



# **Audit of the Human Resources Management System (HRMS)**

**January 2006**

**Foreign Affairs Canada and International Trade Canada  
Office of the Inspector General  
Audit Division (ZIV)**

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# 1.0 Executive Summary

## Purpose and Scope

Foreign Affairs Canada (FAC) is currently facing a number of human resources challenges. These challenges are a result of a series of events: the salary devolution initiative, the reorganization of the Human Resources (HR) Branch, the splitting in two of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, and the upcoming implementation of the PeopleSoft Pay interface.

In particular, FAC is facing data integrity issues within its Human Resources Management System (HRMS) as well as perceived deficiencies in the HR processes and supporting materials. Inaccuracies in data have significant impacts on the Department's Human Resource Planning, budgets, and various internal and external systems fed by HRMS. Corrections to data are not only required in the HRMS system but also in the receiving systems which is creating extra pressure on the staff's current workload. When these systems reside external to FAC, the results can be detrimental to the organization, causing embarrassment and immediate action to clean up the issue.

An audit project was carried out to assist FAC in defining a framework that would help to alleviate the current data integrity issues.

## Key Findings

Over the course of the audit, major common findings relevant to the HRMS data integrity issues emerged from various documents, consultations, interviews, workshops, and control effectiveness testing. These key findings may be summarized as follows:

### ***Lack of Clearly Documented Policies and Business Procedures***

HR and HRMS policies, business procedures and processes are not consistent and documented across the Classification and Staffing areas. This scenario creates confusion in terms of roles, responsibilities and accountabilities, and impedes maximizing the effectiveness of all HR employees. Missing policies and procedures affect the timeliness of entry into HRMS and the accuracy of the data entered.

### ***Lack of Communication Process to Support Dissemination of Information Down, Up and Across Organization***

There is currently no formal process in place to take HR information and disseminate it across the organization. Communications between Missions and HR is a challenge to ensure information on current postings, changes in policies and procedures is communicated in a timely manner. Communication between directorates may not occur when workload impacts timely processing and in turn impacts the other areas of the organization.

### ***Lack of Verification Process***

Adhoc and inconsistent verification activities at various levels of the organization are performed because either the employees are unaware of the verification tools available to them, or the verification tools are lacking in being able to provide comprehensive useful information. Without documented procedures, there is nothing to guide

employees as to what requires verification, when verification must be performed, what tools should be used and how the corrections should be communicated and effected. In the case where verification is performed, the staff applies an informal “common sense” approach to ensure that verification or “appropriate” control activities are exercised.

## **Recommendations**

The audit recommends that Foreign Affairs Canada implement its own Human Resources Control Framework to provide the necessary infrastructure for data integrity through validation and monitoring. The Human Resources Control Framework requires that FAC achieve and implement each of the five consecutive levels of the framework to address the key findings.

The Five Levels are:

- Level 1 – Documented Policies
- Level 2 – Documented Procedures and Processes
- Level 3 – Applied Procedures and Controls
- Level 4 – Monitor and Review
- Level 5 – Fully Integrated Procedures and Controls

At Level 1, internal policies and directives will need to be created to provide the organization with a foundation providing direction and assistance in decision-making when capturing information into HRMS.

At Level 2, documentation of HR business procedures and processes to support the internal policies and directives will also need to be created. These should include supporting documents such as forms, data verification and correction procedures, service level agreements and integrated HR and HRMS training modules to ensure information is complete and available for the employees to perform their roles effectively and efficiently. Business processes must be realigned for effectiveness and efficiency.

At Level 3, FAC will need to implement the policies and procedures and provide training and support to the employees. Change strategies, communication plans, and training programs should be implemented through the active participation of management and/or a change agent, such as, a Communications/HR Officer, and CFSI.

At Level 4, a “risk” manager should be assigned to monitor the level of data integrity issues pertaining to the policies, procedures, verification processes, communication programs, training programs, and change strategies, to ensure that the intended results are met. These results should be routinely reported to Human Resource Executive Management for their review.

At Level 5, HR Executive Management should receive the results of the level of data integrity issues and assess the level of data integrity improvement. Risks and strengths should be identified and a mitigation strategy built to continue the process of data integrity improvement. The mitigation strategy should identify where in the control framework further work is required. This information should be communicated back to the Departmental Executive Committee to keep everyone in-step and moving forward.

## **Summary**

This audit report has facilitated an implementation process by lining up the audit findings with each of the five levels, and recommending immediate improvements in Classification and Staffing that can be made at each level. This will ready FAC to go forward to put in place its own Human Resources Control Framework.

Audit findings revealed that without a framework in place, employees struggle on a daily basis, relying on corporate memory, external policies, and internal training guides to make business decisions that may impact other areas of the organization. The Human Resources Control Framework will alleviate staff's current frustration and confusion and provide them with the support required to make effective and efficient business decisions, lessening the current investigative process.

## 2.0 Introduction

Foreign Affairs Canada and International Trade Canada (formerly Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade – DFAIT) adopted PeopleSoft as the department's Human Resources Management System (HRMS) in 1998. The purpose of PeopleSoft was to support the administration of human resources throughout the organization.

A series of examinations of PeopleSoft have taken place since its inception. In 1999 PeopleSoft was audited; in 2003 it underwent a PeopleSoft HRMS Performance Improvement Project; in 2004 there was an HRMS Risk Assessment.

Consistently, the studies identified a low level of confidence in the accuracy of the data contained in PeopleSoft. Research has shown that the ability of PeopleSoft to deliver on expectations is hampered by past and current human resources practices within Foreign Affairs Canada.

In order to make sound decisions, Foreign Affairs Canada requires sound data. It is critical for the department to produce accurate and reliable human resources information in real time. In order to achieve this, the Audit and Evaluation Committee of Foreign Affairs Canada requested:

- an audit of its human resources business processes, specifically Classification and Staffing; and,
- recommendations for achieving and sustaining human resources data integrity.

This audit report contains high-level findings supported by detailed findings in the Appendix. It recommends that Foreign Affairs Canada establish a comprehensive Human Resources Control Framework for manual and automated practices. The Audit proactively assesses the findings and recommends improvements to assist Foreign Affairs Canada to ready itself to meet the requirements of the Five-Level Framework. In addition, it provides step-by-step direction for the implementation process to assist Foreign Affairs Canada to put in place its own Human Resources Control Framework.

Every effort must be made to strengthen and maintain the integrity of the HRMS data within Foreign Affairs Canada. The accuracy of the department's data has far-reaching effects. Internally, the systems affected are the Salary Management System (SMS), Business Intelligence tool (BI), and the SAP financial system. Externally, the systems affected are at the Public Service Commission, Treasury Board, Public Service Human Resource Management Agency, and at Public Works and Government Services Commission. See Figure 1.0 HRMS Interfaces below.

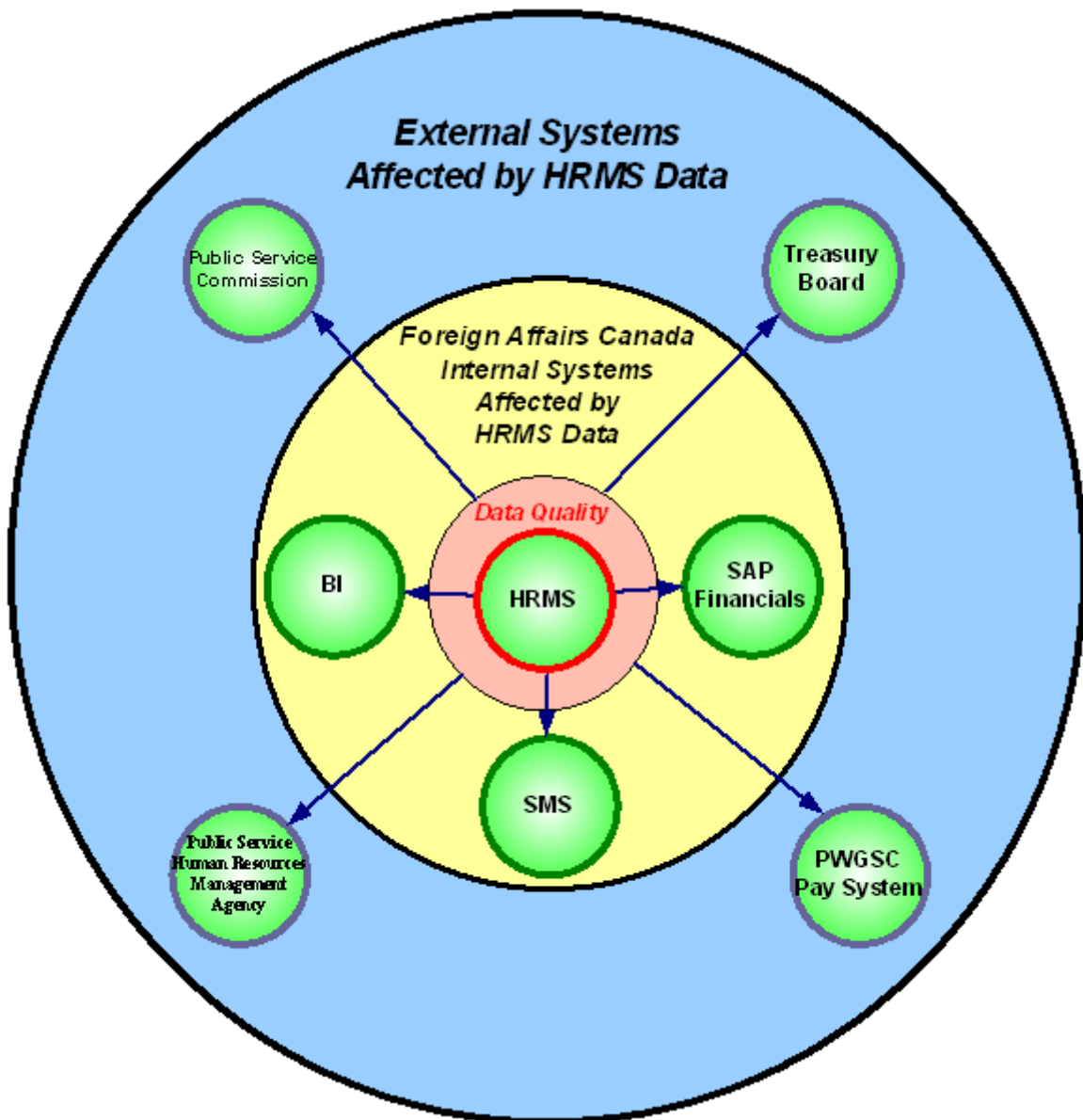


Figure 1.0 HRMS Interfaces

The internal systems affected by the data integrity issues residing in HRMS produce inaccurate reports reflecting misinformation and affect the budgets, quarterly reporting by sectors, efficiency of the assignment process and employee entitlements.

External reporting must be given a high priority for data accuracy because of the effect it has on the organization. When external organizations receive inaccurate data, it can result in embarrassment to the organization and could have financial impact to FAC.

