Worker Committees of the PSAC may be organized where there are at least three (3) Components and/or DCLs willing to participate and upon application to the AEC.

b) Notwithstanding Sub-Section (2) (a), the AEC may approve the organization of Regional Indigenous Peoples, Racially Visible Persons, Pride, Access and Young Worker Committees where less than three (3) Components and/or DCLs are willing to participate when it is satisfied that the Committee can be viable.

c) Notwithstanding Sub-Section (2) (a) and (b), Regional Human Rights Committees consisting of members of the Indigenous Peoples, Racially Visible Persons, Pride and Access Equity Groups may be organized where there are at least three (3) Components and/or DCLs willing to participate, and upon application to the AEC.

d) Notwithstanding Sub-Section (2) (a), (b) and (c), the AEC may approve, in exceptional cases, the organization of Regional Indigenous Peoples, Racially Visible Persons, Pride and Access Committees jointly as a Human Rights Committee when it is satisfied that the members are willing to participate and the Committee can be viable.

Sub-Section (3)

a) Regional Women's, Indigenous Peoples, Racially Visible Persons, Pride, Access and Young Worker Committees or Regional Human Rights Committees shall consist of representatives who should come from each Component with members in the jurisdiction of the Women's, Indigenous Peoples, Racially Visible Persons, Pride, Access and Young Worker Committees.

b) Only one member per Local or Branch may be a voting member of each Committee. For any Committee that does not utilize voting, only one member per Local or Branch may engage in the process by which decisions of the Committee are made.

Sub-Section (4)

Regional Human Rights Committees or Regional Women's, Indigenous Peoples, Racially Visible Persons, Pride, Access and Young Worker Committee meetings shall be held at least four (4) times a year.

Sub-Section (5)

Regional Human Rights Committees or Regional Women's, Indigenous Peoples, Racially Visible Persons, Pride, Access and Young Worker Committees shall be fully funded by the PSAC.

Sub-Section (6)

The seven (7) PSAC Regional Health and Safety Committees shall have the authority to submit resolutions directly to the National Health and Safety Conference.

HUMAN RIGHTS TIMELINE

The sixties and seventies

1958 Cal Best, first Black union leader in the federal public service is elected President of the newly formed Civil Service Association of Canada (CSAC). He remains President until the merger of the CSAC with Civil Service Federation of Canada to form the Public Service Alliance of Canada in 1966.

1971 PSAC organizes employees of the Iroquois St. Regis Band Council. The Band Council challenges the union's certification and argues that the Band Council is not 'an employer'. PSAC argues that Indigenous and non-Indigenous employees working for the Council or the Band should not be denied basic workers' rights. In 1982, the Supreme Court agrees with the union's position that the Council engages employees to do work and pays them.

1976 First woman National Director elected to PSAC National Board of Directors, Eleanor Ryan

1976 24 per cent of delegates to PSAC Triennial Convention are women

1976 First woman elected to the Alliance Executive Committee, Aileen Manion

1976 Establishment of PSAC Equal Opportunities Committee, focusing on women's advancement

1976 A year after the federal government introduces wage and price control legislation, the Canadian Labour Congress sponsors a national Day of Protest to mark the anniversary. Over a million workers are estimated to have participated in demonstrations across the country.

The eighties

1980 Clerical and Regulatory (CR) group members go on strike

1980 Leave negotiated for care and nurturing of pre-school children

1980 Adoption leave negotiated

1980 Maternity leave allowance negotiated for CR group

1980 Leave for relocation of spouse negotiated

1980 First pay equity settlement – Library Science (LS) group

1981 Establishment of the PSAC weekend course "Fighting Discrimination: The Local's Role"

1981 The mandate of the PSAC Equal Opportunities Committee is expanded to include all equity groups

1982 Establishment of PSAC family care allowance for participation in union activities

1982 Pay equity increases won for the Food Services, Laundry Services and miscellaneous personal service members within the General Services (GS) group

1982 Discrimination within the Hospital Services (HS) classification standard recognized and corrected with a reclassification of 250 Registered Nursing Assistants

1983 PSAC files pay equity complaint on behalf of CR group (Canada Post) with the Canadian Human Rights Commission

1983 The Task Force on Equality in Employment, headed by Justice Rosalie Abella, is created to examine the issues of representation in the workforce. The Canadian Labour Congress (CLC), PSAC and other unions make submissions in support of employment equity. The Task Force produces a groundbreaking report: Equality in Employment.

1984 First woman component president elected, Sandra Messer, Union of Veterans Affairs Employees

1984 Establishment of PSAC in-residence course, "Women at Work"

1984 Adoption of PSAC Sexual Harassment Policy

1984 PSAC files pay equity complaint on behalf of the CR group (Treasury Board) with the Canadian Human Rights Commission

1985 First National Women's Conference (500 participants)
"Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow: The Changing Role of Women"

1985 Constitutional recognition of Triennial National Women's Conferences to report to the PSAC Triennial National Conventions and to have their recommendations voted on

1985 Funding at six cents per member per month established for Regional and National Women's Conferences

1986 Sexual harassment protection clause negotiated

1986 No discrimination clause negotiated

1986 Maternity leave provisions negotiated for all other PSAC Treasury Board units

1986 The federal government adopts the *Employment Equity Act* to help remedy historic discrimination and remove barriers in the workplace against women, Indigenous people, people with disabilities and visible minorities. The Act does not apply to the federal public service. Labour participates in the initial consultations on the proposed Act.

