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MEMORANDUM TO THE MINISTER

PILOT TO ADDRESS DEMAND FOR LIAISON SERVICES AT THE MINISTERIAL CENTRE FOR MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT AND SENATORS

FOR INFORMATION

SUMMARY

- The purpose of this memorandum is to provide you with an update following the October 28, 2022 MinDM briefing which identified a need to address demand for liaison services by high-volume Member of Parliament (MP) and Senator offices, to ensure that they could adequately respond to their constituents.
- Effective October 31, 2022, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) modernized its operating model at the Ministerial Centre for Members of Parliament and Senators (MCMPS) by introducing liaison services via an online appointment-based system. This empowers MP and Senator offices to schedule appointments based on their needs to receive personalized support from a client support professional.
- As part of the implementation plan, IRCC has undertaken a pilot with certain MP and Senator offices facing higher demand in an effort to determine appropriate level of capacity to support these offices, while maintaining equal access for all MP and Senator offices.

BACKGROUND:

- Since the start of 2022, the steadily rising volume of enquiries at the MCMPS resulted in significantly longer wait times and an increased backlog of email enquiries, which impacted MP and Senator satisfaction as well as Client Support Centre (CSC) agents' well-being.
- To address the increase in enquiries received, IRCC's Client Experience Branch (CEB) proposed the introduction of liaison services within the MCMPS, introducing a new online scheduling solution to better manage intake, as well as a revised operating model to ensure effective triaging of urgent enquiries.
- On September 13, 2022, IRCC implemented a soft launch of liaison services with 20 MP offices, and based on positive feedback, liaison services were fully implemented as of October 31, 2022.



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CURRENT STATUS:

- During the soft launch period, IRCC observed a trend where some MP offices would book multiple same-day appointments and subsequently cancel many of them, often at the last minute (i.e. within 15 minutes of the appointment time). While cancellations are expected to occur from time to time, the frequency of last minute cancellations prevented other MP offices from being able to book appointment times, creating a risk of access for some offices.

- As a result,

This greatly reduced the rate of last-minute cancellations and allowed for more equitable access by MP and Senator offices.

- During the October 28, 2022 MinDM briefing, concerns were identified on the impact of this on MP and Senator offices that have historically identified a higher need for MCMPS support.
- As part of the implementation of liaison services, it is proposed that a pilot be undertaken with certain high volume offices in order to try to determine the right capacity model to balance the need for ensuring equal access to MCMPS services, with consideration to ensuring that offices experiencing a higher demand have proportional support.

Pilot outline

- Using historical MCMPS data, the top MP and Senator offices that make use of MCMPS services were identified. Among the top there was a clear distinction between the top offices, reflecting that they appeared to have a much higher need for MCMPS services than other offices on the list.

- Effective November 1, 2022 and each of the top offices have in order to determine the right capacity model for higher volume offices. Each of the top offices have and the remaining offices

This has subsequently reduced the total number of appointments available for other MP and Senator offices to book on a daily basis

- For the first week (November 1 to 4 inclusive), IRCC

- IRCC will monitor data (i.e., the use of all available appointments) and feedback from all MP and Senator offices in order to determine the right capacity model moving forward.

CONSIDERATIONS:



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- Managing MP and Senator office expectations: This pilot is intended to try to find the right capacity model that will be ultimately put in place,

It will be important to manage expectations of MP and Senator offices that IRCC will continue to have a balanced approach to ensure that all offices have access to MCMPS' liaison services.

- Client perceptions:

While IRCC is working on many service enhancements to improve the support offered to clients, including an investment in Budget 2022 and

COMMUNICATIONS IMPLICATIONS:

- IRCC has received recent media enquiries, and there has been limited coverage on traditional and social media regarding services provided through MCMPS and delays in providing responses to MPs. An improved, more predictable service for MPs and Senators may be viewed positively by some stakeholders, but preferential treatment for MPs and Senators may also generate some criticism as the MCMPS is not something that IRCC communicates extensively to the public on. It also raises questions of what is being done to address the larger issue of overall service to clients provided through the CSC, which also has extensive backlogs. As noted in considerations above, it is quite possible that announcing an improvement to this service without any mention of improvements on the CSC side could drive more clients to approach MPs and Senators for assistance, which would add pressure to both MP and Senator offices as well as to the MCMPS.
- A responsive communications approach is recommended, with transparent messaging developed to respond to any media enquiries should information about consultations with MPs or the change in service become public.
- With all communications on the MCMPS, care should be taken to pre-emptively address possible concerns regarding service to all clients. Messaging should be provided consistently to reflect that this is only part of IRCC's larger efforts to improve service to clients, with additional examples of actions taken or in progress provided.

NEXT STEPS:



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- The Department will continue advancing the proposed pilot with the top offices while monitoring trends regularly.
- The Department is proceeding with its measurement impact survey (for all MP offices using liaison services). The survey will be sent two weeks after full implementation,
- Based on feedback from all MPs (through the survey), and trends observed during the pilot, the Department will continue to finalize and refine the operating model for liaison services, including the capacity model for offices experiencing higher volumes and demand.
- The Department will continue to monitor this initiative as part of the IRCC Action Plan.

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