## **3.0 Methodology**

Various techniques were used in the conduct of this audit, including consultations with management, interviews, workshops and control effectiveness testing. The purpose was to extract:

- data integrity issues;
- where in the organization the data integrity issues reside; and,
- root causes of data integrity issues.

### **3.1 Management Consultations**

Consultations were held with senior management from various HR Directorates as well as SMSH to:

- a. identify issues and concerns;
- b. obtain their support and commitment; and,
- c. identify the workshop attendees for the upcoming workshops.

Information gathered during the consultations was analyzed and assisted in the creation of the following audit criteria used in the workshop process:

- accurate, relevant, available documentation to support HR Business Processes
- sufficient HRMS access to execute business process
- efficient and effective forms
- timely, effective training
- effective, documented service levels
- timely, effective data verification
- timely, effective data correction

The control areas assessed against the criteria in the workshops were:

- HR policies, procedures and processes
- access controls into HRMS
- forms used for the entry of data into HRMS
- HR training practices
- timely entry of data
- the verification process
- the correction process

### **3.2 Interviews**

Individual interviews were conducted with the Classification, Staffing, and Assignments Officers and Assistants, and the HRMS Trainer from CFSI. These individuals provided:

- a. a view of the business processes
- b. the roles and responsibilities of the individuals within the processes
- c. high-level business process flows



### **3.3 Workshops**

Three workshops were conducted in this study; Classification, Staffing, and Data Integrity. Participants spanned the HR organization and included representation from SMSH and AMA's. Groups were formed within the workshops to:

- a. assist in identifying the data integrity issues;
- b. assist in identifying the data integrity root causes.

At the Classification and Staffing workshops, a sub-set of business process flows was introduced to the participants to verify and identify key HRMS activities within the FAC business processes. The objective was to:

- a. document the issues arising from the current process that affect data integrity;
- b. identify control checkpoints for activities within the process.

A data integrity workshop was facilitated to identify further issues affecting data integrity not identified through the previous workshops. It was conducted to review and discuss:

- a. the verification of data;
- b. communication of data issues;
- c. corrections to data; and,
- d. the report process around the integrity of the data.

Participants provided their recommendations on ways to improve the data integrity of the HRMS system.

### **3.4 Control Effectiveness Testing**

A key element of the approach was to ascertain the extent to which the HR control objectives were being achieved. To do this the approach focused on how effective the current controls were in:

- a. preventing errors
- b. detecting errors
- c. reporting errors

The testing also assessed the procedures being applied by staff to:

- execute the controls
- carry out data correction

## 4.0 Findings

The findings are a high level summary of the audit reviews, consultations, workshops, and interviews held with various levels of staff within the organization. The findings were sorted in three categories: General, Classification and Staffing to comply with the request to audit the Classification and Staffing processes within FAC. These findings were then lined up with the Five Levels of the recommended Human Resources Control Framework:

- Level 1 – Documented Policies
- Level 2 – Documented Procedures and Processes
- Level 3 – Applied Procedures and Controls
- Level 4 – Monitor and Review
- Level 5 – Fully Integrated Procedures and Controls

This was done to assess the immediate corrective action that needs to be taken before an HR Control Framework for FAC can be put in place. ***For details on the findings, please refer to 7.0 Appendix A.***

### 4.1 General

The high-level general findings revealed that FAC Human Resources does not have its own overall control framework or common understanding of controls and processes to ensure data integrity. The staff generally apply an informal “common sense” approach to ensure that verification or “appropriate” control activities are exercised.

FAC relies on the integrity of the HR data within Foreign Affairs Canada to make critical decisions affecting the organization. The findings show that the current lack of a control framework impacts FAC’s ability to make these critical decisions in an effective and well informed manner. It also affects the HR and sector efficiencies by creating additional work exponentially when inaccuracies need to be corrected.

The findings also revealed that HR lacks the dedicated resources necessary to input the information into the HRMS system. This lack of staffing resources impacts the timeliness of entry into HRMS, which in turn impacts the SMS system. Correction is then required in both HRMS and SMS.

The findings also identified only one CFSI resource dedicated to developing and delivering HRMS training.

In particular, the high-level **findings** showed that in order to achieve the **Requirements of Level 1 and 2 – Documented Policies, Procedures and Processes** there are a significant number of improvements that need to be made to human resources HRMS control framework.

Research identified the following deficiencies:

- A lack of HR business related policies and procedures with integrated HRMS activities.
- A need for clear definition of roles, responsibilities and accountabilities for all classification actions affecting HRMS data.
- A need for integrated HR action and HRMS forms.
- There is no validation of data at time of entry.
- Roles for verification and correction are known in each of the HR directorates but there are no formal written procedures to support and guide staff in conducting an efficient and effective data verification.
- Numerous verification activities are also conducted at the sector level with the results forwarded to HR for correction. However, the procedure for requesting a correction is not documented resulting in inconsistent and inefficient processes across the organization.
- Verification reports from HRMS are cumbersome and complicated.
- Verification also occurs external to HRMS and is verified within the Salary Management System (SMS), the Business Intelligence (BI) tool and by Corporate Services SSMH business analysts when testing new functionality and new reports.
- There are no formal, documented corrections procedures.
- Service Level Agreements communicating the level of service required to deliver effective and efficient HR services do not exist.
- There is a need for a standard organization chart tool.

High-level **findings** also identified the Requirements that must be met before FAC Human Resources can begin to put in place **Level 3 – Applied Procedures and Controls** of the recommended Human Resources Control Framework.

The audit showed the following general deficiencies in communications and verifications as they relate to data integrity:

- There is no forum for discussing HRMS issues across and down through the organization. HRMS User Reference Group was previously disbanded, although it was recently reactivated.
- No one point of contact within the different HR directorates to assist the managers and the Area Management Advisors (AMA) when performing HR related tasks.
- High turnover in staff in HR; heavy workload; pressure to complete tasks in a timely manner.
- Several sectors within FAC maintain “a black book” duplicating information found in HRMS, resulting in inefficiencies and costly misuse of resources.
- There is a need for an HRMS refresher course for Assistants; and a quick reference guide.

*Since a Human Resources Control Framework is not currently in place, there were no general findings at Level 4 – Monitor and Review or at Level 5 – Fully Integrated Procedures and Controls.*

## 4.2 Classification

High-level **findings** from the various meetings and workshops revealed that Classification is very close to meeting **Level 1 – Documented Policies** of the recommended Human Resources Control Framework. Foreign Affairs Canada, Human Resources is in the process of redrafting the internal policies/directives in accordance with the new Treasury Board Classification policies.

- Roles, responsibilities and accountabilities for HR classification actions affecting HRMS data will need to be clearly defined and communicated to all persons concerned.

However, the **findings** showed that it is at **Level 2 - Documented Procedures and Processes** of the Human Resources Control Framework that Classification must concentrate its efforts.

- Classification is lacking formal, standardized and documented procedures and processes for creating positions, reclassifying positions, performing reorganization and all HRMS related activities. This causes delays in the performance of activities, creates a lack of accountability and confusion as to what, when, where and how classification actions should be performed.
- Classification is also lacking formalized, standardized forms, and verification reports and procedures. Most corrections to HRMS data are requested verbally or by email. There is no consistency in this process.
- There is inconsistent involvement of the Classification Officers by the managers in the upfront analysis of the organizational impact of the reorganization process.
- The research also showed that there is only one Certified Classification Officer and one Classification Assistant. These limited resources were shown to create a bottleneck and affect the timeliness of human resources classification activities and subsequent HRMS update.
- There is a lack of trained members for the Reclassification Evaluation Committee which slows the classification evaluation process.

The **findings** at **Level 3 – Applied Procedures and Controls** of the HR Control Framework revealed that clear lines of communication have not been established. In particular, there is a need for HR to advise sector managers when heavy workloads will impact on timely processing of data. This lack of communication then impacts other areas of the organization.

Research also showed that the correction of Classification data is diverted to the Staffing group because Classification does not have access to “correction mode” in

HRMS. There is no formal feedback process to notify when corrections have been made.

*Since a Human Resources Control Framework is not currently in place, there were no Classification findings at Level 4 – Monitor and Review nor at Level 5 – Fully Integrated Procedures and Controls.*

### **4.3 Staffing**

The high-level **findings** in staffing revealed that at **Level 1 - Documented Policies** of the Human Resources Control Framework there are a number of internal policies and directives missing.

In particular integrated HR and HRMS internal policies and directives are needed for the following:

- Secondments-in / out
- Rotational Assignments
- Mission Date of Arrival
- Official Languages

Roles, responsibilities and accountabilities for HR staffing actions affecting HRMS data have not been clearly defined and communicated to all persons concerned.

Moving up to **Level 2 - Documented Procedures and processes** of the HR Control Framework, the **findings** showed a lack of formal, standardized, documented human resource procedures for hires, assignments, promotions and reclassifications, including clear HRMS requirements.

- Many of the data integrity issues are concentrated within the Assignment process as the process requires multiple steps and is reliant on the gathering of information from various areas, including the employee.
- As the Assignment Officers are rotational employees, they are dependent on support documentation left behind by the previous officer, the goodwill and knowledge of other officers and the abilities of their assistant.
- Once an employee arrives/departs at a Mission, there is no clear process in place to update their personal information and arrival/departure date on HRMS.
- BIOS on HRMS are used by managers to make assignment decisions; however, these are not up-to-date and accurate.
- As the posting process is cyclical, it requires staff to “remember” how to handle situations year after year.
- The PCF form is created and reissued a number of times throughout the assignment process. The Assignment start date needs to be changed regularly in HRMS. Delays in this update have a significant impact on budgets and allowances.
- Timing issues regarding data entry into the payroll system and HRMS; is an on-going problem since employee payroll information is often captured first.

- HR Assistants use HRMS reports for the verification of HRMS data, however, these reports were said to be inadequate. Managers on the other hand use BI reports; even though they are more effective than HRMS reports, they were not designed for verification purposes.
- Inconsistent and often incomplete information is submitted to HR for a staffing action resulting in delays and ultimately delays updating HRMS.

The **findings at Level 3 - Applied Procedures and Controls** of the Control Framework identified the following issues around implementation procedures, service levels, supporting tools and training.

These issues include the following:

- Work is split by “stream” in Staffing so there is no single point of contact for the managers which causes confusion, delays and duplication of work.
- There is a need for improved communication between HR Operational Services Division (HMO), Services for Executives Bureau (HCD) and Assignment and Pool Management Division (HMA).
- Communications around the posting extension of employees coming from the mission managers to HMA is not timely at the end of the posting cycle and the process poorly defined.
- The Mission Arrival Form is not always sent in a timely manner.
- Managers identified a lack of access to reference information.
- Inconsistent business process training for Officers and Assistants.
- Posting cycle creates an enormous impact on workload with no additional Assignment staff to balance the load.

*Since a Human Resources Control Framework is not currently in place, there were no Staffing findings at Level 4 – Monitor and Review nor at Level 5 – Fully Integrated Procedures and Controls.*

## 5.0 Recommended Solution

The recommended solution is to put in place a Foreign Affairs Canada, Human Resources Control Framework that will consistently ensure data integrity within the HRMS system.

