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Intergovernmental Relations: An Analysis to Test the Effectiveness of the Position of an Intergovernmental Relations Officer at the Local Level

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**Intergovernmental Relations:
An Analysis to test the Effectiveness of the
Position of an Intergovernmental Relations Officer
at the Local Level**

MPA Research Report

Submitted to

**The Local Government Program
Department of Political Science
The University of Western Ontario**

July 2004

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Executive Summary

This report, at the outset, was meant to explore an alternative branch of federalism in Canada namely the relationship between that of the municipal and federal governments. Specifically, the study was to test the effectiveness of a dedicated staff person in intergovernmental relations and the need for intergovernmental relations at a municipal level. In examination of the position, this report will determine whether the findings show municipalities that have an intergovernmental position receive more grant funding from the federal or provincial governments and have better communications with the upper tier orders of government than municipalities that do not have this position.

Section One: Introduction

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this research report was to explore intergovernmental relations at the local level. Examination of a resource position dedicated to intergovernmental relations was a focal point of this research report. Other objectives were to explore relations between government, particularly municipal relations with upper tier orders of government. Moreover, this report shows an emerging role for cities in the twenty-first century.

The primary purpose of this report was to examine the position of an intergovernmental relations officer. A series of interviews were conducted to collect data on the position. Furthermore, indicators were established to analyse the effectiveness of the position. To quantify the effectiveness of such a position, a survey questionnaire was used to compare municipalities that have the position or staff dedicated to intergovernmental relations and those that do not. The results from the questionnaire display through the indicators that the position at the municipal level is effective and advantageous for a municipality.

Research Question

The scope of this report was to question the following:

Is an Intergovernmental Relations Officer an Effective Position for Local Government?

Intergovernmental relations in Canada are beginning to have an important role at the local level as well as the provincial level and federal level of government. Issues are now affecting all three levels of government because municipalities are now dealing with global issues that were once dealt with by upper tier orders of government. Cities are beginning to have an emerging role in the twenty-first century because issues are now transcending all three levels of government as many of the problems facing cities relate to issues that are under federal or provincial jurisdiction.

The position of an intergovernmental relations officer can aid the municipality and help solve some of the issues. Due to the complexity of these issues, municipalities are beginning to realize the importance of creating a network with upper tier levels of government; issues can no longer be attributed to one government, they resonate throughout all three levels. Creating staff at the municipal level opens the possibilities to partnerships and establishes communication with upper tier orders of government.

Section Two: History of Intergovernmental Relations

Existing Theory of Intergovernmental Relations

Most research that analyses intergovernmental relations in a Canadian context has tended to focus on interactions between the provincial and the federal governments. Since municipalities are creatures of the province, the relationship between the province and the municipalities is the second relationship. There has been little research conducted on the third intergovernmental relationship, that between municipal governments and the federal government.

In the Canadian federal system, the Constitution specifically divides jurisdictional powers between the central government and the provincial governments. Specifically, "the legal powers are divided between a central government and regional governments in such a way that each level of government has some kind of activities on which it makes final decisions."¹ Although the Constitution gives the federal government more powers than the provinces, Section 92 of the Constitution outlines responsibilities of the provincial government. Many social services and programs available to Canadian citizens are the result of agreements between the federal government and provincial government. Few programs are supported by one branch of government and therefore the majority require financial cooperation between the two levels. According to Richard Simeon, "if neither order of government has the fiscal, political, or constitutional resources to make major policy on its own, then we must look to a more collaborative partnership among equals to assure policy development that meets the needs of Canadians."² It is evident that intergovernmental relations in Canada are important to ensure that all levels of government cooperate to create policy that has a positive effect for the citizens of Canada.

The second relationship in Canada is the relationship between the provinces and the municipalities within that province. In the early years of their existence, municipalities

1

Robert Jackson, and Doreen Jackson, Canadian Government in Transition. 3rd Ed. (Toronto: Prentice Hall, 2002), 77.

2

Richard Simeon, Political Science and Federalism: Seven Decades of Scholarly Engagement. (Kingston: Institute of Intergovernmental Relations, Queens University Press, 2000), 29.

often had considerable local autonomy. This freedom was attributed to the 1849 Baldwin Act through which "municipalities had gained the right to local self-government with a minimum of parliamentary or executive control."³ However, provincial governments began to exercise a growing supervisory role. In other countries, intergovernmental relations between the federal and local government have been considerable; however, in Canada, "relations have been funnelled through the provinces as intermediaries."⁴ As municipalities began to increase their population base over the next century, provincial governments across Canada began to provide increased leadership and guidance to deal with emerging problems such as increased service demands.

The creation of Metropolitan Toronto in 1954 was the first major change in the Ontario system, until the Smith committee (the Ontario Committee on Taxation), report in 1967, recommended "that all of southern Ontario be restructured in the form of Metro-Toronto-like regional governments."⁵ This led to the creation of ten regional governments in Southwestern Ontario. The period of 1996 to 1999 after the election of the Harris government, saw the most comprehensive reform of municipal government since 1849.

3

Richard Tindal and Susan Nobel Tindal, Local Government in Canada. 4th Ed. (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Limited, 1995), 195.

4

Ronald Watts, Comparing Federal Systems in the 1990's. (Kingston: Institute of Intergovernmental Relations, Queens University Press, 1996), 64.

5

David Siegel, "Recent Changes in Provincial-Municipal Relations in Ontario: A New Era or a Missed Opportunity?" (Conference on Municipal-Federal-Provincial Relations: New Structures/New Connections. 9-10 May 2003. Queen's University, Kingston, ON.), 2.

Changes that stemmed from the Common Sense Revolution included financial reforms and structural reforms that affected many municipalities throughout the province of Ontario. The consequences of these reforms increased the burden of program responsibility delegated to the provinces which then created challenges for the municipalities which were financially limited. The largest source of transfers to municipal governments in Canada is from the provincial government. Over the last decade, however, "provincial transfers to municipal governments have declined significantly from 21.8 percent of municipal revenues in 1988 to 14.4 percent in 1998."⁶ Faced with increased costs, municipalities have had to search for an alternative approach of attainable revenue which has been generating a relationship with the federal government.

The third relationship which was the focus of this report is the relationship between the federal government and the municipalities. Canadian cities are now the strategic place in the global age. In Canada, "nearly 80 percent of the population reside in cities, with fully 51 percent concentrated in the four largest city regions."⁷ The structure of the economy has shifted from the primary sector to manufacturing and service related activity located in urban centres across the nation. At present, "it is sufficient to note that cities are the principal repositories of human capital and therefore, competitiveness, which in turn implies that in the new economic order, Ottawa will therefore be

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Enid Slack, "Report to the Federation of Canadian Municipalities." (Intergovernmental Fiscal Relations and Canadian Municipalities: Current Situation and Prospects. 8 May 2002. Queens University, Kingston, ON.), 2.

⁷

Neil Bradford, "Place Matters and Multi-Level Governance: Perspectives on a New Urban Policy Paradigm." Policy Options, 25 (February 2004): 2.

automatically centred politically with its cities.”⁸ Because of the new economic order, provincial governments have passed down responsibility to municipal authorities commonly referred to as “decentralization,” which refers to “economic restructuring of responsibilities from federal and provincial governments which have a direct impact on urban governments.”⁹ From a federal perspective the goal is to “delineate clear and separate service responsibilities between the provincial and municipal governments and to have each level assume full financial responsibility for the services it provides.”¹⁰ In reality, it is clear that the end result has been significant downloading of responsibilities to municipalities without financial compensation and a sharp reduction in provincial-municipal transfers.

The significance of downloading onto the municipalities is that municipal resources are constrained due to increased responsibilities from the provinces so municipalities must look to the federal government to deal with increased costs. The search for new sources of revenue at the local level is critical to the financial success of the municipality as the revenue that the municipality collected from property tax, which was its primary source of revenue, is now limited. According to Enid Slack, “in 1997, property taxes accounted for 51.2 percent of municipal revenues followed by user fees at 21.2 percent

8

Thomas J. Courchene, Cities in the New Economic Order: An Intergovernmental Perspective. (Kingston: Queen's University, 2002), 4.

9

Katherine A. Graham, Susan D. Phillips, and Allan M. Maslove, Urban Governance in Canada: Representation, Resources and Restructuring. (Toronto: Harcourt Canada Ltd, 1998). 1.

10

Caroline Andrew, Katherine A. Graham and Susan D. Phillips, eds. “Introduction,” Urban Affairs, (Montreal: Mc-Gill-Queen's University Press, 1998), 10.

and transfers from other levels of government at 20.2 percent.”¹¹ Although property tax and user fees may be sufficient to fund many local services, they are not appropriate to “finance services that are redistributive in nature such as social housing or social services.”¹² The main reason is because the property tax is not an elastic source of revenue, it is a regressive tax, and consequently the tax base does not increase automatically like alternative taxes such as the income tax. Also, the property tax cannot provide sufficient revenue to cover all services especially considering many voters do not pay property tax. In order to sufficiently cover the costs of increased services, a system such as that in Great Britain would have to be adopted where in the late 1980's there was a “switch from the property tax to a poll tax to finance local government services.”¹³ A poll tax is a levy on an individual and is independent of the person's income or wealth. However, since the main source of local revenue is constrained, municipalities need to forge an intergovernmental relationship with upper tier levels of government, specifically the federal government.

