Integration of Consultative Input:
Professional Designations for Evaluators

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Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to integrate the consultative input received during the CES initiated consultation process on professional designations in the period of March to May, 2007. The consultation followed the publication in January 2007 of '*An action plan for the Canadian Evaluation Society with respect to professional standards for evaluators*' by a Consortium of prominent members of the Canadian evaluation community and CES National Council's response document in March 2007. The consultation ended with a 'town hall meeting' at the CES national conference in June 2007.

There were four strands to the consultation: an interactive public exchange on the CES web forum EDÉ-L; private emails sent to the chair of Member Services Committee; CES Chapter briefs arising from local chapter consultation activities; and briefs received as a consequence of a call for input from various organizations with an interest in the professional designations of evaluators (referred to as partners of CES in this document). The consultation questions were, 'Should CES proceed with the establishment of a system of professional designations? Why/not? If so, what should it look like?'

In the end, the input consisted of over 45 postings obtained from EDÉ-L (some initially received as email messages and subsequently posted with permission on the public forum), 11 email messages, submissions from all CES chapters, and four briefs from partner organizations. A content analysis system was developed, piloted and implemented by the integration team. The analysis relied heavily on emergent trends in the input.

On the question of whether CES should proceed with establishing a system of professional designation, input was highly mixed. Partner briefs and some chapter reports tended to favour an affirmative response, although there were some observed differences. Partners favoured exam-based certification such as that promoted by the Consortium whereas some Chapter briefs tended to support the educational/experience-based position put forward by CES National Council. Other Chapter briefs were decidedly mixed, reporting a lack of consensus at the local level. One chapter favoured the Consortium proposition of certification. Input from the other two sources was highly variable and distributed over "preference for options", "mixed/unclear" and other categories. It can be stated that very few individuals or organizations overtly expressed a preference for CES maintaining the status quo.

The integration team, in reporting on the content of the input, committed to the provision of a balanced synthesis. Its intention was to remain neutral and descriptive and to represent the discourse in the voices of those participating in the consultation, regardless of input stream. The analyses emerged into four main categories or themes as follows:

- *Professional designation options*: thoughts about what professional designations might look like and arguments either for or against specific approaches.

Comments and concerns generated were grouped into sub-themes: professional designations in general, exam-based certification, the concept of voluntary certification, educational and experience-based credentialing, and other less frequently addressed issues. The section ended with a description of initiatives currently under development with TBS that have significant implications for CES.

- *Rationale*: reasons for or against establishing a system of professional designations. Issues raised were: demand for professional recognition and identity by evaluators, the multidisciplinary nature of evaluation as a domain of professional practice, roles for the professional society, environmental forces at play, the needs of employers and purchasers of evaluation services, among others.

- *Implementation strategies and challenges*: suggestions, comments and concerns about the business of developing and establishing a system of professional designation. Discussed here were: implementation strategies, fiscal and human resource costs, evaluator competencies, access to training and development opportunities and other issues.

- *Consequences*: reflections on the probable effects of establishing a system of professional designation, or not. The sub-themes that emerged were improvement in evaluation quality, enhanced validation of evaluation as a profession, constrained diversity in the field, implications for recruitment and renewal, implications for the professional society and legal issues.

Regardless of the issue or the sub-theme under discussion it is fair to say that significant diversity in opinion exists among the contributors to the consultation process. To that end, the consultation has succeeded in raising, in undeniably thorough fashion, the issues that must be taken into account as a basis for deciding to embrace the establishment of a system of professional designations as an overt objective for CES. The integration team sincerely hopes that this document, coupled with further input from the town hall meeting session, will help National Council to make an informed choice on behalf of the CES membership and the Canadian evaluation community. It also hopes that members of the Canadian evaluation community, whether individual or organizational, will benefit from a deeper understanding of the issues as a result of this report.

Sommaire Exécutif

Le but de ce rapport est d'intégrer les données reçues pendant le processus de consultation sur les désignations professionnelles, enterprises par la SCÉ dans la période mars à mai, 2007. La consultation a suivi la publication en janvier 2007 d`un *'plan d'action pour la société canadienne d'évaluation en matière de normes professionnelles'* pour les evaluateurs, publié par un consortium de membres renommés de la communauté canadienne d'évaluation et d'un document réponse par le conseil national de la SCÉ en mars 2007. La consultation termine avec une séance plénière au congrès national de SCÉ en juin 2007.

Il y avait quatre sources de données de consultation: un échange public interactif sur le forum de discussion EDÉ-L de la SCÉ; les courriels privés envoyés au président du comité des membres de la SCÉ; les memoires deposées par les chapitres de SCÉ, basées sur les consultations locales les dossiers reçus en reponse à une invitation aux divers partenaires institutionels de la SCÉ. Les questions de la consultation sont les suivants: Est-ce que la SCÉ devrait établir un système de désignations professionelles ? Pourquoi/ pourquoi pas? Si oui, à quoi pourrait-il ressembler?

En tout, nous avons reçus plus de 50 contributions écrites dans le forum de discussion EDÉ-L (un certain nombre de ces contributions écrites ont été reçues par courriel et envoyées au form de discussion avec l'approbation des auteurs), 11 courriels, des memoires de la plupart des chapitres et seulement 4 dossiers des partenaires institutionnels. Un cadre d'analyse du contenu a été développé, mis à l'essai et mis en application par l'équipe d'intégration. L'analyse est basée fortement sur les tendances émergentes des données reçues.