Once in place, for both manual and automated practices, the department will be able to produce reliable information in real time to support decision-making.

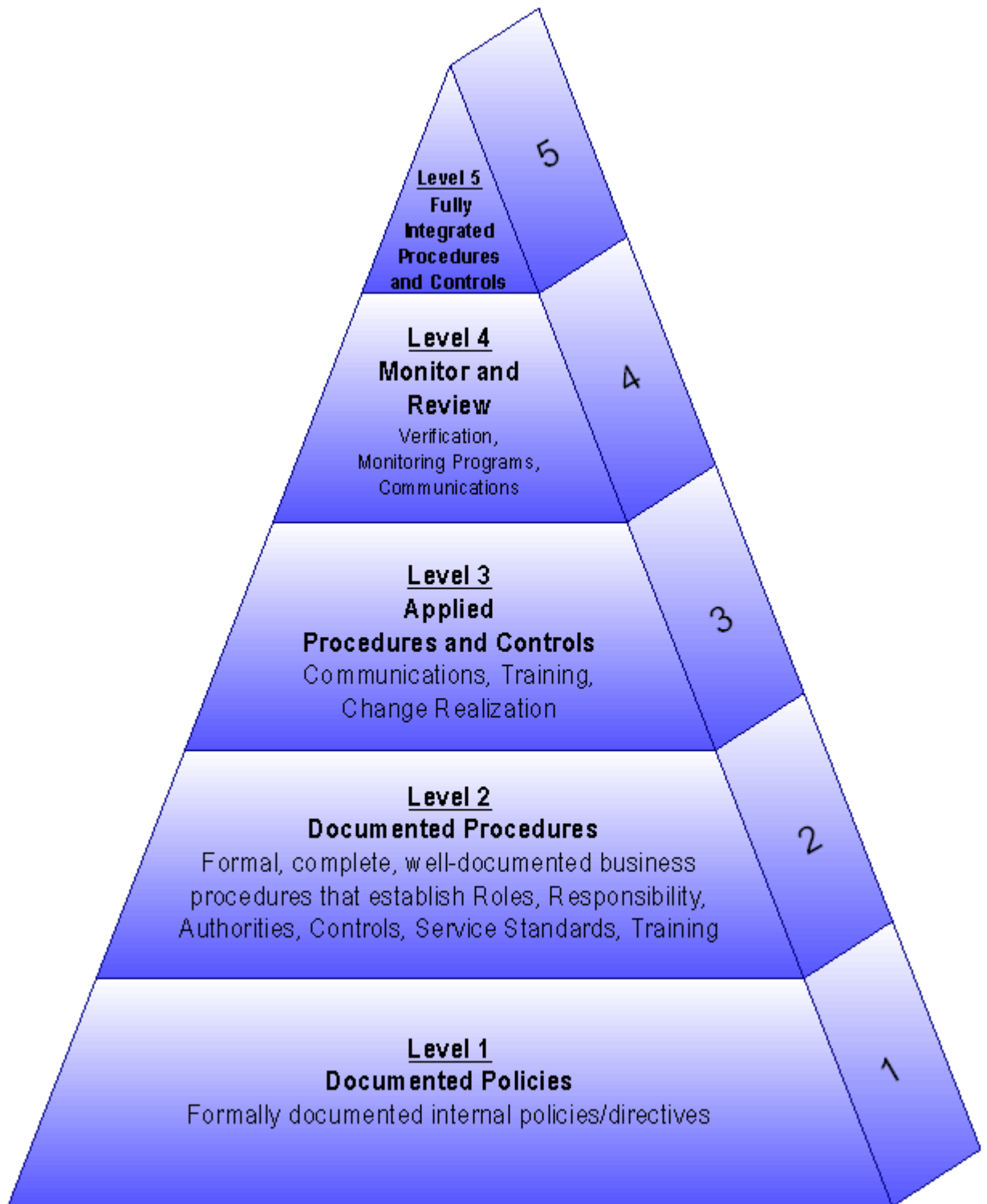
The Human Resources Control Framework has five (5) levels and requires that each level be achieved before moving to the next level. These levels are:

- Level 1 – Documented Policies
- Level 2 – Documented Procedures and Processes
- Level 3 – Applied Procedures and Controls
- Level 4 – Monitor and Review
- Level 5 – Fully Integrated Procedures and Controls

Once all these five levels are completed in sequence, HR will have integrated a group of “controls” that:

- manage the completeness, accuracy and timeliness of the data entered into the HRMS system;
- support key business processes;
- manage the risks inherent in ERP systems; and,
- identify responsibilities at various levels within the organization.

# RECOMMENDED SOLUTION HUMAN RESOURCES CONTROL FRAMEWORK





## 5.1 Solution Overview

The implementation of the Human Resources Control Framework will establish standards to support HR business goals. These standards are integrated at each level of the framework to directly reduce data integrity issues.

Once implemented, management will also be able to control a wide range of HR business activities and measure their achievement against specific mandated goals and responsibilities.

## 5.2 Control Framework

To apply a Control Framework to the Foreign Affairs Canada HR organization, each of the five successive levels of controls must be in place. Implementing each step brings FAC closer to ensuring that data integrity risks are properly managed.

As each level is implemented, the integrity of the data increases.

The Audit Findings were analyzed and data integrity improvements have been recommended for the Classification and Staffing processes. The specific data integrity improvements in Classification and Staffing are lined up with each level of the Human Resources Control Framework in the charts following each level. These data integrity improvements need to be achieved at each level as indicated in the charts, in order to fulfill the set Control Framework Requirements.

Change realization plays a major role in the success of this approach. Bringing everyone on board and keeping them on board throughout the implementation process is essential.

## **FIVE LEVELS of the Human Resources Control Framework**

### **Level 1**



The foundation is Level 1. Formal internal HR policies covering headquarters and missions are developed, documented and disseminated to all. The formalized policies provide users with direction and assist with decision-making when capturing information in the HRMS application.

The policies should be developed with regard to HR business requirements unique to FAC. They should include provisions for identifying exceptions and the options available when encountering policy issues.

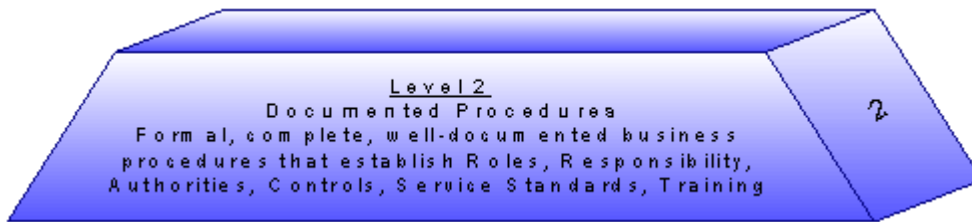
Data Integrity	Requirement	Data Integrity Improvements for Classification and Staffing
Level -1 Policies	Write, approve and distribute internal policies and directives	<p><b>Classification</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create internal Classification <b>policy</b> or directive identifying roles, responsibilities and accountabilities for HRMS data</li> <li>• Clarify the <b>policy</b> regarding the use of email as a method of authorization for HR actions</li> </ul> <hr/> <p><b>Staffing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create integrated HR and HRMS <b>policies</b> for Hire for Secondments-in/out and for assignments of rotational employees</li> <li>• Revisit Official Languages internal <b>policies</b> to understand if policies require revisions around the entry of the official languages</li> <li>• Create clearly defined <b>policy</b> around Date of Arrival</li> <li>• Clearly define roles, responsibilities and accountabilities for HRMS data</li> </ul>

## Management Response and Action Plan

The HR Branch supports the high level approach described in the report and is committed to developing and implementing a Control Framework to ensure that roles, responsibilities and accountabilities are clear. Furthermore, we agree that the implementation of Level 1 is key to the success of the Control Framework as it is the foundation level that will provide direction and assistance to decision-making at data entry level.

The attached action plan (Appendix 1) outlines activities that must be undertaken to support Level 1 of the Control Framework. The action plan identifies which division/bureau will take responsibility for the activities described, as well as completion dates and success indicators.

## Level 2



Level 2 **enables** the implementation of policies established in Level 1. Formal HR business procedures are formulated, documented and disseminated to all. The procedures roll out the application of the HR policies and describe **how** HR activities should be done consistently among various divisions.

The procedures describe the authorization levels required for various processes and forms. In addition, error detection checkpoints should be imbedded throughout the business process to ensure that data is being handled correctly and on time with any errors identified for correction and follow-up.

The implemented procedures reference the key Service Standards that define HR service levels and measure performance objectives. Moreover, the standards are designed to ensure effective and efficient processes to support the HR business enterprise objectives. They will also be designed to ensure internal compliance.

In conjunction with the development of the procedures, training modules are designed to support the procedures.