Necessity for Municipal-Federal Relations

As the relationship between the federal government and municipalities in Ontario becomes more prevalent, a study to determine the effectiveness of the position of an

11

Enid Slack, “Have Fiscal Issues Put Urban Affairs Back on the Policy Agenda?,” in Urban Affairs, ed. Caroline Andrew et al., (Montreal: McGill University Press, 2002), 311.

12

Enid Slack, “Report to the Federation of Canadian Municipalities.” (Intergovernmental Fiscal Relations and Canadian Municipalities: Current Situation and Prospects. 8 May 2002. Queens University, Kingston, ON.), 4.

13

David Hyman and John Strick, Public Finance in Canada. 2nd Ed. (Toronto: Harcourt Canada Ltd., 2001), 170.

intergovernmental relations officer is important. This study is important because of a growing intergovernmental relationship: "Cities and their public managers operate in a complex governmental and intergovernmental environment."¹⁴ A new form of management referred to as collaborative management is a concept that "describes the process of facilitating and operating in multi-organizational arrangements to solve problems."¹⁵ Establishing a relationship with the federal government is an alternative way to deal with the current challenges that municipalities are encountering. Even though the bulk of transfers to municipalities in Canada are provincial-municipal transfers, within the last decade, the federal government has begun to consider local issues as part of the national agenda. Recently, the federal government created a New Deal for cities across Canada.

New Deal

On May 31, 2002, the Minister of Finance, Paul Martin, announced to members of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) a New Deal for municipalities. The focal point of the deal was to create a national partnership that included federal, provincial and municipal leaders to collectively deal with the current challenges that all orders of government face. The New Deal has three pillars that include:

- i) Environmental Sustainability
- ii) Adequate Housing
- iii) Infrastructure and other funding

¹⁴

Robert Agranoff and Michael McGuire, Collaborative Public Management: New Strategies for Local Governments. (Washington: Georgetown University Press, 2003), 2.

¹⁵Ibid, 4.

I. Environmental Sustainability

The environment is an issue that affects all three levels of government. The federal government has pledged a commitment to improve the environment in communities across the nation by allocating \$4-billion to clean up contaminated sites and a further \$600-million to ensure clean water in Aboriginal communities¹⁶ In addition, other initiatives related to the environment are underway such as dedicating financial support to public transit in urban centres such as Toronto and other metropolitan cities.

The Green Municipal Funds (GMF) have been created to accelerate investment in environmental technologies that deliver cleaner air, water and soil and climate protection. The GMF is composed of two distinct funds and is administered by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM). The Green Municipal Enabling Fund is a proposed tool which will assist municipal governments with funding of new projects. The second fund is the Green Municipal Investment Fund which offers financial services to support project implementation.¹⁷ The culmination of these funds according to the Privy Council Office have been highly effective in stimulating community-based feasibility work and investments in more than 100 projects as the Government of Canada has endowed the FCM with \$260 million to establish the GMF and support municipal government action for environmental protection.¹⁸

¹⁶

Paul Martin, "Speaking notes to the Annual General Meeting of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities," lecture given at Edmonton, Alberta, 28 May 2004.

¹⁷

"Green Municipal Funds," at Internet:
http://www.cdea.ca/html/conf/2001.michael_wiggins/tsld003.htm, 4 October 2001

¹⁸

Privy Council Office, "Former Prime Minister's Newsroom Archive (1995-2003)," at Internet:

II. Adequate Housing

The second pillar of the New Deal is adequate housing. Social housing is important because it is "the foundation of healthy, secure, and socially inclusive communities."¹⁹ Furthermore, it is critical to the successful settlement of new Canadians and the growth of supportive environments for Aboriginal people who are moving to our cities. Social housing is an issue that should be supplemented by all three orders of government because of the mass migration of new citizens to the urban centres of the nation.

Within the last decade, "the Government of Canada has completed nine long-term bilateral agreements which have provided approximately \$1.9 billion in subsidies to the provinces and territories."²⁰ However, new plans are being developed as part of the new deal involving all orders of government that will build on the existing transfers to stimulate affordable rental housing and will also provide funding for services to the homeless through the Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative (SCPI). The National Homelessness Initiative (NHI) is a program that was formed in 1999 by the Government of Canada designed to "help ensure community access to programs, services and support for alleviating homelessness in communities located in provinces

<http://www.pco.gc.ca.default.asp?Language=E&Page=pmarchive&Sub.asp>, 10 December 2001.

¹⁹

Paul Martin, "Speaking notes to the Annual General Meeting of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities," lecture given at Edmonton, Alberta, 28 May 2004.

²⁰

"Intergovernmental Relations by Sector," at Internet:
<http://www.pco.gc.ca/aia/default.asp?Language=e&Page=Relations>. 8 October 2002.

and territories."²¹

III. Infrastructure and other funding

The third pillar of the New Deal is infrastructure and other funding. The Infrastructure Canada Program (ICP) is a tri-lateral partnership with provincial and municipal governments. Cities and communities are faced with "the need for massive infrastructure renewal and by working in partnership with the federal government, municipalities can deliver clean water, green energy for clean air and other vital pieces of public infrastructure."²² To fulfill their share of responsibility, the Government of Canada has decided to "accelerate infrastructure funding committing to spend \$1-billion over the next five years instead of over ten."²³ Infrastructure funding is one of the most common demands from municipalities in Canada . The FCM estimates that "the national municipal infrastructure deficit now totals \$60 billion, increasing by \$2 billion a year and with infrastructure aging, most of it has exhausted close to 80 percent of its service life."²⁴ Infrastructure renewal is critical in cities across Canada to ensure that economic vibrancy is maintained.

²¹

"National Homelessness Initiative," at Internet: http://www21.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/initiative/index_e.asp, 12 January 2004.

²²

Jack Layton, "Ensuring that Ottawa Delivers," Municipal World, January 2004, 17.

²³

Paul Martin, "Speaking notes to the Annual General Meeting of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities," lecture given at Edmonton, Alberta, 28 May 2004.

²⁴

Federation of Canadian Municipalities, A New Deal for Community Prosperity and Well Being. (Submission to the Honourable Ralph Goodale, Minister of Finance. January 2004), 4.

Canada's cities are the "generation points for economic progress."²⁵ They are the focal points around which economic, social and cultural innovation takes place. If their infrastructure is not maintained, cities will lose their effectiveness and their vibrancy as "Canadians are beginning to realize that we are a nation of cities."²⁶ Furthermore, smaller communities face unique challenges to economic development. Involvement from the federal government is necessary at a micro level to ensure that communities have the tools to provide for their citizens, such as adequate infrastructure to distribute clean water.

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) has offered further recommendations to the Government of Canada regarding the three pillars of the New Deal. In addition to the three pillars advocated by the federal government, FCM has also suggested alternative sources of revenue. FCM has assessed the possibility of revenue sharing that would include a share of the federal excise tax on fuels. The goal of a federal contribution of five cents per litre would generate \$2.5 billion per year, enough to halt the continuing erosion of infrastructure. However, the federal government has decided to increase the municipal GST rebate allotted to municipalities from 57.14 percent to 100 per cent.²⁷ The fact is municipal governments need a revenue-sharing agreement to

²⁵

Paul Martin, "Speaking notes to the Annual General Meeting of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities," lecture given at Edmonton, Alberta, 28 May 2004.

²⁶

T.J. Plunkett, "A Nation of Cities Awaits Paul Martin's "New Deal" - Federal Funds for "Creatures of the Provinces." Policy Options. February 2004, 20.

²⁷

Federation of Canadian Municipalities, A New Deal for Community Prosperity and Well Being. (Submission to the Honourable Ralph Goodale, Minister of Finance. January 2004), 6.

provide a new source of revenue that is stable and predictable enough to allow them to address the needs of the environment, adequate housing and the growing infrastructure deficit.

A key concern with any revenue-sharing agreement involving the Government of Canada is that the new revenue stream would have to flow through provincial channels. The purpose of intergovernmental agreements regarding revenue sharing is, "to help make funding predictable and sustainable which involves empowering municipal governments by providing them with a new net revenue source that will allow communities to take control of their own futures."²⁸ What is not needed is higher property taxes but a more equitable sharing of the current fiscal pie among all orders of government. Creating an intergovernmental partnership involving all levels of government will help reduce municipal dependence on property taxes and diversify municipal sources of income.

Forging a new partnership

The New Deal is about more than finding sources of revenue for municipal governments. It is about "re-imagining and re-inventing how governments serve Canadians to ensure sustainable, dynamic and competitive communities that support a high quality of life."²⁹ At the centre of this new approach is a new intergovernmental

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Federation of Canadian Municipalities, A New Deal for Community Prosperity and Well Being. (Submission to the Honourable Ralph Goodale, Minister of Finance. January 2004), 1.

²⁹

Federation of Canadian Municipalities. A New Deal for Community Prosperity and Well Being. (Submission to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance. September 2003), 2.

partnership.

Although quality of life in communities is dependent on each order of government fulfilling its jurisdictional responsibilities, it also depends on "all orders of government recognizing the complex connections among themselves and the work that they do, so that they can work together to achieve common goals."³⁰ The New Deal is based on partnerships and cooperation among governments which is a new avenue to provide adequate services to local communities. Municipalities are beginning to realize that the position of an intergovernmental relations officer is the alternate way to forge a partnership with the federal government. As the New Deal is discussed on the federal agenda, municipalities are preparing for a new partnership and the position of an intergovernmental relations officer is an innovative approach for consideration by municipalities.