1986 Labour activists who were involved in anti-racist work inside unions as well as in their communities create the Ontario Coalition of Black Trade Unionists.

1986 Alliance International Women's Day (IWD) activities – "Getting Organized: Bargaining for Equality"

1986 Establishment of PSAC weekend course on technological change

1986/87 First Regional Women's Conferences "Equality for a Change"

1987 Establishment of PSAC weekend course, "Men and Women Talking: A Vision of Equality"

1987 Second woman component president elected, Lynn Ray, Union of Solicitor General Employees (USGE)

1987 Supreme Court decision (Robichaud case): employer responsible for maintaining a harassment-free work environment

1987 Alliance IWD theme "Blueprint for the future: Our future is our children"

1987 Second National Women's Conference, "Women's Action: The Power of Change"

1987 HS members receive pay equity adjustments retroactive to 1980

1988 Union of Postal Communications Employees (UPCE) strike

1988 The PSAC triennial convention adopts a comprehensive human rights policy. This policy reaffirms PSAC's support for human rights as proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and the *Canadian Human Rights Act*. It also outlines measures to facilitate achieving equality and eliminating discrimination.

1988 The National Employment Equity Network is created by a coalition of equality-seeking groups. The mandate of this coalition is to lobby the federal government to make the employment equity program more effective. PSAC is part of this network.

1988 Constitutional recognition and funding of Regional Women's Committees by PSAC Triennial National Convention

1988 PSAC Human Rights Policy adopted at Convention

1988 Two women elected to the Alliance Executive Committee (AEC), Susan Giampietri and Joane Hurens

1988 Funding for Regional and National Women's Conferences increased to 21 cents per member per month

1988 Alliance IWD theme "Quality Child Care"

1988/89 Second series of Regional Women's Conferences, "Women's Action: The Power of Change"

1989 Letter of Understanding between PSAC and Treasury Board on Workplace Child Care negotiated

1989 Hospital Services (HS) strike over pay equity

1989 Joint union-management pay equity study begins for members at the Government of Northwest Territories

1989 Alliance IWD theme "Pay Equity: Putting it Together"

1989 PSAC Lesbian and Gay Support Group is formed

The nineties

1990 Third woman component president elected, Bernice Wilson, Union of Energy, Mines and Resources

1990 Third National Women's Conference, "Women's Action: The Power of Change"

1990 Treasury Board makes partial payments to Clerical and Regulatory (CR), Stenographic and Typing (ST), and Educational Support (EU) members as a result of Joint Union Management Initiative (JUMI) pay equity study

1990 Federal separate employers such as Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS), Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), Communications Security Establishment (CSE), and Auditor General (AG), follow suit and make partial pay equity payments to same groups

1990 Canadian Human Rights Commission appoints a Tribunal to hear the largest pay equity complaint filed in Canadian history for the CR, ST, HS, LS, EU groups

1990 35 Regional Women's Committees established

1990 PSAC Equality Action Group is formed by visible minority members to work on race relations issues

1990 Alliance IWD theme "Women's Action for Economic Equality"

1990 Racially visible members form the PSAC Equality Action Group in the National Capital Region (NCR) to work on human rights issues. This later became the NCR Racially Visible Action Committee (RVAC).

1991 A committee of the House of Commons is given the mandate to review the *Employment Equity Act*, 1986 and make recommendations for improvement. PSAC provides its views to the Committee. The Committee's 1992 report, entitled "A Matter of Fairness", makes a number of recommendations, including: the inclusion of the federal public service under the Act, that the Act require bargaining agents to be consulted and have input into the preparation and implementation of employment equity plans, and that the Canadian Human Rights Commission (CHRC) become the enforcement agency under the Act with auditing powers. Although this report was tabled in 1992, the Act was not revised until 1995.

1991 PSAC video "Harassment at Work" produced

1991 34 per cent of delegates at PSAC Triennial Convention are women

1991 Three women, out of five AEC positions, are elected at PSAC Convention, Nycole Turmel, Susan Giampietri, and Joane Hurens

1991 Hospital Services (HS) Pay Equity Tribunal decision

1991 Alliance IWD theme "Tech Change Under Control"

1991 PSAC national strike of Treasury Board units, regarded as the largest strike in Canadian history/herstory

1991 An additional three Regional Women's Committees established

1991 Treasury Board recognizes need for major overhaul of public service classification system to remove gender bias

1992 Alliance IWD theme "In Diversity is Unity"

1992 PSAC woman member, Lynn Jones, elected to Canadian Labour Congress Executive Council – visible minority affirmative action position

1992 Third series of Regional Women's Conferences "After the Strike: Women, Power and Politics"

1992 First contract negotiated for Yukon Women's Transition Home (PSAC members), using a "consensus bargaining" approach

1992 A tribunal is finally appointed, ten years after the filing of a pay equity complaint by PSAC on behalf of the CR group at Canada Post

1992 On behalf of our members, PSAC negotiates travel insurance policy that recognizes same-sex spouses

1992 PSAC produces December 10th, Human Rights Day poster (members with arms linked representing various concerns)

1992 PSAC's Equal Opportunities Committee is expanded by eight seats in order to ensure the representation of groups covered by Human Rights Policy

1992 The PSAC National Board of Directors adopts a resolution to commemorate the United Nations Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, March 21

1993 Fourth woman component president elected, Valerie Denesiuk, Supply and Services Union

1993 PSAC Harassment Policy and Complaint Procedure is adopted by the National Board of Directors. This policy undertakes to maintain a harassment free environment at all PSAC functions and, unlike the Sexual and Personal Harassment Policy, pertains to harassment on all prohibited grounds cited in the PSAC Human Rights Policy (e.g., race, disability and so on).