Data Integrity	Requirement	Data Integrity Improvements for Classification and Staffing
<p><b>Level 2- Procedures</b></p>	<p><b>Create procedures to enable internal policies</b></p> <p><b>Evaluate and restructure Business Processes</b></p> <p><b>Set Service Standards</b></p> <p><b>Create Verification Checkpoints</b></p> <p><b>Create Forms, Reports, Queries</b></p> <p><b>Develop Training Modules/ Orientation packages</b></p>	<p><b>Classification</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create <b>procedures</b> for the creation of a position, the reclassification process and the reorganization process, including the communication activities with the AMAs and other directorates</li> <li>• Establish <b>procedures</b> to ensure new employees receive their business training prior to their HRMS training</li> <li>• Update <b>training</b> guides to include verification reports and their purpose</li> <li>• Create a quick reference <b>training</b> guide for Classification and Position Management</li> <li>• Create a refresher <b>training</b> course for the Classification and Position Management</li> <li>• Standardize the rationale <b>form</b> used in the Classification process by the Classification Officers and map to fields in HRMS</li> <li>• Create verification <b>reports</b> off of HRMS for the creation of new positions and the reclassification of positions</li> <li>• Assign a higher priority to the creation of verification <b>reports</b> within the SMSH group</li> <li>• Clearly define the business process for reclassifications</li> </ul> <p><b>Staffing</b></p> <p><b><i>Improvements can be had by updating and/or creating business procedures and processes for the following:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify roles and responsibilities around Start, Extension and End dates for assignments and for employees who are Seconded-In. Clearly define where in the business process the Start, Extension and End dates are created and how they are reported to HR for update to HRMS.</li> <li>• When hiring a new employee, add a step before creating their new employee ID to verify whether the employee has been previously hired</li> <li>• Clarify the distribution of the letter of offer</li> </ul> <p>Identify roles and responsibilities for communicating and updating Official Languages data</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create <b>procedures</b> for the arrival at missions form to include role of compensation</li> <li>• Ensure that a role is identified as responsible for the entry of BIOS information</li> <li>• All procedures and processes should clearly identify the linkages between Staffing and Classification and HMA especially where HRMS data is dependent on decisions and action between each other</li> <li>• Create procedures for promotion process for rotational employees</li> <li>• Create procedures to establish a process where the “date of arrival” is identified by the Assignment group and the employee and correctly entered into the Track Global Assignments (TGA)</li> <li>• Create <b>procedures</b> to incorporate the request for creation of the CDID (Financial Code for person going on Assignment) once the hire record has been created for the secondment-in or for a rotational employee</li> <li>• Identify when Position Data Override should be used, including what to do if position data override is activated during a reclassification process</li> <li>• Specify when service dates need to be modified</li> <li>• Create <b>procedures</b> to support Single Assignments returning to substantive positions</li> <li>• Identify the managers as responsible communicator of Position Languages profile to the Officer</li> <li>• Create <b>procedures</b> that incorporate the transmission of relevant HRMS data to Compensation as required</li> <li>• Create <b>procedures</b> to change the LOA process so that HR receives notification of the LOA, enters the end of assignment and the LOA. The assignment record needs to be ended before the LOA is entered. Process would need to ensure that Staffing forwards the notification for the leave to Compensation to process in on-line pay</li> <li>• Create <b>procedures</b> for Return From Leave to identify roles and responsibilities around the Assignment date within TGA and RFL dates in Administer Workforce</li> <li>• Create <b>procedures</b> to address cross-stream assignments</li> <li>• All <b>procedures</b> must incorporate the communication of key HRMS data between the various HR directorates, and management and the level of authorizations required, the use of reports and queries required for verification purposes, and reference the service levels</li> <li>• Review and revise existing Staffing <b>forms</b> to include the data fields from the HRMS system, and to ensure consistency across the Staffing group</li> <li>• Create a new <b>form</b> for the assignment from Missions to Headquarters</li> <li>• Create an electronic verification checklist <b>form</b> that must be completed by the manager and will accompany all Hire documentation</li> <li>• Revise the Outlook Mission arrival/departure <b>form</b> to incorporate Date of Arrival as per defined policy</li> <li>• Create a custom verification <b>report</b> to display the employee data elements that reveal whether the employee class is correct or not</li> <li>• Create a <b>report</b> to list employees who have returned from a leave of absence in Administer workforce and have an active assignment record with a start date that does not match the return from leave date</li> <li>• Create a <b>report</b> comparing the Position Data record and the position information on the substantive and assignment record</li> <li>• Create <b>reports</b> to identify rotational cross-stream assignments</li> <li>• Create <b>report</b> to identify when Position Data Override is on and position and employee information match to identify where override flag is no longer required because of match</li> <li>• Create <b>report</b> to identify incumbents against a reclassified position where the position override button is activated</li> <li>• Create <b>report</b> to list employees Seconded-In with a hire date that is different from their assignment start date</li> <li>• Revise <b>reports</b> for the Assignments Group to display future dated rows</li> <li>• Create an employee <b>report</b> that identifies their end of post date in preparation for creating extensions</li> </ul>
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<b>Procedures Cont'd</b>		<b>Staffing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create <b>reports</b> with filters for Position count (rotational and non-rotational), positions with incumbents, and overfill, unfunded and frozen positions</li> <li>• Create a <b>query</b> to allow the Assistants to perform verification on the Reason Code</li> <li>• Create a <b>query</b> to perform verification on the start date between the Assignment data page and the Home/Host page</li> <li>• Create a <b>query</b> to perform verification on the list of employees whose substantive record has a leave status with a host record that is active</li> <li>• Create a <b>query</b> to list employees who have been terminated in their substantive record and have an active assignment record</li> <li>• Create a <b>query</b> to identify seconded/rotational employees without CDID</li> <li>• Create <b>training</b> module for Promotion of Rotational employee process</li> <li>• Create a quick reference <b>training</b> guide for Hire and for the Assignments process</li> <li>• Create a refresher <b>training</b> course for Hire and for the Assignments process</li> <li>• <b>Evaluate</b> the feasibility of removing the PCF form from TGA so that assignments do not have to be entered into TGA to trigger the PCF process</li> <li>• Consider downloading Official Language test results from PWGSC for verification against HRMS data</li> </ul>
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### Management Response and Action Plan

The timeliness and quality of HRMS data input is a priority for HR Branch Senior Management and positive actions have been taken to provide the foundation for developing and promulgating HR business process documentation and putting in place formal and regular data validation and monitoring procedures. This is evidenced by the creation in 2004 of two positions within the HR Branch tasked to work with managers and users alike to identify processes that are unclear or misunderstood and to facilitate working groups in order to recommend solutions.

While it is understood that well formulated business processes are the enablers of the internal policies established at Level 1 of the Control Framework, and that the development and mapping of integrated and standardised business processes depend to a large degree on the presence of the clearly defined internal policies, it is also recognised that the development of business processes is critical to the Department's ability to plan and forecast its human and financial resources, to produce accurate and reliable information and to fulfill its reporting obligations to external clients. Consequently, the development of business processes should not be dependent upon the creation and implementation of policies at Level 1.

As a result, some of the activities and recommendations outlined in the Audit Report have already been completed, or are in process. As the supporting policies are created, the activities already in place will provide a solid basis upon which to map and build the missing links, such as authorisation levels, and error detection points. In this way all processes will be designed to ensure internal compliance and the establishment of HR service standards that define HR service levels, measure performance objectives and support the HR business enterprise objectives.

The attached action plan (Appendix 2) outlines activities that must be undertaken to support Level Two of the Control Framework. The action plan identifies which division/bureau will take responsibility for the activities described, as well as completion dates and success indicators.

### Level 3



Level 3 **applies** the HR procedures and controls. The procedures and controls act as preventative and detection mechanisms to improve data integrity. Training modules deliver the procedures and introduce individuals to their roles, responsibilities and accountabilities, to the service standards, and to the controls involved in their business processes. The Orientation Package will introduce new employees to the policies, procedures and communication mediums that will enable them to effectively fulfill their HRMS-related roles and responsibilities.

Effective communication of processes is key to ensuring the procedures and controls are effectively understood and implemented.

The implementation of procedures and controls is a preventative mechanism to improve and maintain data integrity and minimize confusion.

The intended outcome of changes in procedures and controls is clear to the originators who must now communicate these to additional stakeholders who are now involved. Different perspectives bring different needs and new events alter the environment. A Change Realization process at this level is required to help FAC leaders, managers, employees and other stakeholders and partners see the change from an objective perspective and be supportive of the change.

An individual within each of the HR directorates should be assigned as the responsible person for the HR procedures and processes and for keeping them current.

Data Integrity	Requirement	Data Integrity Improvements for Classification and Staffing
Level 3 - Applied Procedures and Controls	<p><b>Apply Procedures and Controls</b></p> <p><b>Establish internal Communications Processes</b></p> <p><b>Schedule and Deliver Training</b></p> <p><b>Establish Roles, Responsibilities and Accountabilities</b></p> <p><b>Put in place a Change Realization Process</b></p>	<p><b>Classification</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish and communicate points of service</li> <li>• Establish method of communicating HRMS updates and changes</li> <li>• Establish clear lines of <b>communications</b> within Classifications and the external Stakeholders to communicate when workload is affecting the timeliness of activities</li> <li>• Provide HRMS correction <b>access</b> to the Classification Assistant</li> <li>• Implement an organization chart tool supported by PeopleSoft and implement tool</li> </ul> <hr/> <p><b>Staffing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish and communicate points of service</li> <li>• Establish method of communicating HRMS updates and changes</li> <li>• Provide Employment Equity <b>access</b> to enter the gender on the Eligibility/Identity page</li> <li>• Publish information on the <b>intranet</b> to remind Rotational and Non-rotational employees of their responsibility to keep their personal information up to date in HRMS</li> <li>• Publish information on the <b>intranet</b> site for rotational employees regarding the importance of updating dependent information when dependents change</li> </ul>

## Management Response and Action Plan

Documented procedures do exist in the form of training manuals used to deliver training on the HRMS system and high-level procedural guides used by the SMSH business analysts and to which all the HR assistants have access. Nevertheless, in the absence of documented internal policies and business processes, procedural guides may be subject to interpretation where roles, responsibilities and accountabilities are not clear. Once Level 2 of the Control Framework has been implemented, procedural manuals will need to be reviewed and updated to ensure compliance and consistency.

The HR Branch is already offering training on the various modules of HRMS on a routine basis. Ad hoc training is also provided when required to meet specific needs. Furthermore, steps are being taken to provide new employees with basic information and tools that will enable them to make a smooth transition into our workforce.

The Audit Report identifies the need for effective communication of applied procedures and controls in order that they be well understood and implemented throughout the organisation. While forums already exist to



disseminate information regarding HRMS, business process and data quality initiatives to managers and officers within HR, SMD and the Area Management offices, it is clear that these will need to be expanded to reinforce the importance of collective responsibility towards the achievement of change by all stakeholders across the organisation.

The attached action plan (Appendix 3) outlines activities that must be undertaken to support Level 3 of the Control Framework. The action plan identifies which division/bureau will take responsibility for the activities described, as well as completion dates and success indicators.

## Level 4



Level 4 **establishes** a regular monitoring, review, and reporting process. A monitoring and reporting process is designed to assess the adequacy and effectiveness of HR policies, procedures, and controls.

On-going monitoring activities such as regular audit reporting, routine assessments of controls, regular investigation of information that identifies potential data integrity problems, and communication feedback, are key components in providing management with the visibility required to ensure that the controls are functioning in the manner for which they were designed. This level is designed to ensure that processes are effectively monitored, and policies, procedures, and controls are regularly updated.

A separate monitoring process also needs to be in place to monitor and evaluate the change management process to ensure the successful transition from the old to the new.

In the monitoring process, it can also be valuable to use other systems available to the organization such as Business Intelligence (BI) software to build, store and report on information.

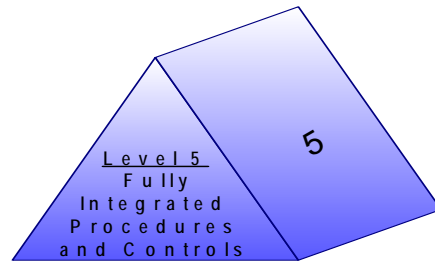
## **Management Response and Action Plan**

**Once this level of the Control Framework has been attained, we are confident that the further analysis and routine monitoring required to assess where intended results are not being met and to recommend**

corrective action in order to maintain the impetus can be done from within our existing resource base.

To this extent, we will be providing training on SQL Queries to our Data Quality Analyst so that HAM will be able to carry out routine assessments of data quality in order to identify potential data integrity problems and recommend solutions. Training to be taken in October 2005.

## Level 5



Level 5 **puts in place** the comprehensive HRMS control program. This control program is now an integral part of the Foreign Affairs Canada organizational culture.

This level continues to apply Change Realization techniques to develop further organizational acceptance and support for the Foreign Affairs Canada HR Control Framework. This is now the new way to do business.

## **Management Response and Action Plan**

**Once the Control Framework has been fully implemented, HR Branch will support its continued success through the annual HR business planning exercise. This should include a review of existing strengths and weaknesses as well as identification of what steps need to be taken to continue the process of improvement.**

## **6.0 Control Framework Implementation**

Once the recommended data integrity improvements have been made to Classification and Staffing processes, FAC Human Resources can embark on developing its own fully functional Human Resources Control Framework. Based on the audit results, the following step-by-step implementation process is recommended. In following this process, FAC Human Resources will be able to put in place the necessary policies, procedures, controls and monitoring process required to manage and strengthen its data integrity.