Section Three: Position of an Intergovernmental Relations Officer

Data Collection

The main focus of this report was to examine the effectiveness of the position of an intergovernmental relations role. In order to examine the effectiveness of this position, a series of interviews were done to collect data pertaining to the position. Through the information retrieved from those in the position, five indicators were established.

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Federation of Canadian Municipalities. A New Deal for Community Prosperity and Well Being. (Submission to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance. September 2003), 1.

Interviews were conducted with three staff members from different municipalities in the position of intergovernmental relations. The three municipalities include: City of London, Municipality of Chatham-Kent and City of Toronto. These three municipalities vary in population and size and therefore have different needs and interests. Current incumbents from each municipality have functions that vary as well as other responsibilities that are shared.

In addition, two interviews were conducted with the Mayor of the City of London and the Chief Administrative Officer from the City of London. These interviews were undertaken to study the opinion from a member of the political and senior administration of the organization. Their views also helped establish the indicators needed to examine the effectiveness of the position.

City of London

One of the reasons for creating the position in the City of London was to establish a communications network with upper tier orders of government. This position must communicate with members of the provincial government and moreover, public servants in Ottawa. As a result, when there is an issue at the federal level applicable to the London community, a contact person is now positioned so that public servants in Ottawa know whom to contact. It is important to establish communication with other orders of government because by doing so, the municipality fosters a partnership with the provincial and federal governments which may facilitate a better understanding of the city's agenda.

Communication with upper tier orders of government is important because it raises the awareness of opportunities to apply for increased grant money from the provincial and federal government. One of the functions of the position is to apply for funding and expedite the process of funding provided to the municipal level. Without the position, the municipality may not be aware of the grant money allotted to municipalities. This position creates an awareness of transfers from the federal government made available to the local level which clearly increases the possibility of a municipality becoming more successful receiving grant money from the other orders of government.

In addition to knowing which funds to apply for, another function is knowing when to avoid costs. There are many projects that municipalities undertake on an annual basis whereby some projects may not be beneficial for the community from a financial viewpoint. The position of the intergovernmental relations officer is to understand when to avoid those costs by alerting the administration. Cost-savings is an important issue at the local level because revenues are constrained and this position may aid the municipality by avoiding any projects that may further strain the city's financial resources.

Although it is important to establish a communications network with upper tier levels of government, this position also ensures that the administration and political actors are communicating with one another. An important function is to act as the mediator between the administrative and political branches to ensure that there are open lines of communication and all parties are informed. As a result, policy created by the political branch must be comprehended and implemented by the administration and the position ensures that the administration understands how the policy affects the municipality.

This position also ensures that the administration is aware of any policy or legislation change that has been created by the upper tier orders of government as well.

Another component of the position involves interaction with the community. An intergovernmental relations officer also spends time acting as a community liaison. The City of London has many institutions that are known world wide such as the London Health Sciences Centre and the University of Western Ontario. It is important to forge partnerships with those institutions and non-profit organizations so that the municipality solidifies relationships within the city as well as the other orders of government. This position helps those institutions much the same way as the municipality, ensuring that their needs and interests are known in the political sphere. When the provincial government or federal government are deliberating over monies dedicated to education or health care, this position can notify the institution to ensure that they are aware of the opportunity.

Municipality of Chatham-Kent

The municipality of Chatham-Kent does not have the same revenue base as the City of London. However, as a single-tier municipality, the issues are more diverse because of the mixture of urban and rural citizens. One of the methods to deal with the issue of limited finances is to create partnerships with other municipalities or associations. The incumbent has created a network with municipalities in the Southwestern region to review and deal with attainable sources of revenue as an alternative to Ottawa or Toronto. In order to undertake a project, the position can establish a partnership with a nearby municipality and share the costs, therefore, saving money for the municipality. Partnerships are common in the community because they enable a relationship that

“consists of shared and/or compatible objectives and an acknowledged distribution of specific roles and responsibilities among the participants.”³¹ Chatham-Kent is a rural municipality and many projects that are implemented deal with rural issues. Many of the adjacent communities are also rural and consequently, partnerships are formed when a project is undertaken which benefits both communities.

In addition to creating partnerships with neighbouring municipalities for cost-savings, the position in Chatham-Kent has also used municipal associations in Ontario such as the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) or rural associations as a means to collect money from the upper tier orders of government. Instead of applying for federal money as an individual municipality, this position has sought revenue on a collective basis through the associations. Becoming a member of different associations is a way of getting exposure, given the bias that rural municipalities struggle to have any profile at the provincial or federal level when competing with larger urban municipalities.

One of the tasks of the position is to seek revenue from the Ontario government and the federal government. However, in Chatham-Kent, the incumbent has also established public-private partnerships (PPP). The proliferation of PPPs is due to a number of factors, including “provincial downloading and restructuring, and the resultant pressure on municipalities to become more entrepreneurial and creative in finding ways to cut

31

Kenneth Kernaghan, Brian Marson and Sandford Borins. The New Public Organization. (Canada: Institute of Public Administration, 2000), 180.

costs and deliver services economically.”³² These partnerships exist “primarily to enhance the capacity and permanence of private-sector actors, usually non-governmental organizations (NGOs), which are delegated minor government tasks in order to receive funding, the main purpose of which is to maintain these organizations’ availability for consultations and the provision of advice to governments.”³³ Public-private partnerships offer an alternative source of funding and this arrangement also creates relations with private industry located in the community. Countries in other parts of the world are “showing that innovative partnerships with the private sector make it possible to use public money more effectively by leveraging billions in private investment.”³⁴ Chatham-Kent is a community that is moving ahead with such partnerships and is setting the benchmark for other municipalities in Ontario to follow.

Retrieving alternative sources of revenue is important, however this position also looks to upper tier orders of government for revenue funding. The Chatham-Kent position is unique in that it must analyse the availability of funds to determine which funds are applicable to the community. The incumbent applies for funding only if the fund relates to a project need in the community. By doing so, the success rate of grants received has increased because the officer has knowledge of which grants or transfers to apply

³²

George Rust-D’Eye, “P3 Deals: Dangers of Compromise of Interest,” Municipal World, January 2004, 23.

³³

Michael Howlett and M. Ramesh. Studying Public Policy: Policy Cycles and Policy Subsystems. 2nd Ed. (Ontario: Oxford University Press, 2003), 107.

³⁴

Paul Martin, “Speaking notes to the Annual General Meeting of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities,” lecture given at Hamilton, Ontario, 31 May 2002.

for that are precisely related to a project need in the community.

Interdepartmental communication is also an important facet of the role of the intergovernmental relations officer. Communication is more accessible in the municipality of Chatham-Kent because the organization consists of a smaller bureaucracy than London and Toronto. Communication within the organization has changed the strategic plan as this position enables the organization to be pro-active instead of reacting to situations. In addition to stronger communication, the culture has changed in the organization as the incumbent has kept the staff informed on issues which has increased the efficiency and effectiveness in dealing with policy issues or issues in the community. The organization is reliant on the communication process whereby the officer is the channel to which "is the medium through which the message travels."³⁵ As my research demonstrates, it has the possibility to be a highly effective position that keeps all departments informed.

City of Toronto

The City of Toronto has the largest staff dedicated to intergovernmental relations in the province of Ontario. The department consists of six staff dedicated entirely to the function of intergovernmental relations. These positions are needed because of the complexity of issues that the municipality must encounter. One of the main goals of the position is to ensure that the agenda of Toronto is aligned with that of the provincial and federal governments. There are issues in Toronto that affect all levels of government,

³⁵

Stephen P. Robbins and Nancy Langton. Fundamentals of Organizational Behaviour. (Toronto: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 2002), 187.

such as immigration (since many landed immigrants migrate to the largest population centres such as Toronto). Therefore, the task of the position is to ensure that the needs of the city are addressed by upper tier orders of government, especially when dealing with issues that involve all three levels. In order to ensure upper tier orders of government understand local issues, consultation is necessary whereby "the benefits accruing to government include information and insights regarding the implications of actual and proposed decisions, the extent of support for these decisions, and better compliance with them."³⁶ The position can create an understanding and clarify issues at the local level.

In Ontario, Toronto is unique because the city has different needs that are not prevalent in other municipalities. One responsibility of the position of an intergovernmental relations officer is to ensure that Toronto's agenda is delivered at both the provincial and federal levels. Administrators and politicians believe that Toronto deserves a "seat-at-the-table" because of the global issues affecting the city. For that reason, the position of an intergovernmental relations officer differs because the relationship forged with upper tier orders of government is a horizontal relationship instead of the traditional vertical relationship that other municipalities in Ontario have established. The tri-level relationship is needed to ensure that policy created by the upper tier orders of government designed for Toronto are comprehended by administrators at the local level. If administrators are part of the policy process, they can influence change to ensure that the policy is applicable when implemented because "there is considerable scope for

36

Kenneth Kernaghan, Brian Marson and Sandford Borins. The New Public Organization. (Canada: Institute of Public Administration, 2000), 182.

urban governments in Canada to be effective advocates and actors in their relations with the federal and provincial levels."³⁷

Another issue that the department of intergovernmental relations is working towards is increased autonomy. The municipality of Toronto has the same policy capabilities as the smaller urban centres in Ontario, however because of the size of the population and complexity of issues, the municipality is seeking more autonomy and discretion in policy making to deal with local issues and problems. The intergovernmental relations department communicates with upper tier orders of government on a continual basis to determine which policy matters can be dealt with at the municipal level. Increased discretion given by the upper-tier orders of government provides the city more leniency and autonomy to handle local affairs.

