



## MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

OTTAWA, Monday, February 2, 2026

(9)

[English]

The Standing Senate Committee on Human Rights met this day at 4:03 p.m., in room B45, Senate of Canada Building, the chair, the Honourable Paulette Senior, presiding.

*Members of the committee present:* The Honourable Senators Arnold, Deacon (*Ontario*), McPhedran, Robinson and Senior (5).

*Participating in the meeting:* Robert Mason and Madalina Chesoi, Analysts, Library of Parliament.

Pursuant to the order of reference adopted by the Senate on Thursday, September 25, 2025, the committee began its study of such issues as may arise from time to time relating to human rights generally. (Topic: Employment Equity in the Federal Public Service)

### WITNESSES:

#### *Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat:*

Carole Bidal, Senior Assistant Deputy Minister, Employee Relations and Total Compensation;

Vidya ShankarNarayan, Senior Assistant Deputy Minister, People and Culture.

#### *Public Service Commission of Canada:*

Emma Orawiec, Vice President, Policy and Communications Sector.

#### *Public Service Alliance of Canada:*

Sharon DeSousa, National President;

Seema Lamba, Human Rights Officer, Human Rights, Health & Safety and Education section.

#### *Canadian Association of Professional Employees:*

Mireille Vallière, Labour Relations Officer;

Sydney Holmes, Member of the National Executive Committee.

*As an individual:*

Adelle Blackett, Professor of Law and Chair of the Employment Equity Act Review Task Force.

Senator Arnold moved that notwithstanding usual practice and pursuant to rule 12-17, the committee be authorized to hold today's meeting without quorum if necessary for the purpose of receiving evidence and publishing evidence, provided that two committee members are present.

The question being put on the motion, it was adopted.

Vidya ShankarNarayan and Emma Orawiec each made a statement and, together with Carole Bidal, answered questions.

At 5:04 p.m., the committee suspended.

At 5:11 p.m., the committee resumed.

Adelle Blackett, Sharon DeSousa and Sydney Holmes each made a statement and answered questions.

At 5:59 p.m., the committee adjourned to the call of the chair.

*ATTEST:*

Caroline Woodward

*Clerk of the Committee*