1993 Racially visible members, Indigenous members, and LGBTQ2+ members begin to form their Regional Committees across the country

1993 Funding is provided for pilot project weekend education seminars for racially visible members (Halifax and Toronto). Racially visible members play an active role in planning, developing, organizing and delivering the seminars.

1993 Workshop, "Anti-Racist Facilitator Training" is conducted at the annual conference for education staff

1993 The policy on Sexual Orientation is drafted by the PSAC Lesbian and Gay Support Group and presented to the Equal Opportunities Committee for discussion

1993 Members with Disabilities in the Montreal region form le Comité régional des membres ayant un handicap (MDAC)

1993 PSAC produces March 8 International Women's Day poster, conceptualized by an Indigenous member of the Equal Opportunities Committee, around the graphic depiction of an Indigenous "medicine wheel", under the theme "Voices of Power"

1993 Systems Review of Alliance Centre employment policies and practices completed as part of the Employment Equity Plan for PSAC staff. This plan is jointly developed by PSAC and the two staff unions, the Canadian Union of Labour Employees (CULE) and the Alliance Employees' Union (AEU) for designated groups.

1993 Fourth National Women's Conference held, "Women, Power and Politics"

1994 28 per cent of members of the National Board of Directors (NBOD) are women

1994 PSAC participates in the first joint Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) and affiliate International Women's Day campaign under the theme "Weavers of World Rights"

1994 Federal Court orders the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal to re-examine their rulings on the Mary Pitawanakwat case. A settlement is later reached giving Mary Pitawanakwat $200,000 to cover damages and credits for all annual leave and sick leave.

1994 PSAC completes the representation of its case before the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal in the pay equity complaint for the CR, ST, HS, LS, EU Treasury Board units

1994 During collective bargaining, female-dominated groups at Canada Post receive gains as a result of pay grid re-structuring that cuts the wage gap for women significantly in some cases

1994 PSAC Convention addresses a broad range of human rights issues:

- Women's Policy Paper
- Sexual Orientation Policy
- Policy on Aboriginal Workers
- Policy on the Provision of Alternate Media
- PSAC Action Plan Regarding Employer Initiatives
- Employment Equity for Persons with Disabilities
- Establishment of a Local Accessibility Fund
- Mandate to hold the first National Conference for Racially Visible and Indigenous members

1994 PSAC wins arbitration with Canada Post establishing that the employer must include same-sex spouses in its benefit plans. The employer, predictably, appeals this ruling.

1995 A full day of the PSAC's National Board of Directors meeting is dedicated to training on systemic discrimination, harassment and human rights concepts

1995 Parliament adopts a revised federal *Employment Equity Act*, which applies to the federal public service for the first time. The new Act contains other significant improvements to the former Act, such as:

- providing the Canadian Human Rights Commission (CHRC) with the authority to conduct audits of employers;
- making the Federal Contractors Program requirements equivalent to those of the public service with regard to implementation of employment equity;
- requiring employers to consult with bargaining agents regarding the preparation, implementation and revision of their employment equity plans; and
- including more detailed requirements for employers in implementing employment equity.

However, there are also a number of problems with the 1995 Act, particularly the consequential amendments to the *Canadian Human Rights Act*, which take away the ability to file complaints based on employment equity data in most cases, and take away the Commission's ability to order employment equity remedies. In PSAC's view, the Act is still not nearly strong enough to ensure that employment equity will become a reality in workplaces.

1995 Representatives of PSAC and the two staff unions sign the PSAC Internal Employment Equity Plan.

1995 The founding convention of the PSAC Québec Council is held in St. Hyacinthe on May 6 – 7. The 150 delegates elect 10 officers to the Council, including a vice-president for women's issues.

1995 The second Access Conference is held in August for members with disabilities following an NBoD resolution to provide funding. Entitled "Access 95: Taking Our Place", the conference focuses on the impact of cuts to social programs and to employment on persons with disabilities

1995 August 30 marks the opening of the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing, China. Sister Nycole Turmel, PSAC First Vice-President, is part of the Canadian NGO delegation. Canadian delegates propose an International Women's March against poverty for the year 2000, which captures the imagination of many. Support for the march is gaining momentum.

1995 United Nations Survey known as the "Human Development Index" reports Canada rates as the #1 country in which to live – unless, as the Canadian Press put it, you're a woman. The rating then drops to #9.

1995 In an effort to put pressure on the Quebec government to negotiate on nine demands to fight women's poverty, hundreds of women in the province march 20 kilometres a day for 10 days as part of the Quebec March Against Women's Poverty. The march begins May 26 from Montreal, Longueuil and Rivière-du-Loup and ends June 4 in Québec City, with thousands joining them, to demand an end to women's poverty.