### ***6.1 Level 1 - Documented Policies Implementation Flowchart***

***To complete Level 1 of the Human Resources Control Framework, the following implementation steps are recommended.***

***See Figure 6.1 Policy Implementation Steps below.***

- 1.0 First step is to identify all of the internal policies/directives that need to be created and/or revised including those that were outside of the scope of this project.
- 2.0 Once identified, high and low priority tasks should be identified based on the expected data integrity impact.
- 3.0 A work plan to create internal policies and directives should be developed.
- 4.0 Usher the completed work plan through a management approval process to secure funds and resources to complete the work.
- 5.0 On approval, the high impact internal policies and directives should be created first.
- 6.0 On completion of the high level, the remaining internal policies and directives should be created.

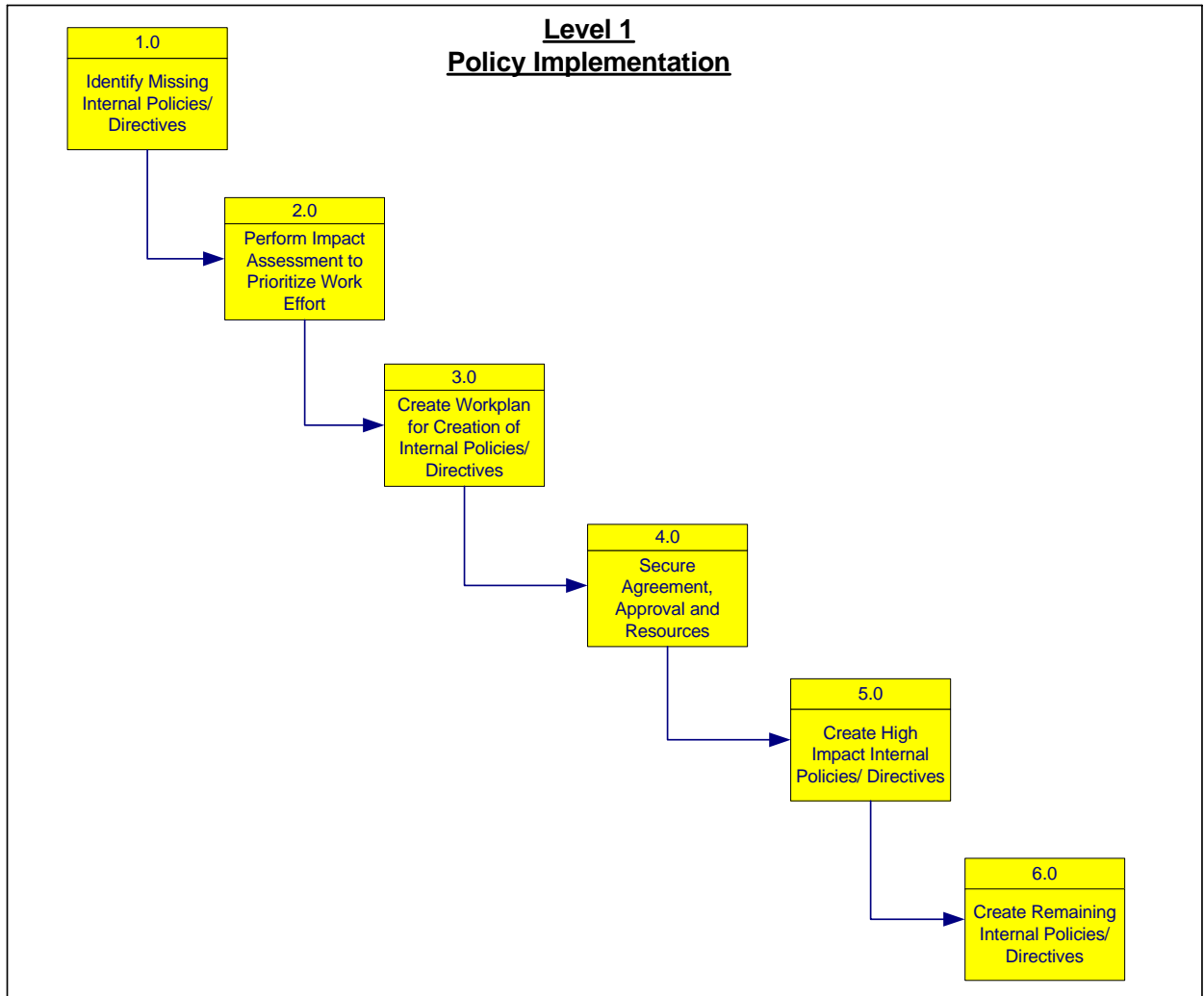


Figure 6.1 Policy Implementation Steps

## **6.2 Level 2 - Documented Procedures Implementation Flowchart**

***To complete Level 2 of the Human Resources Control Framework, the following implementation steps are recommended.***

***See Figure 6.2 Procedures Implementation Steps below.***

- 1.0 The first step is to identify all business procedures that need to be created and/or revised including those not identified within this project.
- 2.0 Identify high and low priority tasks.
- 3.0 Create the work plan to develop human resources procedures.
- 4.0 Take the work plan through the management approval process to secure funds and resources to move forward with the work.
- 5.0 On approval, the high impact business procedures should be created first.
- 6.0 At the same time that high impact business procedures are being created, the data correction procedures should be written to direct employees on the steps involved in correcting data integrity problems on HRMS. Investigate the use of the Remedy system to document data integrity issues for corrections; assist in tracking the correction process; adherence to service standards.
- 7.0 On completion of the high level priority tasks, the remaining procedures should be created.
- 8.0 On completion of the procedures, the business processes can then be assessed for effectiveness and efficiency. Workflow should be investigated as a means of improving the flow of the business process.
- 9.0 The processes found to be ineffective and inefficient should be restructured to regain the effectiveness and efficiencies within the HR organization.
- 10.0 On completion of the procedures and reevaluation of the business processes, service levels should be defined, documented, and tested to support the procedures. The documented service levels should be referenced within the Procedures.
- 11.0 Verification points within the procedures can now be identified and documented.

- 12.0 Forms to support the procedures should be created at this stage.
- 13.0 Reports and Queries to support the procedures and verification points are created at this stage.
- 14.0 Training needs can now be determined by comparing the current training in place with the newly developed procedures to find the gaps.
- 15.0 Gaps should be addressed through the development of training modules and the introduction of an Orientation Package. The Orientation Package should introduce employees to the organization, policies, procedures and internal communications. Training around the verification process by Managers on the BI, SMS and HRMS systems should also be included.

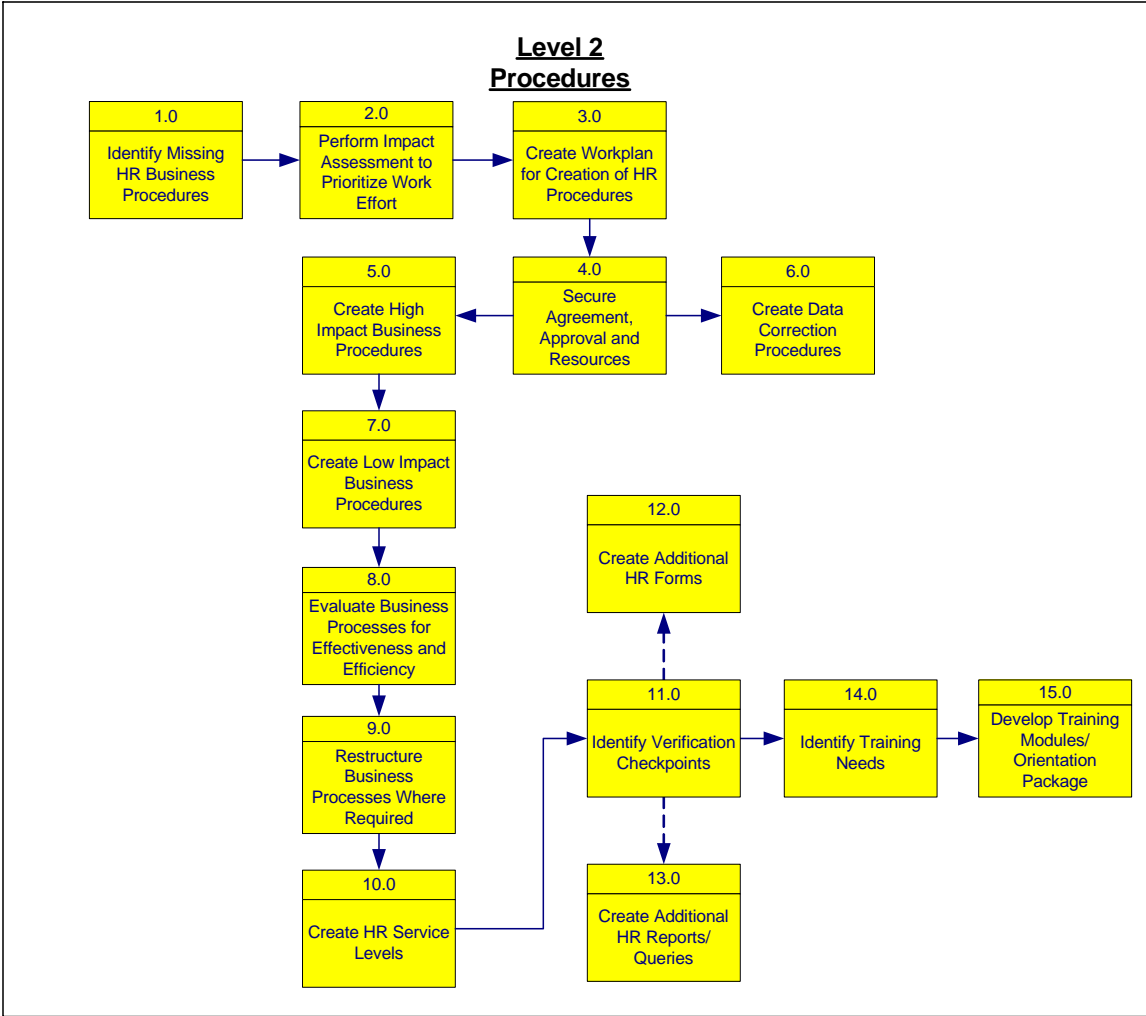


Figure 6.2 Procedures Implementation Steps

### **6.3 Level 3 - Applied Procedures and Controls Implementation Flowchart**

***To complete Level 3 of the Human Resources Control Framework, three areas need to be addressed simultaneously. Communications, Training, and Change Realization must work closely together as they have the responsibility of bringing the organization into the cultural transformation imposed by the control framework. The following simultaneous implementation steps are recommended.***

***See Figure 6.3 Applied Procedures Implementation Steps below.***

#### **Communications**

- 1.0 The Human Resource Branch should identify someone to take on the role of “Communications Officer” for business processes and HRMS.
- 2.0 The officer identifies the communications requirements, looking at the communication mediums available and introducing additional mediums if required.
- 3.0 A Communication Plan is created to incorporate the internal communication required to go down the organization.
- 4.0 A Communication Plan is created to incorporate the internal communication required to go up the organization.
- 5.0 A Communication Plan is created to incorporate the internal communication required to go across the organization including Missions.
- 6.0 The plans are integrated into a Master Communications Plan and ushered through the management approval process to secure funds and resources required for implementation.

