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**PUBLIC MANAGEMENT SERVICE  
PUBLIC MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

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**SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 19th MEETING OF THE PUBLIC MANAGEMENT  
COMMITTEE, 25-26 March 1999**

**20th Session of the Public Management Committee, Château de la Muette, Paris  
28-29 October 1999**

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**SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 19TH MEETING  
OF THE PUBLIC MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE  
25-26 MARCH, 1999**

**Item 1 -- Election of Officers**

1. The Committee agreed to the Secretariat's proposal that Benita Plesch, **the Netherlands**, would still chair this meeting and that the newly elected officers would start their duty at the end of the meeting.
2. On the proposal of **Norway** and endorsed by **Spain**, four Committee officers were elected or re-elected for 1999. They are:
  - Mr Adam Wolf, elected as Chair, **Denmark**, Assistant Permanent Secretary for Public Management, Ministry of Finance;
  - Mr. Jonathan D. Breul, elected as Vice-Chair, **United States**, Senior Advisor to the Deputy Director for Management;
  - Ms Nicole Jauvin, re-elected as Vice-Chair, **Canada**, Deputy Clerk and Counsel, Privy Council Office;
  - Dr. Pia Marconi, re-elected as Vice-Chair, **Italy**, General Director, Civil Service Department.
3. Dr. Jorge Chavez Presa, former Vice-Chair, **Mexico**, made a farewell intervention to conclude his contribution to the work of the PUMA Committee. He stressed the importance of PUMA's central role, to promote sound governance mechanisms to face economic and financial crisis and the need to enhance the quality of governance through proper policies for the delivery of public services.
4. Committee Members agreed on expressing their thanks and appreciation to Len Early.

**Item 2 -- Adoption of the Agenda**

**PUMA/A(99)1/REV2**

5. The agenda was adopted without change.

**Item 3 – Approval of the Summary Record of the Previous Meeting**

**PUMA/M(98)2**

6. The summary record of the Committee's 18<sup>th</sup> session held on 28-29 October 1998 was approved without amendment.

#### **Item 4 – Presentation by the Director, Mr. Jean-Jacques Noreau**

7. Mr Jean-Jacques Noreau, the new Director of PUMA, delivered general remarks on the development of PUMA and updated the Committee on the budget situation. In particular he underlined:

- The greater stability of the OECD budget after a phase of budget cuts and the “political commitment” to ensure that the Organisation’s work programme will no longer be impacted by budget cutbacks.
- The need for PUMA to contribute to the efforts of the OECD to address forthcoming challenges, e.g. how the Organisation relates to the rest of the world. In the future greater attention will be given within the Organisation to the third pillar of the paradigm developed by the Secretary General, i.e. “good governance”. This offers an opportunity for PUMA to contribute its expertise to an important issue with implications for the Organisation’s broader work programme. Mr. Noreau also underlined his intention to work closely with other Directors on selected cross-cutting horizontal projects.
- The possibility of establishing an eminent Persons Group to examine governance issues is under consideration.

Mr. Noreau stressed the need for the Committee to agree on a new mandate for 2000-2006 (see item 7).

#### **Item 5 – Approval of the Annual Report to Council**

**PUMA(99)3**

8. The Committee approved the PUMA 1998 Annual Report, which will be presented to the OECD Council, requesting that the text be made available to the public on the PUMA web site. The Committee also endorsed the suggestion that the report be presented to the OECD Council by one of the Committee Officers. The introduction should be strengthened to present the forward looking effort that PUMA has undertaken over 1998 to “reinvent” its programme of work and prepare future orientations in a difficult budgetary context. One country requested that information on the SIGMA programme developments be enhanced.

9. Countries also expressed the wish that in future, the annual report should be a means of accountability to provide evaluation on the delivery of the Programme of Work.