1995 Full day of National Board of Directors meeting dedicated to training on systemic discrimination, harassment and human rights concepts

1995 The PSAC National Women's Conferences Organizing Committee, mandated to plan the PSAC Women's Conferences, is struck and includes direct representation of equity group members

1995 On July 10, Sister Mary Pitawanakwat dies after a long battle with cancer

1995 Pay Equity Tribunal, to decide equal pay owed to 3,000 clerical workers at Canada Post, continues to meet. The tribunal hearings began in 1993

1995 PSAC appeals to the Federal Court to reverse a pay equity tribunal decision which did not provide full retroactivity to employees of Non-Public Funds Headquarters

1995 PSAC members at Bryony House, a women's shelter, successfully negotiate their first contract after organizing community support to elect a new board of directors

1995 PSAC teams up with the National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC) to provide training to activists and staff across the country, on incorporating coalitions in the fightback campaign against poverty

1995 PSAC woman member, Marianne Mackinnon elected as President of the Yukon Federation of Labour

1995 PSAC members at Purolator Courier, a female dominated bargaining unit, maintain a solid picket line during 57 days of lock-out and achieve their first collective agreement

1996 PSAC establishes and pilots its advanced course in human rights

1996 Fifth woman Component President elected, Jackie Simpson, Union of Northern Workers (UNW)

1996 Fourth series of Regional Women's Conferences "From the Margins to the Mainstream". This is the first series of regional conferences that are completely decentralized to the regions

1996 The first National Conference for members of PSAC who belong to racially visible groups and Indigenous groups is held. The theme of the conference is "Unity, Strength, Power: Together Against Racism".

1996 On February 15, the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal rules that data assembled over four years during the course of the joint employer-union equal pay study are valid. This decision provides hope that pay equity will become a reality in the federal public service. Arguments with respect to retroactivity and amounts owing are continuing before the Tribunal.

1996 Women's Across-Canada March Against Poverty, organized by the NAC and the CLC, begins May 15 in Vancouver, British Columbia, May 19 in St. John's, Newfoundland, and culminates June 15 in Ottawa, where some 25,000 people gather in LeBreton Flats and march to Parliament Hill

1996 Women in Quebec hold a 24-hour vigil in Quebec City, at the National Assembly, organized by the Fédération des femmes du Québec (FFQ) to commemorate the anniversary of the Quebec Bread and Roses March. They are joined by the Women's March Against Poverty eastern caravan.

1996 PSAC member Lois Moorcroft re-elected as MLA for the Yukon New Democratic Party in the Yukon legislature as Minister responsible for Education, Justice and Women's Directorate

1996 There are 10 workplace child care centres established, including a centre located near the Laval Penitentiary Complex which can accommodate 60 children

1996 There are 47 Regional Women's Committees established, and a request pending for the establishment of the 48th committee in Newfoundland

1996 The Canadian Human Rights Commission orders Treasury Board to provide same-sex couples with the same benefits as opposite-sex couples

1996 The Federal Court of Appeal rules that the pay equity complainants of the Non-Public Funds should receive the full retroactivity sought by PSAC, i.e. one year prior to the date of the complaint

1996 Fifth National Women's Conference held, "From the Margins to the Mainstream"

1996 Workers at the Red Bank First Nation are organized by PSAC

1997 40.5 per cent of the delegates to the Triennial Convention are women, double the number at the 1979 convention (20 per cent)

1997 34.6 per cent of the National Board of Directors (NBoD) are women, an increase of 6 per cent over 1994

1997 In the new regionalized structure of PSAC, almost 50 per cent of the AEC are women (4 of 9)

1997 Two PSAC members are elected in the federal election held in June: Louise Hardy from the Yukon Employees Union, representing the riding of Yukon; and Angela Vautour, from National Component, representing the riding of Beauséjour-Petitcodiac, both for the New Democratic Party

1997 PSAC booklet on Multiple Chemical Sensitivity (MCS) at Work is developed

1998 PSAC Awareness Kit on Scent-Free Environments is developed

1998 The first PSAC course on harassment is piloted in February

1998 In the Nova Scotia election held in March, the efforts of PSAC members help to elect the first black woman to the legislature. Yvonne Atwell, well-known community activist, represents the riding of Preston for the New Democratic Party.

1998 Women around the world begin preparations for the World Women's March Against Poverty, to be held in the year 2000. By July 1998, 617 women's groups in 86 countries have indicated their interest.

1998 At the common issues bargaining table during negotiations with Treasury Board, PSAC negotiates a top-up of parental benefit leave, in addition to the benefits for maternity leave, to a total of 25 weeks

1998 PSAC undertakes an internal pay equity initiative with two of its staff unions

1998 There are now 14 PSAC workplace childcare centres

1998 On June 29, PSAC wins a landmark decision in its 14-year battle for pay equity on behalf of federal public service workers in female-dominated groups. The Canadian Human Rights Tribunal decision includes:

- retroactivity to March 8, 1985 (the date the joint pay equity study was announced);
- simple interest, based on the Canada Savings Bond interest rate;
- interest will continue to accumulate until the payments are made;
- calculation of the wage gap to be based on the Canadian Human Rights Commission methodology, which is close to that of PSAC;
- integration of the pay equity adjustment into the wage rate as of July 29, 1998

In the wake of the decision, PSAC members sound the rallying cry from coast to coast: "Don't delay – just pay!"

