

## The Consultation Process

Given the potential impact of its recommendations on both the voluntary sector and government, the Table consulted with a wide range of organizations and individuals prior to finalizing its report and recommendations.<sup>1</sup>

The Table released an interim report and highlights document in early August 2002 to solicit comments and advice. The consultation papers were published in a number of ways:

- Information about the Table's work, consultation schedule and a call for input was published in the CCRA's *Registered Charities Newsletter* (June and August editions) which was distributed to all 78,000 charities.
- A notification letter was sent to 462 voluntary sector organizations, umbrella groups, provincial and territorial government officials and interested individuals, which included an invitation to participate in the consultation process.
- The consultation papers were made available on the Voluntary Sector Initiative website. The website also provided access to 13 research papers prepared for the Table.
- Public notices were posted on the CCRA, Canadian Centre for Philanthropy and The Muttart Foundation websites with links to the consultation materials.
- A media advisory was issued to all major media outlets.
- Public service announcements were made on local cable stations across Canada.

Following the release of its interim report, the Table led three streams of consultations with the voluntary sector and other interested parties:

- Public forums were held in 21 locations from September 3, 2002 through to October 25, 2002. At least two Table members were present to facilitate each session, including one from government and one from the sector. The Table also consulted with staff from the Charities Directorate.
- In each city, the Table also made time available to receive a limited number of presentations. This was an opportunity for interested organizations and individuals to provide specific feedback on the Table's proposals. In total, 21 voluntary sector organizations and professional associations made presentations.
- Individuals and organizations were also invited to submit briefs or respond online. The Table received 24 formal submissions.

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<sup>1</sup> As mentioned earlier in this report, the Table assisted with the simplification of the annual information return and the development of guidelines for "related business" activity. Separate consultations were conducted on these matters by the CCRA.

In addition to the Table’s activities, umbrella organizations also consulted widely with their member and client groups.

In total, 524 representatives from 388 organizations participated in the consultations. Participation came mainly from local and national charities (66%). Smaller numbers attended from non-profit organizations and professional associations (17%), federal, provincial and territorial government departments (11%), and the private sector (6%).

To help focus the discussion during the consultation, participants were invited to provide their comments on key discussion points. During the public forums, comments were captured anonymously and detailed notes on each session were circulated to the Table on a weekly basis. This allowed Table members who were not present to “hear” what was being said at the sessions.

At the conclusion of the consultations, the comments captured during the public forums were combined with comments received during the hearings and in writing. The raw feedback was used to prepare an analytical report that summarized the input received on specific topics.

The Table then used the analytical report to assess the implications and degree of support for the Table’s interim recommendations. As discussed in the report, the Table modified some of its preliminary conclusions based on the advice it received during the consultations. However, many of the Table’s central recommendations received general support.

<b>List of centres in which consultations were held</b>	
<b>City</b>	<b>Dates</b>
Charlottetown	September 3
Moncton	September 4
Fredericton	September 6
Halifax	September 9
Sydney	September 10
St. John's	September 12
Montréal	September 16
Québec City	September 17
Calgary	September 19
Edmonton	September 20
Vancouver	September 23–24
Yellowknife (via video conference)	September 23
Whitehorse (via video conference)	September 23
Victoria	September 25
Kelowna	September 27
Ottawa/Gatineau	October 9
Toronto	October 15–17
London	October 18
Saskatoon	October 21
Regina	October 22
Winnipeg	October 25