Communicating with upper tier orders of government is done on a daily basis; however, staff are also communicating within the organization as well. In Canada, the City of Toronto has the largest bureaucracy for a municipality. With the largest workforce, inter-departmental communication is a necessity. Staff in the function of intergovernmental relations are constantly communicating with different departments and ensuring that various staff are informed of different legislation and/or policy from upper tier orders of government as well as changes taking place within the organization. The main task is to create centralization and coordination in the organization.

37

Katherine A. Graham, Susan D. Phillips and Allan M. Maslove. Urban Governance in Canada: Representation, Resources and Restructuring. (Toronto: Harcourt Canada, 1998), 188.

Political Perspective: Mayor of City of London

According to the Mayor, the role of the intergovernmental relations officer is a supportive position. Therefore, it is important to have role clarity in the organization to ensure that staff understand their job function; if the Mayor lobbies for grant money and the intergovernmental relations officer also lobbies for grant money, the officer performs a supplementary role to the Mayor. Both perform the task of lobbying for grant money, but the intergovernmental relations officer supports the mayor and then informs the administrative staff.

An important role for the intergovernmental relations officer is to create a network of contacts which aids the political branch. One of the tasks is to create networks with upper tier orders of government and different associations to ensure that the Mayor's team is involved in committees or conferences dealing with other orders of government or other municipalities. An example is the Big City Mayor's Conference whereby the intergovernmental relations officer ensured that the City of London was included as part of the top tier group of cities in the nation.

In addition to supporting the Mayor, the intergovernmental relations officer also communicates with other elected officials in the City. It is a unique position because the officer has the opportunity to liaise with elected officials and report back to the administration. The intergovernmental relations officer has an intermediary role to ensure that both sides are informed on the issues so that the administration can implement policy created by elected officials with minimal confusion.

Administrative Perspective: Chief Administrative Officer of City of London

One of the objectives of this report is to determine who the intergovernmental relations officer reports to. Although the officer supports both the administrative side as well as the political side, in most municipalities, the intergovernmental relations officer reports directly to the Chief Administrative Officer and is part of the administration. The position is considered to be part of the senior management involved in a wide range of issues affecting various departments. Therefore, the intergovernmental relations officer assists the Chief Administrator as well as the Mayor. Within the bureaucracy, the intergovernmental relations officer has a unique role because of the constant relations between the administration and political branches.

The position has an abundance of freedom in the respect that the role is to seek and create partnerships for the City. Senior management allows the intergovernmental relations officer the opportunity to create networks and market the City. Like the Mayor, the intergovernmental relations officer has the function of attracting business in addition to lobbying for grant money or federal transfers. It is important to bring business to the City because municipalities are increasingly competing with one another. By having the position, the municipality is at an advantage because more staff are dedicated to the function of bringing investment to the City which makes the municipality more competitive and prosperous.

Measures of Effectiveness

The research question this report will determine is the effectiveness of the position of an intergovernmental relations officer. Through the series of interviews, data was collected and indicators were developed to measure effectiveness. There are five indicators that

are used to assess the effectiveness of the position. The five indicators include:

- i) Monies allocated to municipalities from upper tier orders of government
- ii) Communication with upper tier orders of government
- iii) Cooperation with other municipalities and associations
- iv) Communication within the organization
- v) Consultation

I. Monies allocated to municipalities from upper tier orders of government

The first indicator deals with transfers from upper tier orders of government given to municipalities. The municipal budget includes a number of structural parameters. Local governments are "the only governments in Canada that explicitly distinguish between current (operating) and capital (investment) accounts in their budgets."³⁸ At the federal level, transfer payments are defined as "payments that usually take the form of transfers to the regional units of governments."³⁹ This form of arrangement involves all three parties where payment is distributed from the federal government and to the provinces which disperses revenue to the municipalities. However, in this case study, the indicators deal with direct funding a municipality receives from either the provincial or the federal government. The payments can be considered either conditional or unconditional payments, the indicator is payment received because of the position of an intergovernmental relations officer. With staff in the position of intergovernmental

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Katherine A. Graham, Susan D. Phillips and Allan M. Maslove. Urban Governance in Canada: Representation, Resources and Restructuring. (Toronto: Harcourt Canada, 1998), 221.

³⁹

Ronald Watts, Comparing Federal Systems in the 1990's. (Kingston: Institute of Intergovernmental Relations, Queens University Press, 1996), 43.

relations, it is hypothesized that the municipality will be more successful and more aware of money available at the provincial or federal levels.

II. Communication with upper tier orders of government

The second indicator deals with creating networks with upper tier orders of government. With the position, the hypothesis is that the municipality will have contacts established at the provincial and federal levels compared to a municipality that does not have the position. With more communication flow between Queen's Park or Ottawa, the upper tier orders of government will be more aware of the municipality and the issues confined to the area because of the intergovernmental relations officer. Also, this measure will indicate a more cooperative phase of intergovernmental relations as "governments collaborate to minimize jurisdictional overlap, to coordinate their environmental legislation, regulations, policies, programs and implementation."⁴⁰ Staff dedicated to intergovernmental relations at the local level will create more coordination involving all levels of government because of more communication with the upper tier orders of government. Municipalities are beginning to realize that 'strategic communication' is necessary whereby "communication is not designed to be manipulative, but instead designed to advance particular policies or organizational strategies by making them comprehensible and by enlisting the support and cooperation of those who must work together to produce the intended result."⁴¹ Enlisting the support of upper tier orders of

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Dietmer Braun, Ed. Public Policy and Federalism. (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2000), 70.

⁴¹

Mark H. Moore, Creating Public Value: Strategic Management in Government. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995), 185.

government through open dialogue may be better done with the position of an intergovernmental relations officer.

III. Cooperation with other municipalities and associations

The third indicator deals with creating networks with neighbouring municipalities and being part of associations that may benefit the municipality. The position is important because the expectation is that municipalities which have the position will be able to create partnerships with neighbouring municipalities more easily. The purpose is to demonstrate that the intergovernmental relations officer acts as the coordinator by taking a central role joining neighbouring municipalities and taking the lead on joint efforts for projects where municipalities have consolidated interest's. Furthermore, this position can ensure that the municipality is member to different associations such as Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) which provides an alternative method by which a municipality can undertake projects completed through the different associations and organizations. One of the functions of an intergovernmental affairs specialist is to showcase the municipality they represent. A way of presenting the municipality is ensuring that the city takes part in different conferences held by associations.

IV. Communication within the organization

The fourth indicator deals with increased communication within the organization. Like so many other aspects of corporate life, "effective municipalities depend on open.

transparent and comprehensive communication."⁴² Municipalities that have staff dedicated to mediating between the administrative and political side will have a culture in the bureaucracy that is more harmonized because there is greater awareness of issues, both current and emerging. Keeping the staff informed creates a greater sense of coordination and centralization than those municipalities whom lack the position: this is the hypothesis. Part of the position's role involves community liaison. Emerging issues that take place in the municipality will be brought to the forefront by having a staff member dedicated to communicating not only with upper tier orders of government, but with the community as well.

V. Consultation

The other indicators are measures of how well the intergovernmental relations position creates contacts. Consultation is an indicator that will illustrate how important the position is in the organization. This measure will determine how involved the incumbent holding the position is in the decision making process by examining how often the position is consulted by both senior management in the organization and representatives from the upper tier orders of government. The reason for establishing the consultation indicator is to demonstrate whether this position is a senior position within the local government administration that is part of the policy process. This indicator will confirm the need to have staff in intergovernmental relations at the local level, and whether it is advantageous for a municipality. Moreover, the expectations are that public servants at the provincial level and federal level of government will have a

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George B. Cuff, Making a Difference: Cuff's Guide for Municipal Leaders. (St. Thomas: Municipal World Inc., 2002), 73.

contact person to consult with.

Section Four: Methodology

Research Design

The research design in this proposal is a cross-sectional design. A cross-sectional design is used to collect data on all relevant variables at one time. The reason for using a cross-sectional design is that its data represent a set of cases at one point in time which allows the researcher to examine and compare all the cases. This type of design is appropriate because it can compare and analyse a large sample size. A cross-sectional design (through survey data collection) would first determine whether municipalities have the position of an intergovernmental relations position. Once all data is collected, this design then allows the researcher to compare the data with those municipalities that do not have staff in the position of intergovernmental relations. This research design will answer the research question and investigate whether the position is an effective position for a municipality to have as part of the administration.

The research design will collect data on the variables that reflect the five measures of effectiveness previously listed. Some of the variables include amount of grants received, communication with upper tier orders of government and partnerships established with other municipalities. These variables will be analysed to support or refute the hypothesis of this report.