Sur la question si la SCÉ devrait procéder, les données sont fortement procéder, les données sont fortement diversifiées. Les memoires des partenaires institutionnels et quelques rapports des chapitres prennent une réponse positive, bien qu'il y avaient des différences observées. Les partenaires favorisent la certification par l'entremise d'un examen tel que proposé par le consortium, tandis que quelques memoires des chapitres ont tendance à soutenir l'approche proposée par le Conseil National de la SCÉ, un approche qui mets en evidence l'éducation et l'expérience pratique. Les memoires de d'autres Chapitres ont été décidement diverse dans leur réponse, signalent un manque de consensus au niveau local. Les données entrant de deux autres sources sont hautement variables et distribuées à travers des options preferées mixtes ou vagues et d'autres catégories. On peut affirmer que très peu d'individus ou d'organismes ont ouvertement demandé à le SCÉ de favoriser le statut quo.

L'équipe d'intégration, en rendant compte des données, s'est engagée à fourmir une synthèse équilibrée. L'équipe intend rester descriptive et de répresenter le discourse dans les voix de ceux et celles qui ont participé dans la consultation, peu importe du source des données. Les analyses ont émergé dans quatre catégories ou thèmes principaux comme suit:

- *Options professionnelles de désignation*: expression d'idées au sujet de la nature désignations professionelles et les arguments soit pour ou contre des approches spécifiques. Les commentaires et préoccupations generées ont été regroupés en sous-thèmes: designations professionnelles en générales, la certification basée sur les examens, le concept de la certification voluntaire, un système de titres basé sur l'experience pratique, et d'autres questions moins fréquemment abordées. Cette partie de ce rapport termine avec une déscription des initiatives actuellement en developpement par le Secretariat du Conseil du Trésor, qui ont des implications significatives pour la SCÉ.

- *Rationale:* raisons pour ou contre l'établissement d'un système professionnelle de désignations. Parmi les questions abordées: la demande pour une reconnaissance professionnelle et une identité par les évaluateurs, la nature multidisciplinaire de l'évaluation comme champs de pratique professionnel, des rôles pour la société professionnelle, des forces environnementales au jeu, les besoins des employeurs et les acheteurs des services en évaluation, parmi d'autres.

- *Stratégies et défis d'implementation*: les suggestions, les commentaires et les préoccupations concernant les activités necessaires au developpement la mise en oeuvre d'un système de désignations professionelles ont été discutés ici: les stratégies d'implementation, les coûts fiscaux et les réssources humaines nécessaires, les compétences des évaluateurs, la formation initiale et la formation professionelle et d'autres questions.

- *Conséquences*: réflexions sur les effets probables de l'établissement d'un système de désignation professionnelle, ou l'inverse. Les sous -thèmes qui émergent sont l'amélioration dans la qualité des évaluations, validation accrue du champs d'évaluation comme profession, une diversité diminuée de champs d'évaluation, implications pour le recrutement et la relève, des implications pour la société professionelle et des questions légales.

En dépit de la question ou sous-thème abordée, on peut conclure qu'une diversité importante d'opinion se presente parmi ceux qui ont contribué au processus de consultation. Dans ce sens, la consultation a réussi à soulever d'une mannière explicite les questions auxquelles on doit faire fasse en vue d'établir une position de la SCÉ.

L'équipe d'intégration espère sincèrement que ce document, couplé d'avantage avec les données de la séance pléniére tenue à Winnipeg aidera le Conseil National à prendre une décision éclairée au nom des membres de la SCÉ et la communauté canadienne d'évaluation. L'équipe espère également que les membres de la communauté canadienne d'évaluation, sort les individus soit les organisms, tireront bénéfice d'une compréhension plus profonde des questions en lices en raison de contenu de ce rapport.

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Introduction

Background

On May 19, 2006 the Canadian Evaluation Society (CES) National Council initiated a request for proposals (RFP) process in response to increasing interest and attention to issues of quality assurance from CES members and from individual and institutional members of the Canadian evaluation community with the prospect of developing professional designations. The RFP was titled 'Fact Finding Regarding Evaluator Credentialing'(CES, 2006). Its purpose was to attract proposals to produce an action plan that would aid the CES in establishing a professional credentialing system, including a member registry.

Council was very fortunate to have received competitive proposals in response to the RFP and ultimately the contract was awarded to a consortium of prominent and leading members of the Canadian evaluation community headed by Gerald Halpern (henceforth referred to as the Consortium). By December 2006 the Consortium delivered, a tripartite collection of products comprised of (1) an action plan for professional standards for evaluators and two support documents (Gauthier et al., 2006): (2) an extensive and comprehensive literature review (Huse & McDavid, 2006) and (3) a research report on a qualitative survey of 15 professional organizations and societies based on document (website) analysis and key informant interviews (Halpern & Long, 2006). Essentially, the report outlined an action plan for professional designation that comprised multiple levels of recognition including: CES Member (membership and adherence to standards and principles); Credentialed Evaluator (entry level, educational and experienced-based); and Certified Professional Evaluator (senior level, exam-based certification). It is noted that, in the end, not all Consortium members agreed fully with the final product. Specifically, one Consortium member, Mr. Bud Long, filed a 'minority report' with CES National Council (Long, 2007) which advocated basic exam-based certification and the development of areas of evaluation specialization.