1998 On August 14, the Federal Court dismisses Treasury Board's appeal of the Akerstrom and Moore Human Rights Tribunal decision. At issue in this case is the heterosexual specific definition of 'spouse' in the federal government's collective agreements with its bargaining agents.

1998 On August 27, the Federal government announces it will appeal the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal decision in the global pay equity complaint. PSAC immediately embarks on a national campaign of protest

1998 In September, PSAC officially endorses the World March of Women 2000 and contributes $2,000 to enable a delegate from the South to attend the first international planning meeting held in Montreal in October.

1998 On December 29, following many months of intense bargaining, the first negotiated collective agreements in over 10 years are signed by PSAC and Treasury Board covering workers at five tables. Improvements include:

- a new definition of common-law spouse to include same-sex couples and equivalent access to the provisions of the collective agreement;
- family-related leave is expanded to provide for care of an elderly member of the employee's family; the clause now also provides that employees can use family-related leave in order to make alternate care arrangements for a family member's longer illness;
- Maternity-Related Reassignment or Leave: the employer must modify an employee's job functions or reassign her for the period from the beginning of pregnancy to the end of the 24th week following pregnancy; if such modifications are not reasonably practicable, the employee is entitled to leave without pay;
- Pay Equity: For LS workers, all equal pay adjustments paid since 1990, in addition to special pay adjustments offered by the employer when pay equity conciliation talks broke down in September 1998, are rolled into base salary before the application of the economic increase. Other workers involved in the pay equity complaint (CRs, DAs, EUs, and STs) also receive Special Pay Adjustments which are rolled into base salary before the economic increase is applied; however, the previous pay equity adjustment made unilaterally by the employer is not part of base salary.

1998/99 Regional Women's conferences and seminars are held in every region

1999 May marks the 300th day of hearings in PSAC's pay equity complaint against Canada Post. The complaint on behalf of CRs at Canada Post was filed on August 24, 1983.

1999 On May 31, the Federal Court (Trial Division) begins hearing the government's appeal of the Pay Equity Tribunal decision. PSAC members in the NCR organize daily events in front of the Federal Court building for the entire two-week period, including guest speakers, an appearance by the political satire group the Raging Grannies, and hot dog lunches. A decision is anticipated before the end of 1999.

1999 On June 9, the Public Service Alliance of Canada and the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples (CAP) sign a partnership agreement aimed at finding solutions to the under-representation of Indigenous Peoples in the labour force

1999 On July 7, Canadian Human Rights Tribunal hearings begin in the pay equity complaint filed in 1989 on behalf of the workers employed by the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT). Hearings are scheduled through to June 2000.

1999 On July 13, in the face of continued stalling tactics by Treasury Board since the pay equity decision was issued July 29, 1998, PSAC asks that the Tribunal be reconvened to deal with outstanding issues, which include: methodology, interest, equal treatment for the HS group, and how the total amount of money owed will be divided up among the various levels. On October 29, an agreement is signed on how to implement the Tribunal's order.

1999 Negotiated Child Care Fund for our members at Canada Post

1999 Betty Bannon elected first woman National President of the Union of Taxation Employees

1999 PSAC organizes members of the Burnt Church First Nation

1999 Evans decision comes down regarding the government's appeal on pay equity and rules for the union saying "Justice delayed was justice denied"

1999 PSAC adopts Policy 40 on Anti-Racism

1999 PSAC collaborates with federal employers in the development of an Employment Systems Review Colloquium. The colloquium is designed to help union and employer representatives understand the work required by this stage in the employment equity process. Another goal is to engage representatives in the regions with the expectation that union-management activities will take place that will facilitate an exchange of strategies.

The new millenium

2000 PSAC 12th Triennial Convention elects first Woman National President: Nycole Turmel

2000 40 per cent of delegates to the 12th Triennial Convention are women

2000 Three out of nine members of the Alliance Executive Committee are women: Nycole Turmel, Patty Ducharme and Robyn Benson

2000 Five out of 18 Component Presidents are women

2000 Triennial Convention grants delegate status to PSAC EOC representatives to Convention

2000 World March of Women in the Year 2000 is launched on March 8 (International Women's Day) and culminates with 50,000 women on Parliament Hill on October 15 (International Day for the Elimination of Poverty)

2000 The Task Force on the Participation of Visible Minorities in the Public Service delivers its report entitled "Embracing Change in the Federal Public Service" (also known as the 'Perinbaum Report'), a government-wide action plan to address under-representation within the federal public service. The Embracing Change report sets a goal of one-in-five for new hires into the federal public service by 2003 and for executive hires by 2005, in order to address the large and growing gap with respect to this group. Three years of funding is attached to this initiative. PSAC had provided a submission to the Task Force during its consultations and welcomes the report and its recommendations. (After five years, the funding is not renewed and the initiative fails because the goal of one-in-five was never met.)

2000 PSAC develops its "Duty to Accommodate: A PSAC Guide for Local Representatives" publication (later revised in 2009). This guide is a popular tool for members to better understand the duty to accommodate, the process involved and the responsibilities of all the parties in the workplace.

2000 Resolutions adopted at the PSAC national equity conferences, including the Unity Conference are allowed to be sent to the PSAC Triennial Convention.