Sample Size

According to the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) there are 446 municipalities in the province of Ontario as of January 1, 2004. The sample in this

proposal includes the municipalities located in Ontario. In order to make the data more comparable, the largest municipality (Toronto) and the smallest municipalities (less than 14,000 population base) have been eliminated from this study. The reason for eliminating the top and bottom municipalities is to create a sample size that is relative and comparable in terms of size and budget so that all municipalities have about the same opportunity to hire an intergovernmental relations position. Therefore, the sample size for this study included eighty-five (85) municipalities. The population base varies within this study, but, comparable's were established.

Survey Questionnaire

A survey questionnaire was sent to all the Chief Administrators in the sample size, by e-mail. Attached to the survey was a letter stating the intent of the survey. A survey questionnaire was needed in this proposal to evaluate the effectiveness of the position and determine how many municipalities have the position of an intergovernmental relations officer. Please refer to Appendix A for the questionnaire that was distributed to the administrators of each municipality.

The creation of the survey enables information to be gathered from all the municipalities to determine whether they have staff dedicated to the function of intergovernmental relations. It is theorized that municipalities that do not have staff dedicated to the function of intergovernmental relations do not have the same degree of effectiveness as illustrated by the indicators defined above. The intent of the survey is to identify variables or indicators that can be expressed in quantifiable data so that it can be measured to either prove or disprove the research question. The survey will also contain qualitative data which will provide additional information as well. Therefore, the

questionnaire contains a combination of two types of questions, one being qualitative questions and the other being quantitative research questions. A mixture of both questions is used in this study because both types of data can be collected and interpreted to gather information regarding the focus of the study.

Explanation of Questionnaire

The survey was distributed to all the chief administrators and the sample contains fifteen questions. The first question determines whether the municipality has the position or staff dedicated to intergovernmental relations. This question is vital because it will indicate how many municipalities have the position and it will enable research to be conducted by analysing and setting apart municipalities that have and do not have the position. Analysis can then be conducted once municipalities can be separated into the two groups for comparison purposes.

The first indicator deals with the amount of grants and awareness of grants from the upper tier orders of government. There are three questions dedicated to the first measure. Question two demonstrates the awareness of grant money at the upper tier levels of government with the position of an intergovernmental relations officer opposed to municipalities that do not have the position. This question tests the effectiveness of the position regarding the first measure whereby the municipality that has the position is more aware of monies available to the local level.

The third question is a quantitative question which is applicable to municipalities that have staff in the function of intergovernmental relations. This question will illustrate that with the position, the municipality has a better opportunity to receive more grant funding.

The third question verifies the effectiveness of an intergovernmental relations officer pertaining to the first measure of effectiveness. If municipalities are more aware, results will further indicate that they are more successful receiving grants from the province or federal government.

The last question which is part of the first indicator is an open ended question. This question is designed to define some of the successful programs that have been funded by the upper tier orders of government. A collection of funding programs will be taken into consideration to see if there is a correlation between level of funding and having the intergovernmental relations position. By doing so, question four will illustrate the types of programs that are common with municipalities that have staff dedicated to intergovernmental relations.

The second indicator deals with communication with the upper tier orders of government. Specifically, questions five and six deal with communication that takes place between the municipality and the higher orders of government. Question five asks respondents with the position whether they believe that a communications network exists between the municipality and the provincial and/or federal government as opposed to municipalities that do not have staff in intergovernmental relations. One of the main reasons for having staff in intergovernmental relations is for communication purposes, primarily with the upper tier orders of government.

Question six is a similar question which pertains to creating contacts with officials in the provincial government or federal government. This question explores contact with senior officials at the provincial level and federal level. Also, this question may show

that the position of an intergovernmental relations officer acts as a liaison between the municipality and the upper tier orders of government. Therefore, this question is confirming one of the primary functions of an intergovernmental relations officer which is the second indicator.

The third indicator deals with partnerships created with other municipalities and/or joining with various associations that may benefit the municipality. Specifically, question seven is dedicated to the third measure of effectiveness. It is an open-ended question that may illustrate municipalities that have the position of an intergovernmental relations officer have more cooperation with other neighbouring municipalities. Furthermore, municipalities that have the position are more apt to undertake shared interest projects with neighbouring municipalities. Also, those projects will be listed on the questionnaire to determine the types of partnerships created. Analysis will reveal any correlation of the partnerships formed at the municipal level.

In addition to partnerships forged with neighbouring municipalities, the third indicator also relates to municipalities that are member to associations in Ontario because of the position. Moreover, the open-ended question will indicate the association and participation activity of the municipality. As a result of the position, responses will determine any correlation of associations that municipalities take part or are member to.

The fourth indicator of effectiveness deals with communication within the organization. Specifically, question eight and nine comprise the fourth measure. Question eight is designed to see whether municipalities that have the position of an intergovernmental relations officer are more aware of legislation change or policy issues that have been

administered by the upper tier orders of government that may have an effect on the municipality. This question may show that municipalities that have the position are more aware of issues arising from the upper tier orders of government affecting the local level because there is an established contact.

Another issue that is important is communication within the organization especially dealing with the administration and the political branch. Question nine is critical to illustrate the structure of the local government organization. The structure of the organization is unique because it consists of a political branch and an administrative branch. Therefore, it is critical to have staff that can help connect the political and administrative components. This question is designed to test the importance of one facet of the role of an intergovernmental relations officer, which is specifically the role of mediator. The intergovernmental relations officer must act as a liaison in the structure of the organization. By doing so, the results may exhibit more communication and transparency within the organization and this question will explore whether municipalities that have staff in the function of intergovernmental relations have a bureaucracy that is more harmonized and transparent. The administration will understand policy created by the political branch and how it affects the community.

The fifth indicator differs from the first four indicators because this measure deals with consultation. There are two questions designed to assess the importance of the position of an intergovernmental relations officer by asking whether they are part of the policy process at the local level. Question ten explores whether the role of an intergovernmental relations officer is a senior role in the organization, with an incumbent who takes part in the decision making process dealing with important issues such as the

budget process. Also, this question is designed to test whether this position is approached by different departments in the organization and that the function must communicate with various components of the bureaucracy.

Question eleven is the primary indicator of the fifth indicator. This question is designed to portray municipalities that have the position of an intergovernmental relations officer are now recognized by upper tier orders of government. By having a position in the intergovernmental function, other orders of government will now have a contact person who can be notified. This is important because the response may reveal the need for municipalities to have staff dedicated to intergovernmental relations at the local level.

Additional questions have been added to the questionnaire to obtain more information about the position of an intergovernmental relations officer. There are two questions, thirteen and fourteen, that are detailed questions regarding the supervisor and time the position has been operative with the municipality. These questions are utilized to determine whether this is a prominent position in the organization that has been instituted for a long period of time. Including these questions may demonstrate the significance of the position within the bureaucracy by determining where they fit in the organizational structure and the length of time employed

Question twelve, deals with intergovernmental relations in general. This is relevant because this question may help confirm a growing need for the position especially for municipalities that do not have staff dedicated to intergovernmental relations. Moreover, this question may attest to the growing trend toward tri-level relationships that are emerging and the prominent role of municipalities in the national sphere.

The last question of the survey, question fifteen, is designed for municipalities that do not have the position of an intergovernmental relations officer. This open-ended question is created to determine who performs the role if there is no staff dedicated to intergovernmental relations. There should be identified positions in the administration that perform the duties where staff are not specifically dedicated to the task of intergovernmental relations.

Measurement

In addition to the survey questionnaire, Appendix B indicates the coding of the questions so that they can be ranked in measurable terms. The coding index lists the question, the type of variable and the coding schematic that is used to express the question in quantitative form. Coding is important because it helps separate and convert the data into numerical form using the technique of Likert scaling. Likert scaling was implemented to measure the opinions or attitudes of the respondents. The questionnaire is composed of three parts:

- i. first part contains the independent variable which is the position of the intergovernmental relations officer which is the primary focus of this report.
- ii. second part contains the dependent variables which are the five measures of effectiveness.
- iii. third section of the questionnaire includes additional questions that have been added to the survey to retrieve additional data on the position. The third section responses are not quantifiable; however, the data collected is used to confirm the importance of the position and indicate the growing need to dedicate staff to the function of intergovernmental relations at the local level.

Within the questionnaire, the first part of the survey is found in the first question. The independent variable is determined by coding municipalities that have the position and those that do not have the position. Data can then be collected and analysed to determine how many municipalities have staff dedicated to intergovernmental relations. As shown in Appendix B, municipalities which respond indicating they have staff dedicated to the function of intergovernmental relations will receive a different code than those that indicate otherwise. Research can then be considered analysing the dependent variables and examining what effect on the independent variable (position of an intergovernmental relations officer) has on them.

The second part of the survey includes the five indicators which are the dependent variables. In order to investigate the effectiveness of the position, the measures must be converted into numerical form and compared with municipalities that do not have staff in the position of intergovernmental relations. The first indicator is grant money or transfers allocated to municipalities; this measure is included involving questions two, three and four. As found in Appendix B, question two is ordered using a scale which will display the numbers from one (SD) to five (SA) or weakest to strongest. Question three is similar which indicates a higher rank for more grant money received by a municipality. This question is ranked in an interval method where values on scale can be determined with equal numerical differences between them. This data is important because it will determine the amount of grants that the municipality with an officer applies for and can be compared against a municipality without an officer. The fourth question is an open-ended question which is used to determine whether there is any correlation of monies allocated to the municipal level with the position of an intergovernmental relations officer. There is no ranking for this question, instead, data will be gathered to determine

if a connection can be established for the types of monies allocated to municipalities.