#### **Item 6 – Programme Management**

10. **Pia Marconi, Vice-Chair**, reported on the PUMA-TUAC consultation of 24 March 1999. She indicated that TUAC praised the relationship with PUMA. They welcomed the future orientation of PUMA to strengthen its capacity to address global issues such as governance. TUAC would like to add value to PUMA work on Ethics, Regulatory Management and Reform, and on strengthening government-citizens connections. They would like also to see a representative from the trade unions side to be involved in the Eminent Person’s Group. They expressed some doubts about attempts to compare public and private efficiency; additionally they suggested that the Best Practice Guidelines on Contracting Out, issued in 1997, be revised to show examples where public contracting has failed.

11. The Secretariat suggested the creation of a new service for the Committee Members. So as to respond better to the requests for information PUMA regularly receives, it was proposed to establish a “question and answer” system. This system will ensure that requests are followed up, processed and

answers provided [PUMA/RD(99)2]. Committee Members generally agreed on the usefulness of this new resource but some expressed concerns about practical implications of its management both within the Secretariat and in capitals and its place in the hierarchy of actions under PUMA's new mandate. On the proposal of **Denmark**, Committee Members agreed to ask the Secretariat to explore alternative scenarios for this new service.

12. The Committee was briefed on the preparation of the next meeting of Senior Officials from Centres of Government. The meeting will be hosted by **Italy** and will take place early October on the basis of a slightly renewed formula. This new design will encourage more active exchange of views and will include a "free" session initiated and led off by a Member of the Senior Officials

13. The Secretariat made a brief presentation on the programme for the PUMA Symposium scheduled 14-15 September 1999 on *Government for the Future: Getting from Here to There*. Attendance is by invitation to high-level reformers across OECD Member countries (2 per country). The PUMA Committee members agreed to identify names of suitable participants for the Symposium.

*a) Questionnaire on Ethics*

14. The Committee noted progress on the preparation of the survey on the implementation of the Recommendation on Improving Ethical Conduct in the Public Service. The survey will result in a report which will be sent to the Council at its meeting at ministerial level in 2000.

*b) Questionnaire on Consultation with Citizens Groups*

*PUMA(99)4*

15. The Committee confirmed its strong interest in the new activity on "Strengthening Government-Citizen Connections", which will address government policies and practices for providing citizens with information and involving them in both public consultation and participation mechanisms. The Committee noted the importance of these issues in PUMA's future work on governance, and as a crosscutting subject of relevance to the work of other parts of the OECD. The Committee focused inter alia on issues of information, consultation and participation. Provided that citizens are also consumers of public services, one issue is how much attention should be paid to citizens' expectations concerning the design of the delivery mode of public services. More specifically, another issue was whether the close link established between general issues on strengthening government-citizens connections and more specific indicators of government use of information technology should remain in that form, or be addressed, for more clarity, in a separate questionnaire.

16. Noting the need to build up information in these areas incrementally, the Committee suggested that the proposed written questionnaire be further focused and tested on volunteers from Member countries before being more widely disseminated. Three Member countries volunteered during the meeting (**Canada, Portugal and the United Kingdom**). The Committee also confirmed its interest in the results of the country case studies that are planned for more in-depth investigations.

*c) Note the Calendar of Meetings*

*PUMA(99)5*

17. The **Netherlands** expressed their preference, along with the preference of the HRM network, for keeping regular meetings of the network of the Senior Civil Service.

**Item 7 – Discussion on the New Mandate****PUMA(99)1**

18. Mr. Noreau presented the background document “Governance and Public Management” together with some strategic orientations and questions of substance to be considered by the Committee, considering that PUMA should identify policy areas where it could add most value. He suggested that one of the main challenges of the new PUMA mandate is to find the right balance between:

- exchange of practices and experience;
- adding value to some of OECD’s other substantive work;
- contributing to debates on governance that have an impact “in a globalised world”.

19. Committee Members agreed on the suggested orientations, paying more attention to broader issues of governance and integration of OECD core goals into the PUMA work programme. However they pointed out that such efforts need clarification. The creation of an Eminent Persons Group on Governance could bring a valuable contribution in this respect. **France** also requested that information on how to define “governance” be provided.

