Red Tape Reduction Commission
Key Lessons Learned

National Conference
Presented by Roger Scott-Douglas

September 2012
The Commission

• Announced in Budget 2010 and launched in January 2011
  - Consisting of six parliamentarians and six private sector representatives
  - Chaired by the Honourable Maxime Bernier, Minister of State, Small Businesses and Tourism
  - Led by the Honourable Tony Clement, President of the Treasury Board

• Core mandate
  - Identifying red tape irritants to business that have a clear detrimental effect on growth, competitiveness and innovation
  - Making recommendations on lasting solutions

• Achievements and challenges
  - 2600 federal regulations in 14 sectors
  - Multi-layered consultations during an election period
  - Involvement of numerous departments and agencies
  - Environment of fiscal restraints to be considered when proposing recommendations
Commission’s essential principles to cutting red tape

1. Regulations should be built “from the outside in,” taking into account the circumstances of the businesses being regulated as well as the public interest

2. Common sense should be applied to all aspects of regulatory activity, from planning to management to reporting on performance

3. Governments and regulators should be accountable for regulatory activities and management and, in particular, for taking measures to control the costs associated with regulatory compliance

4. Compliance with regulatory requirements should be promoted while showing professionalism and client-focused service
Summary of key recommendations

Fifteen systemic and 90 department-specific recommendations

- Reducing administrative / cumulative burden
  - “One-for-One” Rule
  - Trimming information demands
  - Enhancing the use of electronic services
  - Improving coordination of activities
  - Reusing information already provided
  - Improving regulatory information on web portals

- Fostering a strong service culture among regulators
  - Meeting service standards
  - Reinforcing professionalism
  - Using plain language and definitive interpretations

- Increasing predictability / improving regulatory design
  - Publishing regulatory plans
  - Improving assessment of risks
  - Better understanding the impact of regulatory requirements on small businesses

- Ensuring accountability for progress
  - Appropriate oversight and accountability
Lessons learned from supporting the Commission’s efforts to drive transformational change

• Four key lessons to be learned from the initiative:

1. **Up-front clarity of mandate and effective governance mechanism**
   • Clear terms of reference / specific objectives / defined timelines
   • Project charter and consultation and work plan developed
   • Establishment of a secretariat headed by an Assistant Deputy Minister (ADM)
   • Governance model with clear roles for lead ministers and chair
   • Advisory committee composed of ADMs from regulatory departments
   • Creation of a working group from regulatory departments for input, advice, fact-checking

2. **Seek advice from a broad range of stakeholders / independent experts**
   • Businesses consulted to identify red tape priorities via roundtable sessions (15 sessions, 13 cities, 200 participants) and online consultations (2000 participants)
   • “What was Heard Report” published (September 2011)
   • Independent experts assessing the merits of the proposed changes
   • Experts advice tested at roundtables with businesses
   • Initial assessment and validation of lists of administrative burden solutions developed with front-line regulators
Lessons learned from supporting the Commission’s efforts to drive transformational change

3. Be transparent with stakeholders and regulators
   • Voices of stakeholders transcribed in the “What was Heard Report”
   • Online participants invited to share their submissions publicly
   • Roundtable summaries, list of written submissions received and names of participants posted on website
   • Executive summaries of policy option papers received are made public
   • Full access to consultation input by federal regulators
   • Analysis of issues and identification of “root causes” behind the irritants

4. Provide leadership to remain goal oriented
   • Initiative launched by the Prime Minister
   • Commission’s work championed by a Minister
   • President of Treasury Board regularly engaging his colleagues
   • Commission members provided entrepreneurial perspective, as well as an understanding of Parliament
   • Active role played by ADMs and DGs in providing advice and support
   • Statements of the President of the TB provide serious call to action
   • Announcements demonstrated government’s commitment (e.g. One-for-One Rule on receipt of the Recommendations Report)
... For the Commission, all this work will make a difference if:

• Its core principles are embedded in the federal regulatory regime

• The recommended systemic reforms are approved by government and embraced by regulatory departments and agencies, such that a significant “culture change” occurs and that business, particularly small business, feels that there is no need for another Red Tape Reduction Commission

• The recommendations to tackle the root causes of the specific top-of-mind irritants are approved by government and implemented by departments and agencies

• A measureable and meaningful difference is felt by business, particularly small business
Annex A – Summary of the approach

Business consultations identifying red tape irritants and potential systemic solutions
• 15 roundtables in 13 cities; 2 online questionnaires; written submissions from industry associations

Analysis
• Categorization of input and root cause analysis to define red tape issues and potential systemic solutions
• Support and challenge function on formulation of departmental response plans

Further research
• Engaging independent experts to produce options papers evaluating proposed systemic solutions
• Research on similar provincial and international initiatives (best practices, implementation strategies, approaches to measuring administrative burden)

Engagement with departments and agencies
• Liaising with DG-level working groups on systemic proposals
• The Community of Federal Regulators (CFR) as an active partner (2 CFR-sponsored workshops and postings on CFR website)

Liaison with other regulatory modernization initiatives
• Administrative Services Review, Regulatory Cooperation Council, MPMO, NPMO

“What was Heard” Report
• Presenting irritants and potential systemic solutions from the consultation participants

Recommendations Report
• 15 systemic recommendations to get at the root of red tape issues and preventing red tape from creeping back
• 90 recommendations to address department-specific red tape issues