2000 PSAC Triennial Convention delegates amend the union's Constitution to allow eight PSAC Equity representatives, including two racially visible members, to have delegate status at PSAC Triennial Conventions with full delegate status

2000 PSAC negotiates a Joint Learning Program with Treasury Board that provides union-employer training to members on various topics including anti-discrimination and anti-harassment

2000 PSAC develops extensive training on employment equity

2000 PSAC Triennial Convention passes a resolution that allows resolutions adopted at the PSAC National Access Conference to be reviewed at the Triennial Convention. For the first time, the resolutions adopted at the PSAC 2002 Access Conference go to the PSAC Convention. As a result, some resolutions adopted included lobbying for a *Disability Rights Act*, developing a disability analysis of health care and improving disability insurance benefits.

2000/01 Negotiated Protective Reassignment for pregnant workers for the CX's at Corrections Canada and the Technical Table at Treasury Board

2001 PSAC participates in consultations on the TBS Duty to Accommodate Policy and Harassment Policy

2001/02 Pay Equity Task Force is established and mandated to organize public consultations on the *Pay Equity Act* and make recommendations by spring of 2003

2002 Seventh PSAC National Women's Conference in Ottawa under the theme, "Act Now! Build Our Future!"

2002 Canadian and Syrian citizen Maher Arar is detained and deported to Syria by U.S. and Canadian authorities even though he carries a Canadian passport. PSAC publicly calls for the release of Arar while he is imprisoned and supports his efforts to have the Canadian government establish a public inquiry into his detention. PSAC contributes financially to the Maher Arar Support Committee and actively participates on a CLC working group. A Commission of Inquiry established in 2007 finds Arar innocent. The federal government issues an apology and agrees to a settlement. Many of the recommendations from the Inquiry have yet to be implemented.

2002 PSAC begins to conduct its comprehensive employment equity and duty to accommodate courses

2002 The third PSAC National Unity Conference takes place

2002 There is a review of the federal *Employment Equity Act*. PSAC makes submissions and recommendations to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Human Resources Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities.

2003 Triennial Convention re-elects Sister Nycole Turmel as National President

2003 43 per cent of delegates to the 13th Triennial Convention are women

2003 37 per cent of the National Board of Directors elected are women and the three women AEC members are re-elected

2003 Delegates to the PSAC triennial convention agree to fully fund delegates to the National Equity Conferences and double the budget

2003 A special resolution is adopted at Convention for the creation of a National Network of Aboriginal, Inuit and Metis members (NAIM)

2003 PSAC launches its Social Justice Fund at the Triennial Convention. The Fund focuses on international development work, Canadian anti-poverty and development initiatives, emergency relief work in Canada and around the world, worker to worker exchanges, and worker education in Canada and around the world.

2003 A $20,000 budget is allocated to assist the work of existing regional equity committees. Newly created regional equity committees, including Racially Visible Action Committees, each receive $500 start-up funding.

2003 PSAC provides submissions on TBS Embracing Change Initiative which requires TBS to staff one in five positions with racially visible workers

2003 The UN Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related tolerance visits Canada as a result of the implementation of the Durban Programme of Action. The Special Rapporteur puts forward 15 conclusions and recommendations which "may add credibility, trust and recognition to its genuine political commitment to combating racism, discrimination and xenophobia". PSAC provides submissions to the Special Rapporteur in which it calls for a national action plan against racism and a strategy that will incorporate and implement employment equity, international and domestic human rights principles.

2003 PSAC participates in the International Civil Liberties Monitoring Group (ICLMG) which monitors the laws, policies and actions of the Canadian government related to civil liberties

2003/04 Pay Equity Taskforce releases its recommendations for a new proactive pay equity law

2004 A one-time think-tank of PSAC members from Indigenous communities in every region in Canada is held in Yellowknife. The objectives of this think-tank are to make recommendations on the objectives, mandate and structure of the NAIM.

2005 Eighth National Women's Conference in Vancouver under the theme, "Changing the Face of Power"

2005 REVPs elected in their respective Regions and three out of seven are women: Jeannie Baldwin, Robyn Benson and Patty Ducharme

2005 Four women elected to President position at Component Conventions and one as VP for international members: Betty Bannon, Heather Brooker, Jeanette Meunier-Mackay, Claudia Thompson and Andrée Massicotte

2005 PSAC signs an agreement with the Dene Nation to jointly explore work-related and labour relations issues facing Dene workers

2005 Tribunal issues decision in favour of Canada Post pay equity complaint. Employer appeals right away.

2005 PSAC holds its fourth National Unity Conference

2005 PSAC develops extensive training on the duty to accommodate

2005 PSAC participates at the National Council of Visible Minorities Conference for federal public service workers

2006 PSAC organizes the Nishnawabe-Aski police officers, the largest First Nations police force in North America

2006 The PSAC Triennial Convention amends Section 15 of the PSAC Constitution to include Regional Human Rights Committees which consist of all the equity groups.

2007 The Senate Standing Committee on Human Rights delivers its first report, entitled "Employment Equity in the Federal Public Service – Not There Yet", which finds that not enough progress is being made and contains a number of recommendations for improving the representation of the four designated groups. The PSAC had made a submission with recommendations to the Standing Committee.

2008 The first PSAC National Conference for Racially Visible Members is held as a result of the Unity Conference being divided into two conferences, one for racially visible members and the other for Indigenous members.