In February 2007, CES National Council met to consider the submissions on professional designation and to develop a plan for consulting the CES membership and members of the Canadian evaluation community at large. Council examined and reflected on underlying assumptions of the Consortium (impetus and justification for system development, training and professional development options, foundational knowledge base, set-up and ongoing maintenance costs). Ultimately, Council developed a response to the Consortium's action plan which offered the 'considered opinion' that a reasonable first step would be to develop a system of professional credentialing that would rely on the awarding of credentials on the bases of educational and/or practical experience in evaluation. In essence, Council provided tentative support for an intermediate system of professional designation that left open the prospect of developing a system of exam-based certification in due time.

Council then developed a consultation plan for the CES membership and the evaluation community at large, including partner organizations[1] and employers. Council wished to base forthcoming decisions about whether it should develop a system of professional designation and if so, what that system should look like, on input from the Canadian evaluation community and especially members of the Society. In March 2007, CES launched a consultative call for views and opinions that included four streams of input:

- EDÉ-L (Evaluation Dialogue, Dialogue Évaluation), a web-based public discussion forum sponsored by CES;
- Email submissions to the CES Membership Services Committee;
- Chapter briefs from local CES Chapter consultations;
- Partner briefs from a concerted effort to reach out to key partner organizations in the Canadian evaluation community.

Reproduced in Appendix A is the call for consultative input sent to CES members via the CES email list. A similar letter was issued to partner agencies and organizations. Appendix B provides a list of the organizations to which requests of consultative input were sent. Targeted were government (federal and provincial treasury boards), voluntary sector (multiple organizations), private sector firms, universities and related professional societies. All requests for partner input were sent via email. Each letter of request contained links to the associated background documents outlined above.

The request for consultative input took the following form:

Should CES establish a system of professional designations for evaluators? Why/why not?

If so, what should it look like?
Multi-tier?
Certification?
Credentialing?
Other?

Issues that you may wish to take into consideration may include at least the following:
- *benefits;*
- *costs (fiscal, human resources);*
- *feasibility;*
- *utility;*
- *regional sensitivities;*
- *availability/access to educational opportunity;*
- *employer demands;*

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[1] We use the term 'partner organization' in a loose, informal sense to imply organizations with common interests in evaluation in Canada.

- *agreement about essential evaluator competencies;*
- *implications for local CES Chapter(s);*
- *implications for evaluation in Canada;*
- *implications for CES globally.*

It should be noted that CES did not wish to shape the discussion in any particular direction but decided to include a list of possible issues to think about (above) as a way to stimulate deliberation and discussion.

The deadline for submission of consultative input was May 14, 2007 at which point the integration team (Cousins, Malik, Maicher) began its work of integrating and synthesizing information provided across the four streams. This report provides the results of that exercise.

Purpose of this Report

The integration team was commissioned by CES Member Services Committee to synthesize the results of the consultation process. Two members of the team serve on CES National Council: Cousins is *ex officio* member by virtue of his role as Editor of the Canadian Journal of Program Evaluation; Maicher is the New Brunswick Chapter representative; both are members of Member Services Committee and participated on this integration project on a volunteer basis. Malik is a graduate student at the University of Ottawa, Faculty of Education, with a strong interest in evaluation. For her contributions, she received a modest honorarium from CES.

It is essential to recognize that it is the explicit intention of the integration team to limit its analysis and scope to a description of views and opinions expressed by CES members, partner agencies and organizations. Our goal is to understand and communicate summary patterns and trends in the input in order to provide CES with a more comprehensive basis from which to make decisions about professional designations. This report is also intended as an aid to CES members and others, in developing their own understanding of the issues for debate and the implications of potential choices about professional designation. To that end, the paper will end with a summary of patterns and trends observed in the input and will not provide an interpretive analysis.

We now turn to a description of the method we used to integrate the consultation input and to a presentation and summary of the results.

Method

As mentioned, we received input until May 14, 2007, at which point we began our analysis. In a few cases, we received requests for modest extensions of the deadline for the submission of briefs. We granted such extensions within clear time limits. Input we received after the deadline was integrated into this final product, to the best of our ability, on a *post hoc* basis.

Data were processed and captured into one of four electronic word files for analysis. These files corresponded to the four streams of input for the consultation process: EDÉ-L, email, chapter briefs, partner briefs. Within data files, individual entries were ordered chronologically by date of receipt and each individual entry (email, EDÉ-L posting, brief) was assigned an ID number from 01 to k, where k was the final submission received. EDÉ-L is an interactive web forum and therefore, naturally, several individuals participated in the dialogue by submitting on more than one occasion. We treated individual submissions as the unit of analysis. That is, if a single individual submitted on multiple occasions, a new ID number was assigned to each submission. Table 1 shows that we received 51 EDÉ-L postings from 30 individuals of whom 9 (30 %) participated by posting on more than one occasion.