*It is recommended that the Master Communications Plan include the following:*

- Management communications that address support for the employees around the continuation of resolution to data integrity issues and the importance of timely training required to ensure accuracy and timely entry into HRMS.
- The creation of a forum for employees to provide suggestions for on-going process improvement to increase the efficiency of the process and the accuracy of the HRMS data in addressing the upward communication from the employees to management.



- The resurrection of the HRMS User Reference Group to address the issues and concerns around the HR business processes and HRMS data integrity issues, and communicate timely information across the organization.
- The assignment of one point of contact and one organizational mailbox within each HR directorate to be communicated to the organization.

7.0 Implement the Master Communications Plan.

### **Training**

8.0 Schedule a series of training programs for employees.

9.0 Identify training participants. Schedule them according to their availability without impacting their workloads.

10.0 Deliver the training. It is recommended that training incorporate Lunch and Learns to address the need for refresher training and introduce the quick reference guides to the organization. One-on-one training can be introduced for new employees who require immediate training. The Orientation Package can be used for new employees on entry to introduce them to the organization and to outline the training modules they will be required to attend.

### **Change Realization**

11.0 A Change Agent is identified.

12.0 The Change Agent assesses the change readiness of the organization. This person is responsible for identifying organizational obstacles and sources of resistance within the organization.

13.0 The Change Agent will create change strategies that address the issues around the organization's change readiness.

14.0 The change strategies are implemented.

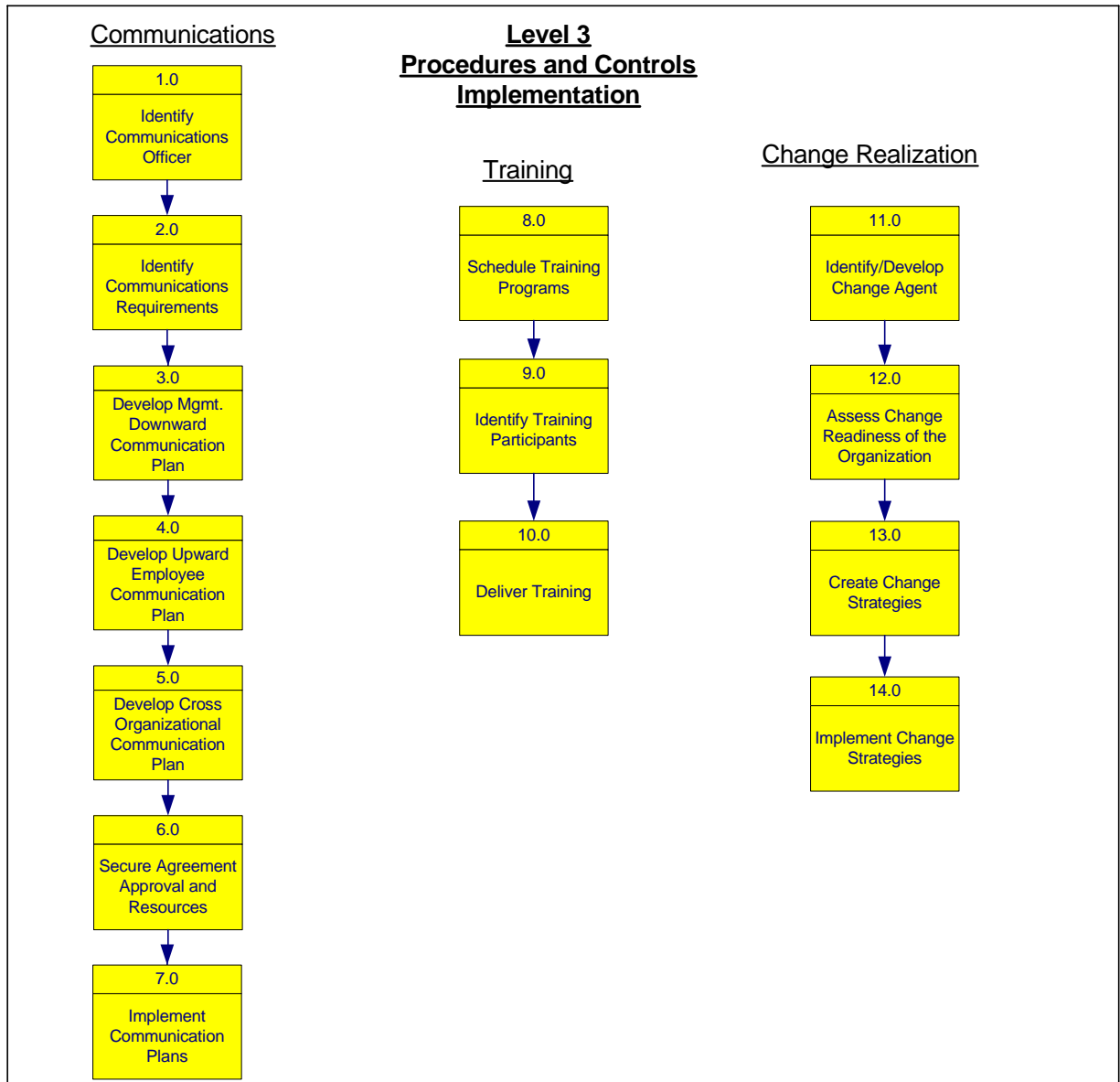


Figure 6.3 Applied Procedures Implementation Steps

## **6.4 Level 4 - Monitor and Review Implementation Flowchart**

**To complete Level 4 of the Human Resources Control Framework, the following implementation steps are recommended.**

**See Figure 6.4 Monitor and Review Implementation Steps below.**

- 1.0 The first step is to identify and develop an HRMS Risk Management function within the organization. This function is responsible for reporting to executive management on the data integrity risks identified through the review process and the recommended corrective action to ensure a continuous high level of data integrity within the HRMS.
- 2.0 A group or manager (as determined by management to be responsible for the risk management of HRMS data – referred to in this report as the Risk Manager), reviews the policies and procedures for compliance.
- 3.0 The Risk Manager assesses Verification Reports and Queries to ensure that the controls remain effective and efficient.
- 4.0 The Risk Manager identifies key areas of risk within the HR organization through the assessments and the feedback provided on a regular basis from the Communications Officer, Training Officer, and Change Agent regarding potential risks to the data integrity.
- 5.0 The Risk Manager will compile their findings and advise executive management on the corrective action.

### **Infrastructure Support for Policies and Procedures**

#### ***Communications***

- 6.0 The “Communications Officer” regularly assesses the programs against the communication requirements to identify where changes are required in order to improve internal communications up, down and through the organization.
- 7.0 Communications programs are adjusted where they don’t fulfill requirements.
- 8.0 New communications programs are created as required.

### ***Training***

- 9.0 The Training Officer creates and disseminates a training survey regularly to the organization to help identify improvements to the training modules.
- 10.0 The Training Officer assesses the results of each training survey to identify weaknesses in the training modules.
- 11.0 The Training Officer makes the improvements to the training programs based on the survey results.

### ***Change Realization***

- 12.0 The Change Agent assesses the outcomes of the change strategies on a regular basis.
- 13.0 The Change Agent adjusts the change strategies to manage unanticipated outcomes.
- 14.0 The Change Agent creates new strategies as required.

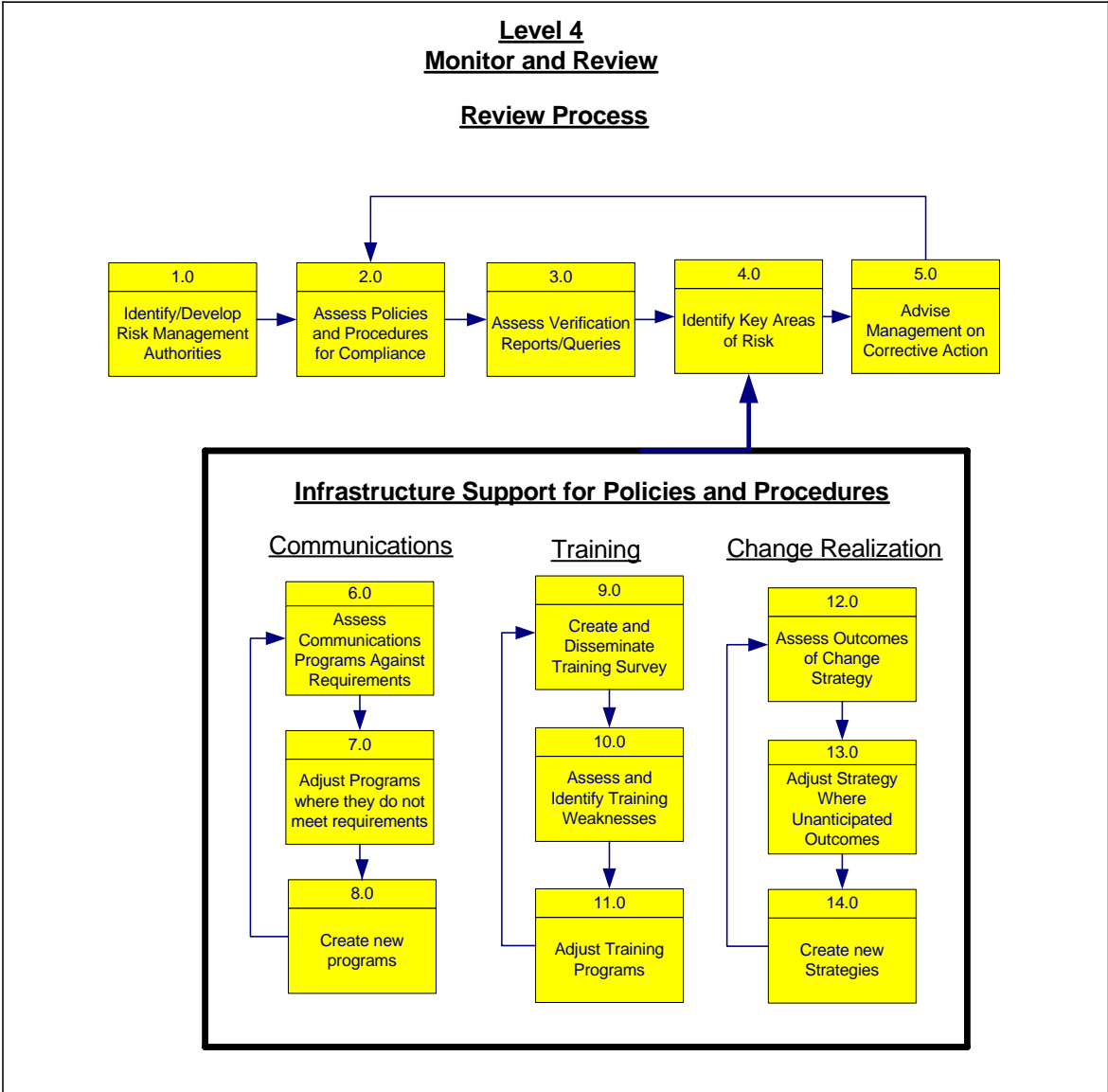


Figure 6.4 Monitor and Review Implementation Steps

## **6.5 Level 5 - Fully Integrated Procedures and Controls Implementation Flowchart**

***To complete Level 5 of the Human Resources Control Framework, the following implementation steps are recommended.***

***See figure 6.5 Fully Integrated Procedures and Controls Implementation Steps below.***

- 1.0 The first step is to assess the data integrity performance against the original expectations of the organization.
- 2.0 Identify high-level risks.
- 3.0 Identify high-level strengths.
- 4.0 Assess high-level risks.
- 5.0 Create a Risk Mitigation Strategy.
- 6.0 Implement the Risk Mitigation Strategy.
- 7.0 Communicate across the organization the risks, strengths and the mitigation strategy in place to keep everyone in-step and going forward.