The second measure of effectiveness includes question five and six on the survey. Both questions are ranked according to the coding index. Question five is a closed-ended question which is allotted a score if there is a communications network; the coding either demonstrates or does not demonstrate a network of communications with senior orders of government. On the coding index, question six has been included to illustrate the importance of having a contact for municipalities. This question will be ordered using a scale from one (SD) to five (SA) to show the need to have staff in the position because contacts are established.

The third measure of effectiveness is a mixture of a closed-ended and open-ended questions. Question seven will be included in the coding index by assigning a one for municipalities that have more communication or partnerships forged with other local municipalities or associations compared to those that do not or zero. The other part of the question is open-ended, designed to determine whether a connection can be made with the different types of associations that the municipalities are part of resulting from the presence of an intergovernmental relations officer.

The fourth indicator includes questions eight and nine. On the coding index, they are both coded the same method involving a ranked scale. According to Appendix B, both questions will be assigned a scale from one (SD) to five (SA) to rank municipalities and demonstrate increased communication within the organization.

The fifth measure of effectiveness is coded in a ranking order. According to the coding index, questions ten and eleven are assigned a ranking scale from one (SD) to five (SA) to indicate the importance of the position within the bureaucracy and among upper tier orders of government.

In addition to the five measures of effectiveness, additional questions have been added to the questionnaire to collect and analyze additional information. In Appendix B, question twelve is an important question in this report because it will show the differences of opinion among CAO's of municipalities that have staff in intergovernmental relations and those that do not. It is ranked from one (SD) to five (SA) to assign quantitative data for comparison purposes.

Questions thirteen and fourteen on the survey are open-ended questions that are specific questions relating to the position of an intergovernmental relations officer. On the coding index, the data will be collected and compared to determine if there is a correlation with the responses.

The last question is also an open-ended question directed towards municipalities that do not have staff in the intergovernmental function. A collection of responses will be analysed to determine the personnel in the local government organization that perform the function of intergovernmental relations. By doing so, comparisons can then be determined with the data collected to examine what person in the organization performs the duty, if staff are not specifically designated to the role of intergovernmental relations.

Section Six: Analysis

Response Rate

A total of eighty-five surveys were distributed to municipalities throughout the province of Ontario. Thirty-three (33) responded to the survey questionnaire which is a thirty-nine (39) percent response rate. From the thirty-three respondents, six indicated that the position of an intergovernmental relations officer or staff are dedicated to intergovernmental relations. The final result is that eighteen (18) percent of municipalities that responded have staff dedicated to intergovernmental relations at the local level. The municipalities include: City of London, City of Windsor, Municipality of Chatham-Kent, County of Lambton, Town of Caledon and the Town of Huntsville. Each municipality has indicated that they have an intergovernmental relations officer or staff dedicated specifically to the function of intergovernmental relations.

Results

The analysis of the first measure of effectiveness according to question two indicates a greater awareness of funding available for municipalities that have staff dedicated to intergovernmental relations. The results show that municipalities with the position are more aware of funding than municipalities that do not have a position. According to the data in Appendix C, the results show that municipalities that do not have staff in the function of intergovernmental relations received a rank of 3.04 whereas municipalities that have staff in the function received a rank of 4.67. These results indicate that municipalities with the position can generate greater opportunities dealing with revenue sourcing from the upper tier orders of government.

In conjunction with a greater awareness of grant funding, question three displays the amount of funds generated by municipalities comparing municipalities with the position of an intergovernmental relations officer and those without. The results display an increase for municipalities that have an intergovernmental relations officer, however, the response rate for question three is small compared to the other answered questions. In question three, there were only five responses from the municipalities without an intergovernmental relations officer out of a possible twenty-seven. As a result, the final statistics indicate that municipalities that do not have an intergovernmental relations officer received a tally of 1.00 compared to 1.67 for municipalities with an intergovernmental relations officer. To supplement the results in the survey, data has been collected regarding the amount of grant money the thirty-three municipalities received from the provincial and federal governments. The total grant money includes conditional and unconditional grants for the years 1998 and 2002 and analysed on a per capita basis using 2000 population statistics. Analysis reveals that municipalities that have an intergovernmental relations officer had increases from both orders of government over a five year period, fifty-three percent and over seven hundred percent respectively. However, the twenty-seven municipalities that do not have an intergovernmental relations officer received a higher percent increase over the same time period.⁴³

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"Financial Information Return," at Internet:
<http://oraweb.mah.gov.on.ca/fir/welcome.htm>, July 2004.

PER CAPITA (TOTAL GRANTS/POP)		
	NO - IRO	IRO
ON GRANTS	230%	53%
CDA GRANTS	802%	710%

The reason for the differences according to the table is because of the following reasons. First, the reporting accuracy according to the statistics of the ministry of municipal affairs is inconclusive such that some of the municipalities did not report all of the grants received dating back five years. Second, analysis done over a five year time frame (1998-2002) displays inconsistent spending on behalf of the federal and the provincial government. A reason for the inconsistent transfer of money could be for a specific reason such as project development. Third, over the last decade, municipalities in Ontario have gone through the effect of downloading which has caused unprecictable expenses and transfers of revenue to supplement those expenses. Last, municipalities without the position may have commissioned third party intervention to lobby for grants from the other orders of government.

Therefore, these results confirm an increase of transfers from the upper tier orders of government. Although, these results do not confirm that the position of an intergovernmental relations officer is more successful attaining revenue from the other orders of government.

There was a correlation of responses in question four according to the responses from municipalities that have an intergovernmental relations officer. Municipalities, in

common, received funds for infrastructure renewal, environmental initiatives and tourism. In addition, more than one municipality acknowledged receiving funds directly from Human Resource Development Canada (HRDC). The responses reveal some correlation of funds that are given to municipalities with an intergovernmental relations officer. Furthermore, there are additional funds provided to municipalities by the upper tier orders of government including: income support programs, Geo-Smart (GIS), trillium grants and research studies. The results reveal the diversity of funds that are available at both the provincial government and federal government. The position of an intergovernmental relations officer is advantageous for a municipality because staff can then explore funds that are available to local government.

The second indicator is defined in question five, the results demonstrate relations municipalities have with the other orders of government. Of the twenty-seven respondents that do not have staff in intergovernmental relations, five indicated that they have a communications network with the upper tier orders of government. The municipalities with an intergovernmental relations officer all indicated that there is a communications network because of the position. These results confirm that communication with the upper tier orders of government is an important job function of the intergovernmental relations officer.

The second measure of effectiveness illustrates contact that is established between the municipality and the other orders of government. The results from question six, according to Appendix C, indicate that municipalities with an intergovernmental relations officer ranked higher than municipalities without an intergovernmental relations officer with a tally of 4.67 compared to 3.47. These results confirm that municipalities that have staff

dedicated to the function of intergovernmental relations are in contact frequently with the orders of government compared to municipalities that do not have staff. Analysis from the responses demonstrate the importance of having staff in the function of intergovernmental relations because this is a position whereby the officer acts as a liaison between the municipality and the upper tier orders of government.

The third indicator centres on communication with other municipalities in the province and the partnerships that have been established. According to Appendix C, the results from question seven confirm the importance of having an intergovernmental relations officer in order to establish more communication through the creation of partnerships with other municipalities in the province. All twenty-seven respondents that do not have an intergovernmental relations officer indicated that they do not have consistent communications with neighbouring municipalities compared to the six municipalities with an intergovernmental relations officer. All six municipalities referred to having continuous communication with neighbouring municipalities and as a result, have created partnerships with neighbouring municipalities, as well as local businesses in the community.

The responses revealed that municipalities with an intergovernmental relations officer have on-going communication with municipalities within the surrounding area of the municipality. For example, the municipality of Lambton-County has established frequent contact with the surrounding townships in the area. Partnerships have also been established as evident in the municipality of Chatham-Kent, having taken the lead role in the Biotechnology Consortium Initiative involving the counties of Lambton, Kent and Essex. These examples demonstrate the amount of communication that takes place at

the local government level and the importance of having staff dedicated to the function of intergovernmental relations not only for vertical communication with the upper tier orders of government but horizontal communication with surrounding municipalities.

In addition to on-going communication with neighbouring municipalities, municipalities that have an intergovernmental relations officer are in constant contact with one another. Results indicate that the six municipalities that have an intergovernmental relations officer are in frequent contact with one another. The municipalities located in Southwestern Ontario including: County of Lambton, City of Windsor, Municipality of Chatham-Kent and City of London have consistent relations with one another. These results demonstrate a network that has been established with the municipalities that have an intergovernmental relations officer.

The fourth indicator of effectiveness deals with communication within the organization. The results from question eight reflect the fourth measure of effectiveness, specifically, alerting the organization of policy change or legislation change that has been enacted by the upper tier orders of government. The results confirm one of the job components of an intergovernmental relations officer because the statistics indicate that municipalities that have the position ranked 4.0 compared to 2.2 for municipalities that do not have the position. In order to have an efficient organization, communication flow is important. These results confirm the need to have staff dedicated to the function of intergovernmental relations to alert the organization of policy change that has been implemented by the other orders of government.