It should be noted that several EDÉ-L postings were made by the chair of Member Services Committee who posted emails that he received with the permission of the author. We also received 11 emails (not posted on EDÉ-L), 12 chapter briefs and 4 partner briefs (See Appendix E and F for listings of responding chapters and partner organizations). Chapter briefs came from virtually every CES chapter. In addition to the limited number of chapter briefs submitted, we also received a few acknowledgements from other partner organizations that chose to abstain from the debate but expressed their interest in its outcome (e.g., American Evaluation Association, Joint Committee for Educational Evaluation). Still the number of partner briefs received was quite low considering the number of agencies and organizations to which the invitation was sent (see Appendix B). It seems likely that the tight time frame for consultation may have explained at least part of this lack of response.[2]

We did not receive a partner brief from a key partner agency, Treasury Board of Canada, Secretariat (TBS), but managed to schedule a meeting on May 28, 2007 of all three members of the integration team with the head of the Centre of Excellence for Evaluation and an associate. We took field notes during this 2 hour meeting for the purpose of this report.

We developed and piloted a system for content analysis of the data received. First, we started with a coding scheme with codes that reflected different professional designation choices (e.g., status quo, education/experienced-based credentialing, exam-based certification) and the issues offered for consideration in the invitation for consultation (e.g., feasibility, access to educational opportunity, employer demands). Our intention was to expand and elaborate on the coding scheme through a pilot exercise. Appendix C presents the final version of the coding scheme that we used.
A second device that we used was a submission summary form, appearing in Appendix D. This device was intended to provide the basis for cross-referencing for the purpose of summarizing the data and identifying trends. On the summary form, the analyst recorded the submission ID and data source and then the explicit position on professional designation (if one existed) expounded by the author Then, all codes assigned were listed. If codes were used multiple times in reference to multiple, non-redundant ideas, an

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[2] Due to logistical issues in locating partner agency / organization address information, invitations were not sent until early April 2007.

indication of this was provided. Finally, the analyst made note of observations of interest about the submission (e.g., 'this is the third response by the same individual with further elaborations of ideas'; or 'this person feels very strongly about their position').

To pilot the system, each of the integration team members received the same sample of three submissions for coding, one each from EDÉ-L, email and Chapter brief files. We set about independently analyzing the responses by assigning codes to idea units in the text. The coding list was elaborated through this process; as new codes were developed, they were added to the coding scheme (see Appendix C for final version). We independently assigned codes in the margins of hardcopy printouts and then later applied them to the electronic file using the 'insert comment' function' feature of MS Word. We then held a teleconference with the integration team members to compare notes, review and agree on the revised coding scheme, and streamline the analysis process. Once we had completed this process, each team member was given an assignment of unique responses to analyze. Assignments were more or less random with the proviso that each member would analyze data from each of the four streams of input (EDÉ-L, email, chapter, partner). We each completed our analysis independently and one team member then compiled master files of coded data, one for each of the four streams. Master files of the summary forms were also compiled, one for each of the four streams. In both cases, master files were ordered chronologically (i.e., by ID number).

Finally, one team member worked with the master data files and summary forms to summarize the analyses and present the results. Our choice was to use a liberal sprinkling of verbatim quotations so as to leave the point being raised in the voice of the participant. We endeavoured to maximize balance as a reporting principle. One person drafted the report and then fed back to the other team members for verification and cross-checking. In the final revisions to the report, we integrated late submissions concertedly into the synthesis. We now turn to a presentation of the results of the analysis.

Results

Consistent with the emergent structure in the coding scheme, the results are organized around four themes. The themes are laid out as follows:

1. *PROFESSIONAL DESIGNATION OPTIONS: Comments about professional designations: types, plans for implementing, structure, requirements.* We looked at participants' thoughts and reactions to prospects for professional designations, preferences for moving or not moving in this direction, and the types of designation of most interest.

2. *RATIONALE: Comments about the rationale, impetus, and motivation for implementing (or not) a system of professional designation.* Here we considered various arguments for and against developing a system of professional designation.

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Table 1:
EDÉ-L Response Tracking Chart

Respondent I.D. No.	Response No. (EDE-L)
001	01, 04, 31
002	02, 07, 16, 22, 27
003	03
004	05
005	06
006	08, 10, 12
007	09, 11
008	13, 14, 44, 47
009	15, 21
010	17
011	18, 19, 26, 29, 30, 40, 49
012	20
013	23
014	24
015	25
016	28
017	32
018	33
019	34, 50
020	35
021	36
022	37
023	38
024	39
025	41, 48
026	42
027	43
028	45
029	46
030	51

3. *IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND CHALLENGES. Issues listed either in support of or as arguments against specific forms of designation.* Third, we examined specific issues that emerged, either as challenges or specific implementation issues that would need to be addressed.

4. *CONSEQUENCES. Consequences, effects, implications of implementing (or not) a system of professional designations as issues listed either in support of or as arguments against specific forms of designation.* Finally, we summarized participants' thoughts about the potential implications of installing a system of professional designation or deciding not to do so.

Professional Designation Options

The first observation that we can make about the prospects and preferences for professional designation is that there exists enormous variability in views and opinions. Table 2 shows the distribution of observed responses that we coded on summary forms by input stream. Here we can see an interesting pattern of variation. These results ought to be treated with caution, however, since they derive from the analyst's interpretation of the response provided (as opposed to an explicit response to a closed form questionnaire item, for example).