2008 PSAC and the staff unions adopt a PSAC Internal Anti-Racism Policy

2008 PSAC Collective Bargaining Branch supports a seven-week research project to begin to document PSAC's unionization and collective bargaining experiences with First Nations governments.

2008 PSAC holds its First National Conference for Indigenous members in Winnipeg

2008 Christine Collins elected first woman National President of Union of Canadian Transportation Employees

2009 PSAC's Duty to Accommodate Guide for Union Representatives is updated

2009 PSAC Triennial Convention Resolution on developing tools on the duty to accommodate is adopted by the delegates

2009 PSAC launches "Sometimes Sorry is Not Enough" campaign, engaging the participation of several affiliates of the CLC. The campaign calls for an end to gender discrimination in the *Indian Act*, and funding restoration for the Kelowna Accord.

2009 PSAC negotiates a collective agreement at Casino Regina that specifies that one in two workers should be Indigenous.

2009 PSAC, with the CLC and other unions, participates in the follow-up to the Durban Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and other forms of discrimination in Geneva.

2010 The Senate Standing Committee on Human Rights releases a second detailed report entitled "Reflecting the Changing Face of Canada". PSAC had provided submissions and recommendations to the Committee.

2010 PSAC's Seventh National Access Conference

2011 In *Cyr v. Treasury Board (Department of Human Resources and Skills Development)*, PSAC wins accommodation of member with environmental sensitivities.

2011 PSAC holds its second National Conference for Racially Visible Members

2011 Sharon DeSousa is the first racialized woman elected as Regional Executive Vice-President (Ontario)

2011 Larry Rousseau is the first racialized man elected as Regional Executive Vice-President (NCR)

2011 PSAC sends Equal Opportunity Committee Representative for Racially Visible Members to attend the 7th International African Diaspora Heritage Trail (ADHT) Conference, which is held at the World Trade and Convention Centre (Halifax, Nova Scotia) from September 22 to 25

2011 PSAC's Social Justice Fund establishes the Rémy M. Beauregard Project to support the education of Indigenous children in Columbia affected by the armed conflict

2011 PSAC joins forces with Amnesty International and the Assembly of First Nations on a campaign to have Canada sign onto the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

2011 The Supreme Court hears PSAC's appeal of the decision in the pay equity case for Clerical and Regulatory workers at Canada Post. In a rare move, Chief Justice Beverly McLaughlin issues the Court's unanimous decision directly from the bench that same day, ruling in PSAC's favour and ending a 30-year battle for pay equity at Canada Post.

2011 The PSAC National Aboriginal Peoples' Circle (NAPC) launches its "Justice for Aboriginal Peoples – it's Time" campaign to raise public awareness and provide tools to ensure the rights of Indigenous Peoples are respected. The accompanying video is titled "Why Don't You People Just Get Over It?".

2012 Magali Picard becomes the first Indigenous woman Regional Executive Vice-President (Quebec)

2012 PSAC joins a coalition calling for a national action plan on violence against women and an inquiry into missing and murdered Indigenous women

2012 PSAC Triennial Convention unanimously moves to support a campaign for a universal national child care program

2012 The Senate Standing Committee on Human Rights hears witnesses, including PSAC, on the progress of employment equity in the federal public service

2012 The PSAC National Human Rights Committee (NHRC), which replaced the union's Equal Opportunities Committee, holds its first meeting. There is a working group for racially visible members composed of seven Regional Council Representatives for Racially Visible members.

2013 The Senate Committee on Human Rights again hears witnesses on the progress of employment equity in the federal public service. PSAC appears and makes recommendations.

2013 The third Conference for Racially Visible Members is held simultaneously with the other National Equity Conferences

2013 PSAC women working with sisters from Australia and elsewhere at the UN Commission of the Status of Women obtain strong language on violence in the workplace that prohibits sexual harassment, recognizes the importance of unions, and acknowledges that the effects of domestic violence have an impact in the workplace.

2013 Web tools developed to address mental health issues in the workplace

2013 First National Equity Conferences are held in Toronto (included: National Women's Conference, National Conference for Racially Visible Members, National Aboriginal Peoples' Conference, National Access Conference, and National Pride Conference).

2014 PSAC supports Hassan Yussuff for President and Marie Clark Walker for Vice-President during the Canadian Laobur Congress (CLC) Convention. Hassan Yussuff is the first racialized President of the CLC.

2014 PSAC initiates a research project on the impact of slavery on women of African descent

2014 In Besner v. Deputy Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, PSAC's Canada Employment and Immigration Union component wins a victory on behalf of a worker with disabilities who was laid off in 2012 under the government's workforce adjustment program. The Public Service Staffing Tribunal orders that Claudette Besner be reinstated, after the union is able to prove that she was laid off because the government failed to properly accommodate her during the process.