20. The Committee considered the *Hierarchy of Action* depicting more or less directive forms of action resulting from the work of the PUMA Committee. Committee Members asked that the presentation be revised in order to avoid the impression that PUMA should be too prescriptive. Although OECD Recommendations should remain exceptional, it was agreed that PUMA should provide more direction through identification and dissemination of best practices. Consideration should also be given to Outreach activities but strategic choices must first be made concerning PUMA value-added in this area.

21. Additionally, the discussion identified two promising orientations for PUMA. PUMA should continue to provide support to “government modernisation”, e.g. by evaluation of privatisation/corporatisation measures, developing further work on the Role of Citizens, Ethics and Human Resource Management, and by paying more attention to risk management. However, PUMA should increasingly tackle “forward looking” issues where policy decisions are needed. Possible themes include the management of: natural disasters, crime, terrorism, environmental problems, ageing, multiculturalism and globalisation/localisation.

22. The Committee agreed on the process to follow for the elaboration of the mandate proposal to be discussed at the October meeting of the Committee. The Secretariat indicated that they would begin to work on a revised version of the document “Governance and Public Management” [PUMA(99)1]. Before circulating another version, Members would be invited to submit any additional ideas with respect to emerging issues. The ongoing work will aim to give a “strategic lift” to the document in order to move closer to issues of interest to decision makers. Prior to the October meeting of the Committee, a meeting of the Committee Officers will take place to finalise the draft. In the mean time, greater involvement of the Committee will be assured.

**Item 8 – The Government Performance Project****PUMA (99)2**

23. Professor **Patricia Ingraham** presented the Government Performance Project an initiative undertaken in the United States under her leadership by the administration of the Maxwell School’s Allan K. Campbell Public Affairs Institute.

24. The Government Performance Project aims to improve both the understanding and practice of government management throughout the United States at the city, county, state and federal levels. This will be accomplished through better understanding of the roles and dimensions of management in government; it will enhance public accountability for the quality of public management.

25. Professor Ingraham presented the five main management areas being evaluated. A description of each follows.

- Financial Management evaluation is designed to measure the extent to which governments engage in sound financial management practices, including: budget preparation and execution; cash, contract, debt and revenue management; accounting and financial reporting procedures; and the overall financial management system is linked to the achievement of strategic goals and objectives.
- Human Resources Management evaluation is designed to measure the effectiveness of human resources management (HRM) systems. Information regarding the structure of the HRM system, the degree to which it is integrated with other systems in pursuit of the mission, and the ability of HRM structures and procedures to adapt are emphasized. The goal is to determine the characteristics of effective HRM strategies through an examination of both the environment in which HRM systems operate and the content of those systems.
- Information Technology evaluation is designed to assess the extent to which information technology contributes to effective management. The focus is on the usefulness of technology for management, rather than simply on the management of technology itself. The evaluation covers various aspects of the technology process, including planning, acquisition, development, training of users, and usefulness of information.
- Capital Management evaluation is designed to measure the extent to which the government engages in meaningful, long-range capital planning, including: consideration of the impact of capital projects on future operating and maintenance expenses; assessment of asset condition and replacement/overhaul forecasting; development of accurate information on future needs, cost analysis; prioritization and tracking of capital projects.
- Evaluation of managing for results is designed to measure the extent to which the government is managed, with a focus on the results of policies. This "managing for results" focus implies substantive strategic planning and self-evaluation, the measurement of outputs and outcomes, use of performance measures in management and resource allocation, and the use of forward-looking needs assessments in program management.

26. For more information see the Government Performance Project website at: [www.maxwell.syr.edu/gpp](http://www.maxwell.syr.edu/gpp). See also Background document [PUMA(99)2].