While it would be fair to say that relatively few respondents overtly advocated maintaining the status quo (i.e., do not move toward professional designation), it is important to keep in mind that many responses in the 'mixed/unclear' category expressed mixed opinions about the prospects of professional designation. Such responses usually pointed out a number of implementation questions, logistical issues and challenges.

Table 2: Frequency of Preferences for Various forms of
Professional Designation by Input Stream
Frequency (Row %)

Input stream	Exam-based Certification	Educ./exper.-based Credentialing	Maintain Status Quo	Mixed / Unclear	Other
EDÉ-L	12 (23.0)	5 (9.6)	3 (5.7)	7 (13.5)	24 (48)
Email	2 (18.2)	4 (36.4)	1 (9.1)	2 (18.2)	2 (18.2)
Chapter	1 (9.1)	3 (27.3)	0 (0.0)	6 (54.5)	1 (9.1)
Partner*	4 (66.7)	1 (16.7)	1 (16.7)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Total	**19 (29.3)**	**13 (22.5)**	**5(7.9)**	**15 (21.5)**	**27 (18.8)**

*Note: includes results of TBS face-to-face consultation.

While a substantial number of respondents supported an exam-based certification approach, it is fair to say that support for an education/experience-based credentialing system was observed as well.

Responses in the other categories were highly heterogeneous. In some cases, there were no observable preferences expressed, or comments in response to the question as to whether CES should embrace the prospect of developing professional designations. Rather, commentary tended to focus on various issues and challenges that ought to be taken into account. In the 'other' category responses commented on approaches such as program accreditation or licensure, or some other aspect of professional designation not captured by either the certification or the credentialing options supported by the Consortium and CES National Council, respectively. About half of the EDÉ-L postings were in this category. Responses from the email stream of input were highly variable, representing quite diverse perspectives. Chapter briefs tended to either support the position put forward by National Council (credentialing) or, as was most often the case, did not arrive at a consensus and expressed a mixed view. One chapter achieved consensus in favour of certification. Partner organizations, on the other hand, decidedly favoured moving to an exam-based certification system. We now turn to a summary of the sorts of commentary received concerning this theme. These are expressed in a series of sub-themes that emerged from the consultation input.

Professional designation, undefined

Many responses were clearly in favour of moving to professional designations 'of some sort' expressing the sentiment that the 'time has come'. Some accepted that moving to professional designations is accepted as inevitable and the main question becomes how to do it. Other comments were 'need to clarify the vocabulary', 'desirable to work toward a self-regulated profession in the long term' and 'well developed core body of knowledge would be essential as a basis'. Others that were coded as belonging to this undifferentiated category expressed mixed feelings. A partner organization (federal government department) reported the results of a poll as individuals being in favour of status quo (28%), credentialing (28%) and certification (42%). According to one Chapter level report,

> There was not consensus on [a Chapter] position amongst the Board of Directors and those in attendance at the Breakfast Session did not support voting on [a Chapter] position in that session due to: the diversity of opinions expressed, yet the limited attendance (at roughly 17% of [the Chapter] members), and a desire for more time to think through the arguments.

Further, another Chapter report expressed the need for public organizations and universities to consolidate their role before putting in place a system of professional designations:

> D'une part, il semble être trop tôt pour établir un système de désignation sachant qu'il faut à la fois consolider la fonction au sein des organisations publiques et la formation offerte dans les universités.

Another Chapter reported that there was 'no practical reason' to do it.

Exam-based certification

Several responses coded in this category expressed strong support for moving to a system of exam-based certification, generally acknowledging the 3-tier system, proposed by the Consortium, as being supportable. One person was pleased to see that in this entry level/senior evaluator designation system 'it is nice to see that experience would count'. The following responses were illustrative in terms of the support provided.

> The three-prong system as a whole demonstrates that evaluation is more than a practice, that it is a profession that people support, enter into and grow into. It tells this to evaluation practitioners, to evaluation users and to students who may be considering evaluation as a career (EDÉ-L)

> The consensus of the members of the Chapter is that:
>
> - CES should establish a system of professional designations for evaluators,
> - CES should accept the final report of the Consortium, and
> - CES should begin designation as soon as possible. (Chapter brief)

> I believe a designation is highly desirable, but only in a supporting role, that is, as a confirmation that a person has achieved the goal that really matters: the possession of all of the right

> knowledge. The corollary is that the legitimacy of the designation depends on two conditions: a valid and complete body of knowledge and a valid means of testing individuals for the possession of that knowledge. To the extent these conditions are not met, then to that extent the professional designation will, regardless of good intentions, be fraudulent. (EDÉ-L)

Some participants commented that there may be alternatives to standardized exams as a basis for consideration. For example,

> In the future, an alternative to a written examination is a requirement for candidates to complete case studies that determine their mastery of a defined set of competencies, which are then assessed by a review panel. I find this approach much more palatable than an "examination." Standardized exams are inflexible and cannot recognize the creativity that evaluators need to bring to their profession. (Email)

One Chapter commented on the need to consider the diversity of evaluators' academic and professional backgrounds in preparing exams:

> En effet, la formation et le perfectionnement doivent préparer les postulants à l'examen, compte tenu notamment de la diversité de leur cheminement académique et professionnel.