2014 PSAC-TBS Joint Learning Program (JLP) announces a new workshop, "Mental Health in the Workplace", which is available to union members and their managers in the core public administration

2015 PSAC Triennial Convention delegates vote to launch a campaign for trans rights, by lobbying to include gender identity and expression as protected human rights grounds

2015 PSAC Triennial Convention adopts resolution to hold Regional Conferences for Racially Visible Members budgeted the same as the Regional Women's Conferences

2015 Agreement with Treasury Board is reached to establish a TBS Joint Union-Management Taskforce on Mental Health and Release of First Report of the Taskforce

2016 Government launches National Inquiry on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls

2016 PSAC launches "Thirsty for Justice," a campaign for safe drinking water in First Nations communities

2016 First Regional Conference for Racially Visible Members is held

2016 Second Report of the TBS Joint Union-Management Taskforce on Mental Health is released

2017 Second National Equity Conferences are held in Toronto (included: National Women's Conference, National Conference for Racially Visible Members, National Aboriginal Peoples' Conference, National Access Conference, and National Pride Conference).

2017 June Winger elected first woman National President of UNDE.

2017 Government legislates "gender identity and expression" as protected human rights grounds

2017 Treasury Board announces coverage for all forms of contraception under the Public Service Health Care Plan – a longstanding demand of women PSAC members

2017 The Report of the TBS Joint Union-Management Taskforce on Diversity and Inclusion is released that has comprehensive recommendations on strengthening employment equity, diversity and inclusion.

2018 Federal government announces five days of paid leave for workers experiencing domestic violence and dedicated parental leave for second parents.

2018 Third Report of the TBS Joint Union-Management Taskforce on Mental Health is released

2018 PSAC Triennial Convention adopts resolutions that change the following terminology in the PSAC Constitution: "Aboriginal" to "Indigenous"; and "GLBT" to "LGBTQ2+"

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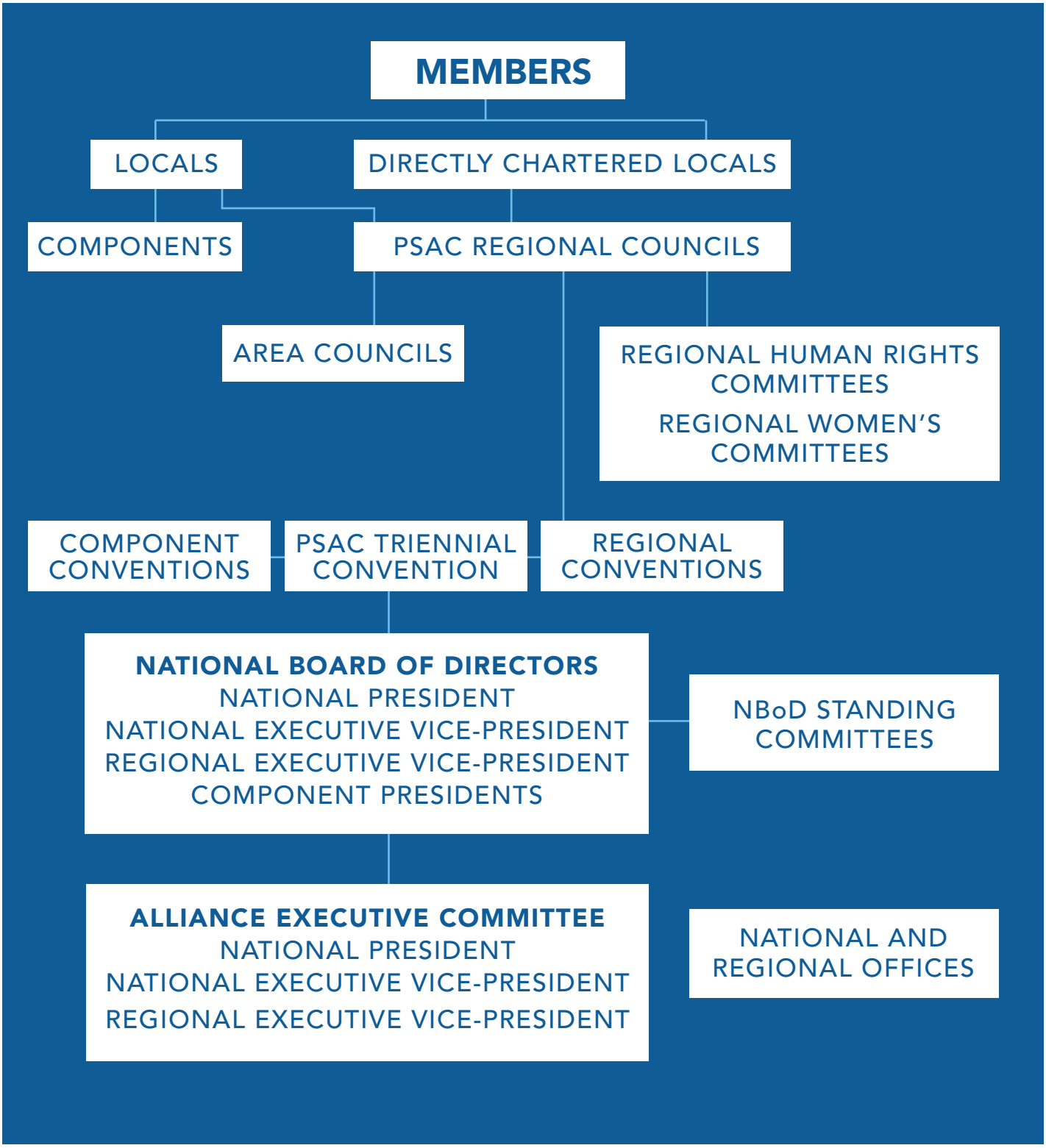
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