Another aspect of the local government organization is the composition of the administrative branch and the political branch. It is important to have staff in the organization that specialize in mediating between the two different branches. The results of question nine indicate that the position of an intergovernmental relations officer is an important position at the local level because it establishes coordination between the administration and the political branch. Because of the composition of the local government system, these results demonstrate the need to have staff perform the role of mediator in the local government organization and the intergovernmental relations officer performs the function to ensure coordination between the two branches is achieved.

The fifth indicator deals with consultation. Question ten specifically deals with consultation which is a measure of effectiveness designed to assess the importance of the position by revealing that the position is part of the policy process in the municipal organization. According to Appendix C, the results indicate that it is a senior position in the organization and consequently, part of the policy process. Moreover, some responses also display that the incumbents holding the position are part of the budget process and part of the strategic management division in the organization confirming that this is a senior management role.

The fifth indicator of effectiveness is tested in question eleven, which is designed to illustrate the need to have a contact person at the local level who can be notified by the upper tier orders of government. According to Appendix C, the results confirm the importance of having an intergovernmental relations officer because municipalities that have the position received a rank of 3.33 compared to 2.27 for municipalities that do not

have an intergovernmental position. These results indicate that a bi-lateral relationship between the municipality and the province or federal government can exist. Moreover, with the position, a tri-lateral relationship involving all three levels of government can also take place. However, these results reveal another component of the position because the first four indicators are established to demonstrate the need to seek and create partnerships but this indicator confirms the importance of having staff in the position at the local level. In order to have more coordination among all three levels of government, it is important to have an intergovernmental relations officer enabling the upper tier orders of government contact with local government representatives as these results confirm a two-way communication process.

The results from question twelve indicate a need for intergovernmental relations at the local level from both sets of respondents. Although the results were higher for municipalities that have an intergovernmental relations officer (4.16 compared to 3.04), this displays a need to have staff dedicated to the function of intergovernmental relations at the municipal level. According to the results in Appendix C, the responses from the municipalities that do not have an intergovernmental relations officer were favourable acknowledging a need for intergovernmental relations at the local level. Therefore, even though many municipalities in Ontario do not have an intergovernmental relations officer, these results encourage the dedication of staff to intergovernmental relations at the local level.

There are two questions on the survey which were added to retrieve information on the position of an intergovernmental relations officer. The majority of responses from question thirteen indicate that the intergovernmental relations officer reports directly to

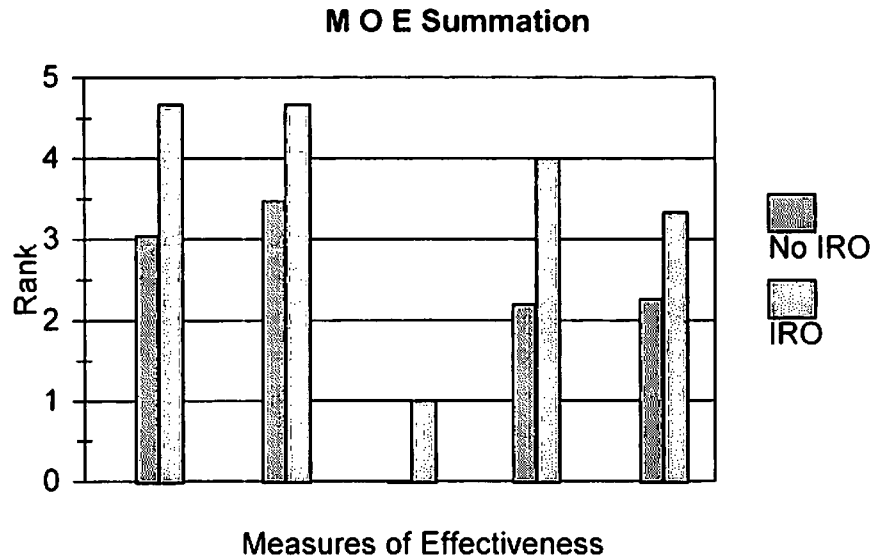
the chief administrative officer in the organization. The result reaffirms the fifth measure of effectiveness, as the function is demonstrated as a senior position in the organization, reporting directly to the chief administrator. Also, the responses confirm that this is an administrative position that is part of the administrative staff even though the function must liaise with the political branch of government. Other responses include the position reporting to the administrative and governance division and the city treasurer.

Question fourteen, determines the length the position has been operating in the organization. The results from question fourteen exhibit a mixed result as the municipalities of Windsor and Chatham-Kent have had staff in the function of intergovernmental relations officer for more than 15 years each. However, of the remaining municipalities, the balance of results indicate that staff in the position have been performing the function for two years and less. Therefore, the majority of these results indicate that this is a relatively new position that municipalities have initiated. Since this is a new position, this explains the emergence of tri-level relations among all three orders of government. As municipal issues are brought to the attention of the national sphere, municipalities will need to have staff in the function of intergovernmental relations to communicate with the upper tier orders of government.

For municipalities that do not have staff dedicated to the function of intergovernmental relations, question fifteen is utilized to determine staff who perform the function. The results indicate a list of possibilities of different members of the organization (from the administration to the political branch) that perform the function of an intergovernmental relations officer. In the larger municipalities, senior management and the department heads perform the function. Some municipalities have the budget for a communications

department that perform some, but not all, of the functions of an intergovernmental relations officer. However, in both large municipalities and the small townships, the majority of responses indicate that the chief administrator performs the duty of intergovernmental relations. The results favoured members of the administrative staff, however, respondents also indicated that the mayor and members of council also perform some of the duties of an intergovernmental relations officer. Specifically, the city of Mississauga who has a strong mayor, is an example of a mayor who performs the role of lobbying for grant money. Therefore, there is a combination of both elected officials and administrative staff who perform the duties of an intergovernmental relations officer.

The results of the survey questionnaire reveal an advantage for the position of an intergovernmental relations officer at the local level; however, the five measures have been added to prove the effectiveness. Using the results from Appendix C, a table was constructed including the five indicators to demonstrate the effectiveness of the position of an intergovernmental relations officer. The results favour the position which total 3.53 compared to the respondents that do not have a position which amount to 2.20. The table signifies that it is advantageous for a municipality to have the position of an intergovernmental relations officer. The x-axis displays the five indicators (MOE) and the y-axis indicates the amount comparing municipalities with the position and those without. These results confirm the legitimacy of the position and therefore demonstrate that it is an effective position for a local government.



Section Six: Conclusion

Synopsis

Cities across the nation are now the strategic centres of the global age. As a result, the role of municipal government has evolved because the political landscape has changed. Cities are now dealing with national and international problems, issues that were once dealt with by the upper tier orders of government.

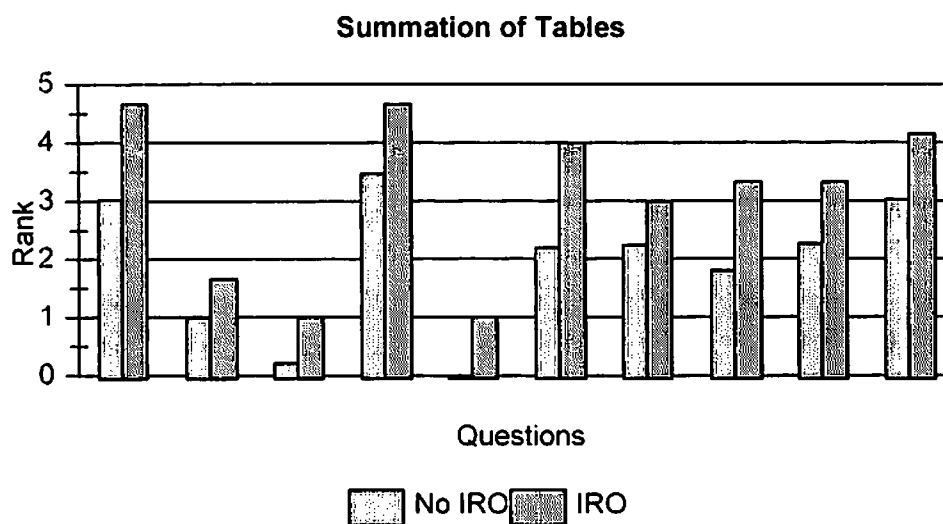
Canadian federalism has now evolved into a tri-level relationship where cities are now part of the relationship that once consisted solely of the federal government and the ten provinces. Consequently, intergovernmental relations consists of relations between all three orders of government. With emerging issues brought to the forefront at the municipal level, the upper tier orders of government will have to initiate relations and begin to collaborate with the municipalities.

As municipalities are brought into the national sphere, the position of an intergovernmental relations officer has proven to be an influential role. Municipalities in Ontario are beginning to realize the relevance of having staff dedicated to the function of intergovernmental relations. The position of an intergovernmental relations officer offers an alternate approach to attain revenue or establish a communication network with the other orders of government. These attributes are critical because municipal revenue has been constrained and local services can no longer be efficiently delivered. Furthermore, global issues now affecting local communities must be dealt with by all orders of government. To deal with these issues, establishing staff at the local level who specialize in intergovernmental relations is an effective approach that can aid the municipality.

The primary focus of this report was an examination of the position of an intergovernmental relations officer. With data collected through a series of interviews by those in the position, five indicators were established to test the effectiveness of the position and demonstrate that it is an effective position for local government. The five indicators included attributes such as communication skills, collaborating with associate municipalities and the creation of partnerships. Other characteristics were established to validate the position and demonstrate that it is an important position in the local government administration.