Despite the support observed, there were those who took a dissenting view. The move to professional certification was suggested to be wrong-headed given there exists a lack of support:

> I do not believe there is widespread support for certification among CES members, and was surprised to hear that this was absorbing Council energy yet again. (EDÉ-L)

Another concern was that without legal protection, it would be difficult to prevent persons from inappropriately representing themselves as being a certified evaluator. That argument was countered with an EDÉ-L reply that introduced the notion of 'certification marks' as being a potentially viable mode of protection.

A comment opposing certification was voiced in view of extensive movement of employees, particularly in government departments, and the current lack of supply.

> Certification will create barriers and certainly reduce the supply of evaluators if the Feds and/or Provinces use certification to screen people to hire as evaluators. (EDE-L)

A government department response countered that if heads of evaluation divisions and mangers, in general, are required to become certified it will raise the profile of evaluation and possibly even increase supply.

Voluntary certification

One aspect of the Consortium action plan would be that the system of certification would be voluntary. That is, it was proposed that CES not serve in a gatekeeper role, thereby preventing persons from practicing evaluation. This aspect appears to have garnered some support. Most commenting on the issue did not see exclusive right to practice as being at all realistic. The following passage from an EDÉ-L posting helps to illustrate.

> The idea of a professional certification process that is voluntary sounds far more appealing. Professionalism is used to segregate and gate-keep (either you are in or you are out), while a voluntary credential option provides added value for those who choose to seek it. While there are arguments … that point to the value-added by professionalizing the field, that value is shared only by those who can afford it and effectively isolates those that can't from practicing evaluation.

A comment from a Chapter brief extends the argument to voluntary sector organizational contexts.

> Such a system also should not dictate that only those who hold a designation can do evaluations. Otherwise it would have negative impacts on those organizations who cannot afford to pay for services or who cannot afford to train their internal staff. Also some organizations may not need this level of expertise.

Some comments about voluntary designations systems, however, touched on the downside. One person suggested that such a system would ultimately reduce competition among evaluation practitioners by narrowing the field. The argument was countered with the suggestion that employers would still be free to hire non-certified evaluators. But, as expressed in an EDÉ-L posting, the risk *of defacto* mandatory certification seems probable:

> The Consortium reports that some respondents expect increased demand for credentials as employers (governments) move to make them mandatory conditions of employment. So much for voluntary!

Education/experience-based credentialing

Several comments were directed at the option highlighted in the National Council response to the Consortium's action plan (CES, 2007). Many of these comments were supportive as reflected in the following excerpt.

> Congratulations to CES for moving forward in the area of professional standards. In my view, formal recognition of the education, training and experience of evaluation professionals is absolutely essential. Without it, evaluation clients have little or no assurance that the people they engage for evaluation work understand the theory and practice of the craft. (Email)

However, several of the comments about credentialing raised concerns. Chief among them were that the approach would be seen as less rigorous leading to a system of 'who you know, as opposed to what you know', it would be too weak (implying that anyone could obtain it), and that a practical element would be integral since evaluation is much more than what is 'learned in school'. A number of participants did not see the logic in Council's decision to opt for an intermediate approach making the case that the concerns raised by Council about the Consortium's action plan would apply equally to a system of credentialing.

Other sub-themes emerging with less frequency

Some participants clearly expressed their opposition to moving toward professional designation. They raised questions about the need or impetus for such a system and they suggested that such a move would have an undesirable effect of rendering evaluation 'uni-dimensional'. For some, the 'negatives' far outweigh the 'positives':

> I am not in favour of a credentialing or certification process. I was on National Council more than five years ago when the subject was examined, along with a parallel exercise in the US. The decision at that time was to NOT move forward, as the negatives greatly exceeded the positives for most members. There are many reasons for my statement. (EDÉ-L)

The contributor went on to cite such reasons as many persons working in evaluation without a social sciences background, lack of access to courses, the threat of CES evolving from a supportive to a policing body, and others.

Some participants discussed the limits of a system of professional designation without having a 'reserved title' or some legal mechanism to ensure that only certified evaluators could claim to be so. This, as mentioned above, was countered with the argument that a system of 'certification marks' has been used by other professional bodies and may represented as a viable solution.

The minority report made public by Long (2007) introduced the notion of basic certification and the possibility of developing specialist designations. This proposition

met with mixed reviews. While some support for such a direction was in evidence others raised concerns about the difficulty of defining specializations and the risks of developing two classes of certified evaluators:

> An evaluator has to be an evaluator! I think that creating two 'classes' of evaluators would be a retrograde step, and the distinction between 'generalists' and 'specialists' would not only be a dangerous route to pursue but also one that would further cloud the definition of what constitutes an evaluator.

Finally, some participants liked the Consortium's designation of 'CES Member', viewed it as a low cost first step worth taking. One individual suggested that it would be a good <u>final</u> step down the trail of professional designation as well; he was not particularly drawn to the prospect of professional designation.

Recent developments at Treasury Board of Canada, Secretariat (TBS).

We observed that most partner organizations were favourably disposed toward some form of professional designation (see Table 2). It is noteworthy that we did not receive written briefs from any of the federal or provincial government evaluation oversight agencies to which the invitation for participation had been sent (see Appendix B). Being aware that a large contingent of CES members work in the federal government and that TBS has initiated an evaluation policy renewal, we thought it imperative to include the TBS perspective in this integration report. We therefore approached the head of the Centre of Excellence for Evaluation (CEE) who agreed to meet with us to discuss the matter. To follow is our understanding of recent developments within the federal government sector which we believe to have considerable relevance to present deliberations about professional designation.