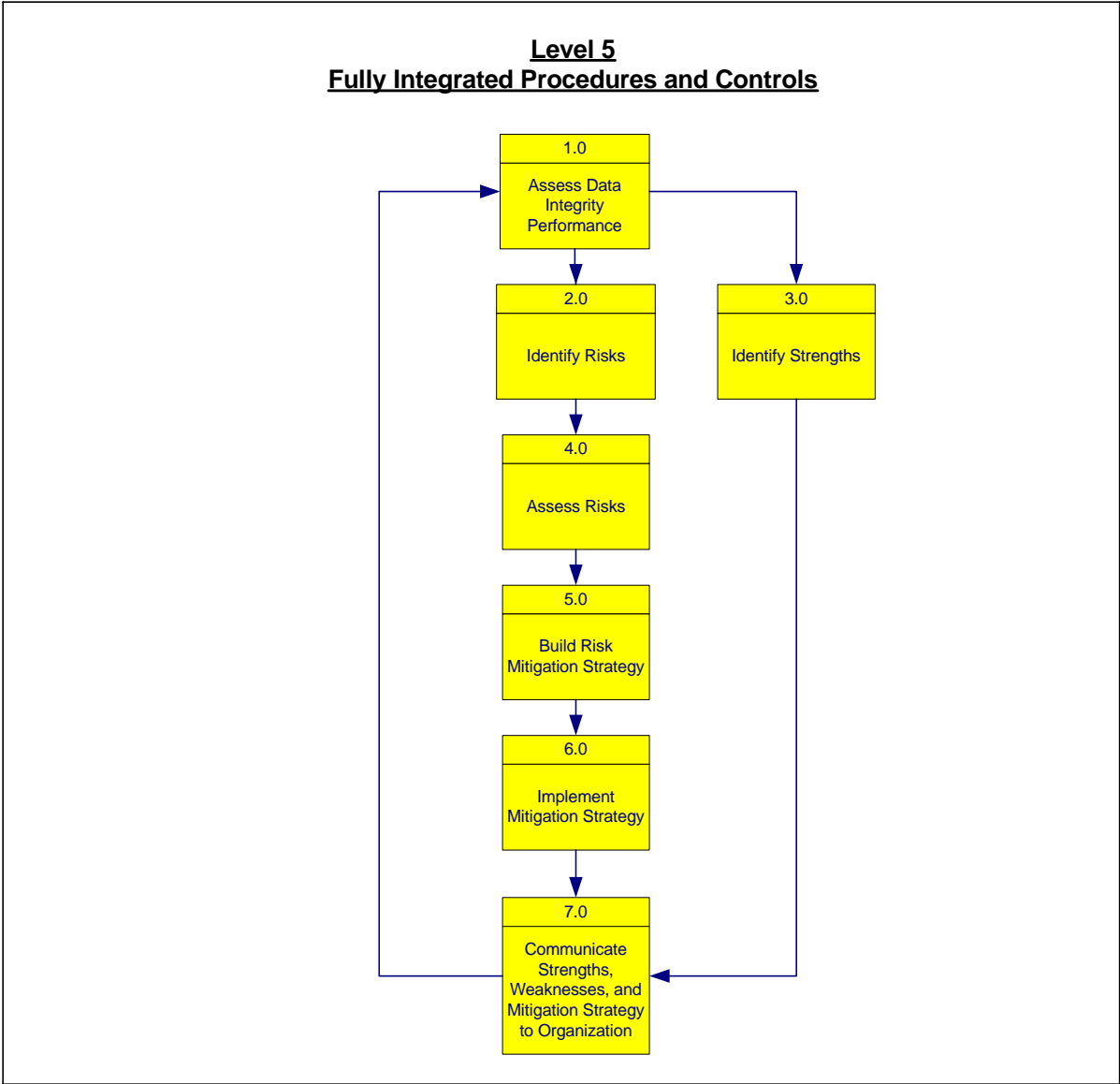


Figure 6.5 Fully Integrated Procedures and Controls Implementation Steps

## 7.0 Appendix

### 7.1 General – Detailed Findings

The detailed general findings of the audit reviews, consultations, workshops, and interviews held with various levels of staff within the Foreign Affairs Canada, Human Resources organization, confirmed the risks identified by previous studies. These findings were then lined-up with the Five Levels of the recommended Human Resources Control Framework. The Five Levels are:

- Level 1 – Documented Policies
- Level 2 – Documented Procedures and Processes
- Level 3 – Applied Procedures and Controls
- Level 4 – Monitor and Review
- Level 5 – Fully Integrated Procedures and Controls

This was done to assess the immediate corrective action that needs to be taken before an HR Control Framework for FAC can be put in place.

#### Levels 1 and 2 – Documented Policies and Procedures

At Level 2, the following general areas were found to be deficient:

- **Roles, responsibilities and accountability** for entering data in HRMS are not clear.
- Employees need to understand the business (not just the data entry steps) to appreciate the impact data integrity has on an operational and corporate level.
- There is a lack of confidence in the current HR business processes in place.
- There was found to be no overall **control framework** or common understanding of the controls needed. There are no formal procedures in place that clearly describe existing controls. In situations where formal controls did not exist, it was noted that the staff applied a “common sense” informal approach to ensure that verification or appropriate control activities were exercised.
- There are currently no documented **Service Level Agreements** communicating the level of service required to deliver effective and efficient HR services. Without documented procedures and service level agreements, Officers must provide hands-on direction to Assistants as to work priorities and there is no accountability in the timeliness of activities.
- **Timeliness** of entry is an issue which impacts other systems (e.g. SMS) and correction is required in HRMS and the impacted system.
- **Data correction** is not timely and there is not enough data validation at time of entry.



- The **correction** process is currently not documented and inconsistent processes are in place across the organization. Without procedures in place, error corrections can occur without knowing who the originator of the error was, and therefore the likelihood of repeat errors can occur.
- **Responsibilities** for performing verifications are clearly known in each of the HR directorates but there are no formal written procedures to support and guide staff in performing efficient and effective data verification. The monitoring of data entered into HRMS occurs rarely because of the high turnover of staff, the heavy workload and the need to complete the tasks in a timely manner.
- Lack of availability of effective **verification** reports for use by the HR directorates. Although there are reports from HRMS available to the HR employees, they were identified as cumbersome and complicated and therefore not consistently used. Currently, verification reports are produced from the SMS system for verification purposes and are sent to Office of the Area Management Advisor (HAM) to correct the errors. Other tools such as the BI tool also assist the managers in identifying anomalies within the HRMS system. SSMH business analysts are also involved in the verification process when testing new functionality and new reports. All of these avenues reveal data issues but it is not evident as to who in the organization should receive the HR data problems for correction purposes as it is not clearly stated anywhere.
- There is no standard **organization chart tool** implemented at this time and organization charts are sometimes produced by hand by Managers for the Officers. This affects the timeliness of the activities performed by the Officers, as they must add the activity of verifying the accuracy of the chart provided by the managers. There is currently an initiative in place among a number of Federal Government departments, including FAC SSMH, to investigate organization chart tools supported by PeopleSoft.

### Level 3 – Applied Procedures and Controls

At Level 3, the following general areas around application of procedures and controls were identified:

- Some participants stated that they were unaware of what **reports** were available to them.
- Data integrity issues resulting from the lack of **verification** by Staffing, Assignments, and Classification have a direct impact on the relationship between HES and the employees they serve. E.g. Employee frustration exhibited to HES around inaccurate identification of their dependents within HRMS and invalid service dates impacting service awards.
- There does not seem to be **one point of contact** within the different directorates to assist the AMAs and managers when performing HR tasks. HR request forms sometimes come from the AMAs and sometimes from the managers. This creates confusion resulting in misdirected communications.

- **User groups** were at one time a form of communication across and down through the directorates. The HRMS User Reference Group was previously disbanded but has since been reestablished.
- **Training** on the HRMS system was identified in some cases as occurring prior to the training on policies and procedures. Training on policies and procedures should occur first in order to clearly understand the business process and enable the employee to incorporate the HRMS learning.
- There is a need for **refresher** courses, which would assist to inform employees on new updates in HRMS.
- A lack of a **quick reference guide** was identified as affecting the timely entry of information.
- There is only one **resource** within CFSI dedicated to developing and delivering HRMS training.
- Training scheduled by CFSI has resulted in a lower turnout than expected. Without proper training in the business process and the HRMS system, the risk of inaccurate and untimely entries increases.
- An issue arose on the lack of available time to attend training courses due to the workload.

*Since a Human Resources Control Framework is not currently in place, there were no General findings at Level 4 – Monitor and Review nor at Level 5 – Fully Integrated Procedures and Controls.*

## **7.2 Classification – Detailed Findings**

This section summarizes the issues identified in the audit reviews, consultations, workshops, and interviews held with various levels of staff within the Foreign Affairs Canada, Human Resources organization with respect to the Create Position, Reclassification, and Reorganization processes that impact the integrity, accuracy and timeliness of the data entered into HRMS. These findings were then lined-up with the Five Levels of the recommended Human Resources Control Framework:

- Level 1 – Documented Policies
- Level 2 – Documented Procedures and Processes
- Level 3 – Applied Procedures and Controls
- Level 4 – Monitor and Review
- Level 5 – Fully Integrated Procedures and Controls

This was done to assess the immediate corrective action that needs to be taken before an HR Control Framework for FAC can be put in place.

### **Level 1 - Documented Policies**

Classification is in the process of establishing their command of Level 1. Internal policies/directives are in the process of being redrafted by the Classification

Policy Officer according to the new Treasury Board Classification policies. There was only one area of concern identified during the workshops. The Treasury Board policies in place at the time of the workshop did not specify that the email process substitutes the hard signature required for **authorizations**. This causes confusion among the Officers on receipt of the classification documents via email from the Managers. Officers tend to follow the policy and go back to the Manager for the hard signature. This affects the timeliness of the activities.

**Roles, responsibilities and accountabilities** for HRMS related data are not clearly documented and there is no consistency among the Officers or Managers in performing their duties. Managers are unsure whom to contact or relay information to in the reorganization process.