The results from the survey questionnaire were favourable illustrating that the position is effective. Of the thirty-three respondents, eighteen percent indicated that they retained staff that perform the function of intergovernmental relations. These responses enabled

analysis to be conducted comparing the two sets of municipalities - those with the position of an intergovernmental relations officer and those without. Analysis of the results display that all five indicators validated the hypothesis demonstrating that the municipalities with the position received a higher rank against those that do not have the position. A summation of the results in the table below confirm the hypothesis. Municipalities that have the position received an overall total of 30.83 compared to 19.30 with municipalities that do not have the position. Furthermore, the survey results displayed a correlation in some responses dealing with the partnerships formed and the projects funded. Overall, these results confirm the effectiveness of the position of an intergovernmental relations officer.



The necessity to have staff in the function of intergovernmental relations at the municipal level will begin to emerge as municipalities struggle to deliver services efficiently to its citizens. As the tables illustrates, municipalities that have an intergovernmental relations

officer are better off in the tri-level relationship that is emerging in the Canadian federal system. Municipalities that have an intergovernmental position are sixty percent more effective in the indicators that have been established in this report. Therefore, the position of an intergovernmental relations officer will aid the municipality in the new Canadian system because it is highly effective.

Appendix A

1) Does your municipality have the position of an intergovernmental relations officer or staff dedicated to intergovernmental relations?

YES ___ NO ___

2) The position of an intergovernmental relations officer can generate greater opportunity and awareness of funding at the provincial level and federal level applicable to the municipal level.

SD ___ D ___ SW ___ A ___ SA ___

3) If your municipality has the position of an intergovernmental relations officer, how many grants or transfers from the federal government and provincial government have been successful within the last year because of the position?

0-5 ___ 6-10 ___ 11-15 ___ 16-20 ___ 20+ ___

4) If your municipality has the position of an intergovernmental relations officer, what types of programs have been funded from the federal and/or provincial government that can be attributed to the position?

5) Do you think the position of an intergovernmental relations officer can establish a communications network between your municipality and the federal and/or provincial government because of the position that did not exist before?

YES ___ NO ___

6) The position of an intergovernmental relations officer will help establish contacts with public servants in the provincial government and federal government.

SD ___ D ___ SW ___ A ___ SA ___

7) Is there increased communication and partnerships established with other local municipalities and associations because of the position of an intergovernmental relations officer?

YES ___ NO ___

If yes, name some.

8) The position of an intergovernmental relations officer has aided the administration by providing information to staff in the organization on policy issues and legislation arising from the upper tier orders of government.

SD ___ D ___ SW ___ A ___ SA ___

9) The position of an intergovernmental relations officer has helped connect policy issues between the administration and the political branch of the local government organization.

SD ___ D ___ SW ___ A ___ SA ___

10) The position of an intergovernmental relations officer is involved in the decision making process of the organization and is consulted by administrative staff and elected officials.

SD___ D___ SW___ A___ SA___

11) The position of an intergovernmental relations officer is spent deliberating and consulting with public servants at the provincial level and federal level and as a result, the upper tier governments now have a contact person at the local level.

SD___ D___ SW___ A___ SA___

12) Do you see a need for intergovernmental relations at the local level?

SD___ D___ SW___ A___ SA___

13) If your municipality has the position of an intergovernmental relations officer, who do they report to?

14) If your municipality has the position of an intergovernmental relations officer, how long has your municipality had the position?

15) If your municipality does not have the position of an intergovernmental relations officer, who performs the function?

Abbreviations: Strongly Disagree (SD) Strongly Agree (SA)
 Disagree (D) Agree (A)
 Somewhat (SW)

Thank you for completing the survey

Appendix B

Question One: Examination of municipalities that have position and those that do not have position.

NO - 0 YES - 1

Question Two: Position of an intergovernmental relations officer can generate greater opportunity and awareness of funding at the provincial level and federal level.

SD - 1 D - 2 SW - 3 A - 4 SA - 5

Question Three: Amount of transfers from the federal government or provincial government attributed to the position of an intergovernmental relations officer.

(0-5) - 1 (6-10) - 2 (11-15) - 3 (16-10) - 4 (21+) - 5

Question Four: Open-ended regarding types of programs funded by the provincial government or federal government.

Question Five: Determination of communications network because of the position of an intergovernmental relations officer.

NO - 0 YES - 1

Question Six: Position of an intergovernmental relations officer will establish contacts with the upper tier orders of government.

SD - 1 D - 2 SW - 3 A - 4 SA - 5

Question Seven: A leading question where the response is yes than additional data can be retrieved.

NO - 0 YES - 1

Question Eight: Position of an intergovernmental relations officer has aided the administration by providing information arising from the upper tier orders of government.

SD - 1 D - 2 SW - 3 A - 4 SA - 5

Question Nine: Position of an intergovernmental relations officer has helped connect policy issues between the administration and political.

SD - 1 D - 2 SW - 3 A - 4 SA - 5

Question Ten: Position of an intergovernmental relations officer is involved in the decision making process of the organization.

SD - 1 D - 2 SW - 3 A - 4 SA - 5

Question Eleven: Position of an intergovernmental relations officer is consulted by staff at the upper tier orders of government.

SD - 1 D - 2 SW - 3 A - 4 SA - 5

Question Twelve: Examination of intergovernmental relations at the local level to determine if municipalities reveal a need for intergovernmental relations.

SD - 1

D - 2

SW - 3

A - 4

SA - 5

Question Thirteen: Open-ended question regarding the time the municipality has had staff dedicated to intergovernmental relations.

Question Fourteen: Open-ended question regarding the superior of the position of an intergovernmental relations officer.

Question Fifteen: Open-ended question to establish who performs the function of intergovernmental relations for municipalities that do not have staff specifically dedicated to intergovernmental relations at the local level.

Appendix C

Summation of Tables		
Question	Do Not Have I R O	Have I R O
2	3.04	4.67
3	1.00	1.67
5	0.22	1.00
6	3.47	4.67
7	0	1.00
8	2.20	4.00
9	2.25	3.00
10	1.81	3.33
11	2.27	3.33
12	3.04	4.16
TOTAL	19.30	30.83

Summation of Measures of Effectiveness		
Question	Do Not Have I R O	Have I R O
2 - (MOE 1)	3.04	4.67
6 - (MOE 2)	3.47	4.67
7 - (MOE 3)	0	1.00
8 - (MOE 4)	2.20	4.00
11 - (MOE 5)	2.27	3.33
TOTAL	$10.98/5 = 2.20$	$17.67/5 = 3.53$

Tables

Question 2: Awareness of Funding		
	Do Not Have I R O	Have I R O
SD	0	0
D	3 (13.6%)	0
SW	14 (63.6%)	0
A	3 (13.6%)	4 (66%)
SA	2 (9%)	2 (33%)
TOTAL	22 (99.9%)	6 (99%)

Question 3: Grant Funding		
	Do Not Have I R O	Have I R O
0-5	5 (100%)	4 (66%)
6-10	0	1 (16%)
11-15	0	0
16-20	0	1 (16%)
21+	0	0
TOTAL	5(100%)	6 (98%)

Question 5: Communication Network		
	Do Not Have I R O	Have I R O
YES	5 (22%)	6 (100%)
NO	18 (78%)	0
TOTAL	23 (100%)	6 (100%)

Question 6: Contact w/ Upper Tier Government		
	Do Not Have I R O	Have I R O
SD	0	0
D	1 (5%)	0
SW	9 (47%)	0
A	8 (42%)	2 (33%)
SA	1 (5%)	4 (66%)
TOTAL	19 (99%)	6 (99%)

Question 7: Partnerships		
	Do Not Have I R O	Have I R O
YES	0	6 (100%)
NO	27 (100%)	0
TOTAL	0	6 (100%)

Question 8: Information to Staff		
	Do Not Have I R O	Have I R O
SD	6 (40%)	0
D	4 (26.67%)	0
SW	3 (20%)	1 (16%)
A	1 (6.67%)	4 (66%)
SA	1 (6.67%)	1 (16%)
TOTAL	15 (100%)	6 (98%)

Question 9: Liaison w/ Admin and Political		
	Do Not Have I R O	Have I R O
SD	4 (33.33%)	0
D	4 (33.33%)	1 (16%)
SW	2 (16.67%)	4 (66%)
A	1 (8.33%)	1 (16%)
SA	1 (8.33%)	0
TOTAL	12 (99.99%)	6 (98%)

Question 10: Decision Making in Organization		
	Do Not Have I R O	Have I R O
SD	5 (45.45%)	0
D	4 (36.36%)	0
SW	1 (9%)	4 (66%)
A	1 (9%)	2 (33%)
SA	0	0
TOTAL	11 (99%)	6 (99%)

Question 11: Consultation w/ Upper Tier Government		
	Do Not Have I R O	Have I R O
SD	5 (33.33%)	0
D	4 (26.67%)	1 (16%)
SW	4 (26.67%)	2 (33%)
A	1 (6.67%)	3 (50%)
SA	1 (6.67%)	0
TOTAL	15 (100%)	6 (99%)

Question 12: Need for Intergovernmental Relations		
	Do Not Have I R O	Have I R O
SD	3 (13%)	0
D	1 (4%)	0
SW	10 (43%)	0
A	5 (22%)	5 (83%)
SA	4 (17%)	1 (17%)
TOTAL	23 (99%)	6 (100%)

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