On the heels of a variety of studies and inquiries commissioned by CEE (e.g., Aucoin, 2005; Breem & associates, 2005; Cousins & Aubry, 2006; Gusman, 2005) and current government priorities, TBS has undertaken an evaluation policy renewal process. The primary drivers for policy renewal are calls for increased quality assurance in evaluation and the need to make evaluation more relevant and useful to senior decision markers' information needs in the federal sector. The policy renewal privileges forms of evaluation that support resource allocation decisions and expenditure management.

A key strategy for enhancing evaluation quality is the development of an internal system of evaluator certification. TBS has committed to policy (not yet having received full approval) and plans to work with the Canadian General Standards Board of Public Works and Government Services Canada, to develop evaluator competencies and then to work with the Canadian School of Public Service to develop courses that would align with these competencies. Ultimately, an internal exam-based certification process would be installed. The first priority would be to certify heads of evaluation within the federal sector and to require heads to sign off on evaluations having ensured that they meet government standards of quality.

Treasury Board is pressing ahead with this initiative because it has a 2010 timeline to get the system up and running and because it is of the view that competencies for evaluation in the federal government are distinct from those of the broader Canadian evaluation community. It has done background research and fact finding and is of the belief that the system would be unique globally. A recent process was put in place for Canadian federal procurement officers, who represent a much larger community within the federal sector than do evaluators. The current process for defining evaluator certifications could be modelled based on that one.

In asking if the system would apply only to federal employees or to the broader evaluation community (e.g., private sector consultants) who do federal evaluation work, the response was not definitive. However, it was noted that the term 'persons' as opposed to 'employees' was used in the policy statement, thereby leaving some latitude in that regard.

Despite having taken some concrete steps in policy formulation, TBS assured us that it "is still feeling its way" and that it is open to the prospect of partnerships with other players in the Canadian evaluation community such as CES and the universities. We had some discussions about duplication and were assured that if CES proceeded with a system of professional designation that met federal government standards, that it would see no problem in recognizing such certification in lieu of its internal certification. We also raised with TBS the issue of duplication of effort in developing professional designation systems and the prospect of TBS partnering with CES and perhaps others (e.g., universities) in this respect. The response was that TBS has "not ruled out anything" and is open to the concept of partnership. TBS reminded us, however, that it is committed to its own process as laid out in the policy renewal documentation and would assess other opportunities in that light.

Rationale

Many comments and submissions focused on the impetus or rationale for setting up a system of professional designation for evaluators. The comments identified both positive forces that would support the establishment of such systems, as well as barriers, and reasons why progress in this direction might be problematic. We now turn to a series of sub-themes that emerged in the course of our analysis. Within virtually every sub-theme there were arguments for and against professional designation for evaluators.

Demand for professional recognition/identity by evaluators

The creation of a system of professional designations would be welcomed by evaluators for a variety of reasons, according to several respondents. Chief among these would be the enhancement of professional identity, the emergence of a shaper definition of the profession, and incentives for continuing education and professional development. In the words of some of the respondents,

If my skills are competitive, I'd like to be able to demonstrate that to potential clients/employers as efficiently as possible. (EDÉ-L)

To be taken seriously as a profession we need some regulations as to who can practice in this field. The profession needs to be identifiable in terms of the skills and competencies required to carry out evaluations (Chapter brief)

There seems to be a number of people in the field who are CMCs or certified auditors, which gives them an advantage over evaluators who don't have such qualifications. The designation would therefore help better define evaluation as a profession and level the playing field for professional evaluators (Chapter brief)

There were other comments that suggested that professional designations would help attract persons to the profession by providing some sort of identifiable career path. The following quotation helps to illustrate.

The presence of a CES professional designation (with the two levels of CE and CPE) would provide enhanced validation of evaluation as a profession (increasing its attractiveness to those embarking on a career) as well as provide guidance for career development as new entrants would move from member to CE to CPE. (Email)

In contrast to the foregoing comments, several participants raised questions about incentives, suggesting that evaluation is not under threat from other professions and the term evaluation itself is quite complicated to define. In their words,

I am personally interested because I think that having more evaluators with designations will promote a higher standard of evaluation in Canada, but quite frankly, if the process is too time consuming or too expensive, I probably won't bother seeking certification. (Email)

If the term "Evaluator" is to be used, it must be delineated. I would avoid the term, despite its extensive use in CES and similar organizations, because it implies that one is determining value. Value is relative. Thus the true evaluator is someone that we typically call "the client". It is they who determine the value of an entity from their perspective which ideally takes into account all relevant information. The "evaluation professional" or "advisor" is someone who understands evaluative processes and knows that determining and procuring relevant information can involve stakeholder consultations, clarifying the objectives of the entity, modeling of the logic through which actions lead to results, developing assessment criteria then collecting, balancing and interpreting information.