27. Following her presentation, Professor Ingraham responded to questions.

## **Item 9 – Trends in Public Sector Human Resource Management**

28. The Secretariat presented megatrends of the Public Sector Human Resource Management. The presentation focused on the interface between Public Sector and Private Sector labour markets.

29. Interface between public and private sectors is increasing in many OECD countries. Managers and decision-makers in the area of public personnel management are generally incorporating this new dimension into their management strategies.

30. The presentation stressed the need to:

- identify emerging practice in the management of public employees;
- explore the share of certain exogenous and endogenous factors in the impact on changes in employment relations in the public sector (e.g. conjunctural, national and institutional/structural, and general factors); and
- draw the attention of decision-makers in HRM to the new challenges they will face in the future.

31. The report presented various scenarios concerning the functioning of the public labour market in OECD countries (e.g. do the “megatrends” observed in the economy impact on public labour markets? or are concepts like flexible organisations, change mastering, tendency to individualisation are relevant to the public labour market? One issue is about the limits to the current public sector trends in flexibility and terms and conditions of employment). The Secretariat suggested that future work should consider Employment status in the Public Service as well as examination of the comparability in employment flexibility in the private and public sectors in OECD countries. Recent development in people management in public services in OECD countries were also presented.

32. The Secretariat suggested that comparative analysis of HR systems in OECD countries will be based on both qualitative and quantitative changes in the area of personnel management and related employment practices in the public sector.

33. The Committee praised PUMA work in this area, the current approach being both promising and forward-looking. Some countries (**Denmark, United States**) underlined this work would be highly relevant for the new mandate. One major aspect of discussion was how to attract and keep the most competent people in the Public Service.

#### **Item 10 – Contracting for Performance and Partnerships**

34. The Secretariat informed the Committee on progress of PUMA’s outputs concerning the work on Public sector contracting and the work on Contracting for intergovernmental partnerships [PUMA/RD(99)4]. Committee members expressed their high interest for this work which was regarded as a good example of successful activities that PUMA should keep doing in the context of the new mandate. The importance of dealing with management issues across levels of government was highlighted.

#### **Item 11 – Governance issues emerging from the Regulatory Reform Activity**

35. The Secretariat briefed the Committee on preliminary conclusions of importance to governance issues arising from PUMA’s work on regulatory management and reform. An update on the OECD horizontal activities in this area was also provided.

36. The country reviews and other work on regulation suggest some themes of potential interest to governance:

- Improving capacities for dynamic policy change may be just as important as ensuring optimal policy design at a point in time. Governments spend considerable effort improving new policy content and design, but less time questioning the value of current government actions. Technological change and globalisation will increasingly reward dynamic regulatory efficiency. Hence, flexibility and capacity for regulatory adaptation are important in today's regulatory regimes.
- Improved policy co-ordination is essential to constructing the policy framework for market performance. Co-ordination continues to be important as countries monitor the impact of reforms, and carry out mid-course corrections that may cut across jurisdictions and be time-sensitive.
- Transparency of the public administration is a core factor for economic performance, yet the concept is poorly understood. Transparency in regulatory decisions and application helps to cure many reasons for regulatory failures: capture and bias toward concentrated benefits, inadequate information in both public and private sectors, policy rigidity, uncertainty, corruption, and lack of accountability. More attention may be needed to identify the key administrative factors in transparency, and approaches for improving transparency in relations with market actors.

37. Countries supported the promising initiatives in this area and wished to be more closely associated, in the future, to the work on Regulatory Management and Reform.

#### **Item 12 – Contribution to OECD horizontal activities**

38. The Secretariat briefed the Committee on horizontal projects on the Links between Trade, Investment and Development and on Sustainable Development.

39. PUMA's contribution to the OECD Ministerial report on the links between Trade Investment and Development focused on issues of policy coherence such as improving co-ordination (i.e. cross-departmental co-ordination between levels of government, good political and administrative interface) and improving access to quality information for decision-makers.



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19ÈME SESSION / 19TH SESSION  
25-26 MARS 1999/25-26 MARCH 1999**

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