## **Level 2 – Documented Procedures**

At Level 2, the following Classification areas around deficient procedures were found:

- Formal, standardized documented **procedures** for creating positions, reclassifying positions, and performing reorganization, are not available to the AMAs, Managers, Classification Officers and Classification Assistants. This causes delays in the timely performance of activities, creates a lack of accountability, and confusion in who, what, where, when, and how the process should be performed.
- Information such as New Designation, Security Clearance and Official Languages profile are not consistently entered at the time of creation and classification of the positions.
- There is inconsistent involvement of the Classification Officers by the managers in the upfront analysis on the organizational impact of the **reorganization** process.
- The **Rationale** form is not a standardized form and is individualized among the Officers. This causes confusion for Assistants in ensuring the completeness of the information to be entered into HRMS.
- **Data corrections** are requested by the Classification Assistant from the Staffing Super Users without formal, standardized documented procedures to follow. Required corrections are communicated verbally or by email. There is no consistency in this process. There are currently no Data Correction procedures in place to follow. Without procedures it is unlikely that there is an external audit trail to identify the particulars of the implemented change.

## **Level 3 – Applied Procedures and Controls**

At Level 3, the following Classification areas around application of procedures and controls were identified:

- There is no HRMS **access** by the Classification group to perform corrections to invalid data on HRMS. Corrections must be documented and passed to the Staffing group to make the corrections.
- Currently there is only one Certified Classification Officer and one Classification Assistant, which sometimes creates a **bottleneck** and affects the timeliness of activities.
- There is also a lack of trained Reclassification Evaluation Committee members, which slows the classification evaluation process down.
- **Communication** around the reclassification of positions is poor between managers and AMAs, and between AMAs and Officers. The impact of a reclassification can affect the employee's home record, and information required to update the host record is not consistently forwarded to HMA.
- Classification Assistant at times has not **notified** HCD, HMA and HMO when a position has been reclassified, which has potential impact on acting pay.
- There is a lack of **reports** to support the Officers in the verification process. The Officers currently use the completed TB330 form to verify the information entered into HRMS by the Assistants. Assistants reported that they were unsure of how to use any available HRMS reports to perform verifications. It was identified that there are currently no screens or reports out of HRMS that simplify the process in summarizing the Classification data entry results for verification purposes.
- Officers currently use excel spreadsheets to assist them in **monitoring** their workflow. HRMS does not assist them to perform this type of monitoring. Officers felt that the HRMS was too cumbersome to use and that the information in the spreadsheet is more efficient and timely.

*Since a Human Resources Control Framework is not currently in place, there were no Classification findings at Level 4 – Monitor and Review nor at Level 5 – Fully Integrated Procedures and Controls.*

### **7.3 Staffing - Detailed Findings**

This section summarizes the issues identified in the audit reviews, consultations, workshops, and interviews held with various levels staff within the Foreign Affairs Canada, Human Resources organization with respect to the Hire, Assignments, Promotion, and Reclassification process that impact the integrity, timeliness and accuracy of HRMS data entry. These findings were then lined-up with the Five Levels of the recommended Human Resources Control Framework:

- Level 1 – Documented Policies
- Level 2 – Documented Procedures
- Level 3 – Applied Procedures and Controls
- Level 4 – Monitor and Review
- Level 5 – Fully Integrated Procedures and Controls

This was done to assess the immediate corrective action that needs to be taken before an HR Control Framework for FAC can be put in place.

#### **Level 1 - Documented Policies**

At Level 1, the following integrated HR and HRMS policies/directives were identified as missing at FAC:

- secondments into Foreign Affairs
- secondments out of Foreign Affairs
- rotational employee assignments
- Date of Arrival at the mission
- Official Languages and who should be entering the information

#### **Level 2 - Documented Procedures**

At Level 2, the following Staffing areas around deficient procedures were found:

- There is a lack of formal, standardized, documented **procedures** for the Hire, Assignments, Promotion and Reclassification process. This creates confusion across the directorates and between the Officers as to how these processes should function. The documents used in place of the procedures are the external policies, some internal directives, and the HRMS Training Guides. These documents do not specify roles, responsibilities, and accountabilities and therefore are unclear to the staff involved.
- The process for hiring employees on a **Secondment-In** and the process for hiring into the FS stream were specifically identified as problematic because they are handled significantly differently than the majority of the hire processes.
- The process for **Secondment-out** is not clear in how to deal with the entry of their host information into HRMS.

- The **hire** process varies by Officer, in terms of responsibilities of the Officer and the Assistant and in terms of the actual activities. There is no common procedure that defines the correct distribution of the Letter of Offer. The practice varies among the officers.
- It is not clear who is responsible for entering PSC results for **Official Language** testing into HRMS.
- There are no written **procedures** available for the assignment processes. Assignment Officers are rotational and this compounds the problems of not having documented procedures. When a new Officer comes on board they are dependent on support documentation left behind from the previous officer, the goodwill and knowledge of the other Officers in bringing them up to speed, and the abilities of their Assistant. The new Officer may also create a slightly different version of the procedure. It is not unusual to have a significant number of new Officers come on board at the same time.
- Many of the **data integrity issues** are concentrated within the Assignment area as accurate employee information is key to the overall process. Receiving employee information in a timely manner is always a challenge and causes delays in having accurate data in PS. (e.g. dependents, medical, accreditation). Such factors affect the employee Foreign Service Allowance and are important to the employee.
- Once an employee arrives at **Missions**, there is no process in place to update their personal information and notification of assignment date.
- Poor **communication** from Missions at the end of the assignments and from employees regarding changes to family configuration affects the integrity of the data negatively and impacts various directorates.
- There is a **form** missing when an employee returns to Canada and is posted in Headquarters on a general assignment. A general assignment is treated differently than an assignment abroad. A Mission Departure Form is completed by the Mission manager and a PCF is required to return the employee to Canada but there isn't a form that goes to HR to tell them where the employee is assigned in Headquarters.
- **BIOS** on HRMS are not up to date and accurate. The BIOS are used by managers to make assignment decisions.
- **Posting** process is very cyclical and it is difficult to remember how to handle situations year after year.
- The responsibilities of the Assistants to **follow up** on missing information is not clearly identified and understood. Assistants will request the missing information but the follow-up on the request is inconsistent.
- **Correction** procedures are not documented. Roles and responsibilities are based on who has the HRMS access to perform corrections. Errors are identified and corrected on an ad hoc basis. The particulars of the errors are either sent by email or relayed verbally to the Assistants. There is no regular validation or reconciliation procedure in place to ensure that corrections have been processed.

- There is a lack of summarized **control** procedures which would help in performing the daily tasks.
- **Timing** issues regarding data entry into the payroll system and HRMS is an on-going problem since employee payroll information is often captured first, prior to the data entered into HRMS.
- **Forms** were identified as not currently reflecting the legislative changes. Checklists used by the Staffing group to perform the Hire process were not consistent.

### **Level 3 – Applied Procedures and Controls**

At Level 3, the following Staffing areas around application of procedures and controls were identified:

- The Managers identified the lack of **access** to reference information to make timely posting decisions.
- **Access** to future-dated rows for reporting purposes was identified as a requirement in allowing the assistant to check for extensions. Assignment Assistants keep a separate list to capture when employee assignments are scheduled to end. The list is used because future dated information is currently not included in HRMS reports.
- The need for HRMS **refresher** courses was identified. **Training** on business processes is also lacking. Officers and Assistants are not provided with formal training on the business processes. They learn on the job and sometimes erroneous information is passed on. This also places an extra burden on those people who become the sources of information for new Officers and Assistant. The rotational aspect of the Officer level in HCD and HMA adds to this since there can be a significant number of new Officers coming in at the same time.
- It was reported in the workshops and in various interviews that there are insufficient Officer and Assistant resources to perform the **workload** in the Hire, Assignments, Promotion and Reclassification process.
- In the Assignments area, when the Posting cycle occurs, there is an enormous impact on the **workload** with no additional staff assigned to balance the load. Officers and Assistants typically put aside all other HR activities such as promotions, reclassifications, and data corrections in order to complete the PCF process. The cyclical nature of the posting cycle means that there are significant increases in the workload for HMA and HCD starting in approximately February and continuing until the fall when most employees arrive at their new assignment.
- Situations have occurred where the assignment process takes place concurrent with the “create new position” process. There is a lack of **communication** from Classification to the HMA/HCD once the new position is created which holds up the PCF process.
- Workshops identified a **communication** issue between HMO, HCD and HMA. For secondment-in hires going to missions, the hire record (substantive) is entered in HMO but the assignment record is entered in

HMA. The hire date is not accurate because entry is required before knowing the actual hire date, and a date is required to start the PCF process. The hire should be corrected to reflect the date the employee arrives at mission but HMA doesn't always inform HMO when the employee arrives.

- In Staffing, the work is split by stream so no one **single point of contact** exists for the Managers. Whom they contact depends on the stream of the employee involved.
- **Communications** to mission managers experience problems at the end of the posting cycle. Managers who have not contacted Assignments to state that they or their employees would like an extension on their posting are put through the posting process and assigned to another posting. The new postings are broadcast and employees who wish to remain are then scrambling to correct the posting situation. This creates more work for the Assignments group.
- The Mission Arrival **form** is not always sent in a timely manner. A copy of the form is not sent to Compensation with the result being that they do not know to end acting pay from an employee's previous assignment.
- The **PCF** form is created and reissued a number of times throughout the assignment process. The assignment process itself is complex and time consuming and this carries over to the data entry of the assignments. The Assistant must enter a false date to start a PCF process. A start date of August 31 is arbitrarily used as the arrival date and is adjusted as required along the way. The start date is regularly changed and requires a new version of the PCF if the month in which the assignment is scheduled to start changes. Data errors that occur have an impact on budgets and allowances.
- Managers are not consistently **verifying** Hire documentation prior to submitting it to HR for processing. Missing information means that the Officer must track down the Managers to complete the information, which affects the timeliness of the Hire process.
- Once the Hire data is entered into HRMS, there is no **verification** performed on the data entered. Secondments-in require authorization from many different people – HMO will enter secondment-in information without all signatures in place while HCD will wait until all signatures are complete. The same occurs for employees hired as an Interchange Canada.
- **Reports** seem to be available but there is confusion on their function and availability. It was also mentioned that with the lack of resources and heavy workload, there is no time to run and review reports. Post-dated transactions are not included in existing reports, so they cannot be verified. There are no reports to assist Managers and Officers in the audit of the information in HRMS. Throughout the workshops it was evident that Excel spreadsheets were being used to meet some of the reporting needs.
- Observations of the **verification** processes showed that source data (e.g. e-mail) is carefully reviewed prior to and at the moment of input into



HRMS. The deficiency arises subsequent to the input of data. As an example, HRMS may not identify a transposition of characters in a date field and yet accept this as valid data. To address this type of error, detection controls need to be strengthened by improving procedures and reporting.

*Since a Human Resources Control Framework is not currently in place, there were no Staffing findings at Level 4 – Monitor and Review nor at Level 5 – Fully Integrated Procedures and Controls.*