Multidisciplinary nature of the field

Related to the foregoing observation about delineating the term evaluation, some respondents made reference to the highly multidisciplinary nature of professional practice in evaluation and suggested that as such it may not be easily amenable to systematizing for professional designation or doing so might have a constraining influence on practice. As another response indicated,

Le caractère multidisciplinaire du domaine de l'évaluation de programme doit être reconnu ainsi que la valeur ajoutée des formations de base diversifiées détenues par les membres d'une équipe d'évaluateurs. (EDE-L)

One contributor from a partner organization observed that the best evaluations occur in the context of diversified teams of individuals each with something different to contribute. It would be difficult to imagine a professional designation system that would be able to accommodate such diversity. According to one Chapter brief, if a professional designation system were to be developed, it must be done in a manner which considers different domains, demonstrates flexibility and adaptability:

> En développant le système, il faudra garder à l'esprit que pour un grand nombre de membres, l'évaluation se pratique dans un domaine particulier : éducation, santé publique, services sociaux, développement économique, etc. Le processus de désignations professionnelles doit avoir suffisamment de flexibilité pour s'adapter à différents domaines d'application de l'évaluation.

Roles for the professional society

Views and opinions were somewhat mixed within this sub-theme. On the one hand, several advocates argued that professional designation is the rightful purview of CES and that the Society must show strong leadership in this regard. Some reference was made to the Society as a gatekeeper of practice and expressed concern that if CES does not actively pursue professional certification others (presumably government) likely would. A suggestion was made in one EDÉ-L posting,

> …the advocacy program should include a push to assign the primary responsibility for evaluation either to a central agency like the TB Staff or, perhaps better, to officials responsible directly to the federal Parliament and the provincial-territorial counterparts. But that's another big issue.

Related to this sentiment is the suggestion that professional designation would assist CES with its role in advocacy for evaluation. According to one EDE-L posting,

> …we do need to investigate accreditations part of providing quality services, and let clients know who we are. Our identity has been unconvincing and the consequences is that we are loosing our positioning in the market.

Yet, other concerns were raised about the role of CES in advocating designations. According to one of the Chapter reports,

> Concerns were also expressed about the value of professional designations. It was felt that extensive advocacy would be required outside the evaluation community to indicate who evaluators are and what the designations mean. That would be difficult. What will be the message outside the evaluation community?

On that theme, several commentators expressed concern that establishing a system of professional designation would transform CES into a policing organization. Concerns were raised about the many other roles that the Society plays and that professional designation might detract from its ability to function in such roles in an effective manner.

Here are some of the sentiments,

CES should invest in the foundations of the field: advancing post secondary education in evaluation across the country, increasing its supply and reach of professional development, and fostering a sense of community and professional pride among practitioners. Much can also be done to increase receptor capacity for evaluation: to promote evaluation standards among clients, to increase demand for higher-quality evaluation work, and more generally to lobby for a stronger evaluation function especially outside of the federal government. (EDE-L)

Those stating CES National should pursue priorities other than credentialing most frequently identified priorities such as; advocacy/awareness raising (n=4), the provision of educational and professional networking and professional development opportunities (n=3), the creation/establishment of a common body of knowledge (n=2), efforts to increase membership and to have closer relationships with other related Canadian organizations (n=1) and, fund raising "the conference should be a service to members, but national sees it as a way of making money." (Chapter brief)

Environmental forces

There is little question that several participants in the consultation grounded their arguments in recent shifts in the environment that have implications for evaluation practice. Mentioned were TBS initiatives with new evaluation policy development, the "dire shortage of evaluators" in the community, increasing demands for quality assurance, and the elevation of internal audit within government sectors. We observed a definite sentiment among some respondents that the "timing is right" for professional designation. Yet not all responses were uniform in this respect. Some commented on changes in the context for evaluation practice suggesting that the role of evaluators has diversified and that many evaluators (perhaps internal to government) are actually involved in non-evaluative job functions to some degree. This was cast as a disincentive for professional designation. Also, concerns were voiced by those in the voluntary sector since that context is quite distinct and departs from the sorts of context evaluators might encounter in government, for example. According to one respondent,

While professional designation might meet the needs of the federal government, Treasury Board and other levels of government, the reality for community-based agencies is that government funding agencies (and, for the most part, foundations and other philanthropic funders) do not provide adequate resources for evaluation (if they even provide ANY resources at all, while still demanding that evaluations be conducted). The standard of 10% of an overall agency budget (or project funding) to be designated for evaluation is simply NEVER granted by funding sources. As it is, community agencies (large and small) are conducting evaluation on a shoe-string budget. The requirement of choosing evaluators who are professional designated/certified would pose an added level of complexity and burden on the non-profit sector. It might meet the needs of larger bureaucracies, but it simply would not work for the non-profit sector. (Email)

Employer exigencies

Without [evaluation certification], evaluation clients have little or no assurance that the people they engage for evaluation work understand the theory and practice of the craft. (Email)

This comment is representative of several participants who commented on exigencies that are favourable to the prospect of professional designation. One participant liked the entry level designation of Credentialed Evaluator proposed by the Consortium in its action plan since it gives employers a good identifiable basis from which to select new recruits to the evaluation function. Yet again, not all of the input was uniform in this respect. Others raised issues such as it being impossible for employers to really define their evaluation needs, employers likely experiencing difficulty in differentiating levels of designation, the need for extensive marketing of designations and their meaning. As one member put it, "If I need a Chartered Accountant, I get a CA, not half of one, and I look for one who has experience in my domain" (EDÉ-L). One of the Chapter reports indicated that no one present had ever been questioned about professional credentials by employers.

Two other aspects emerged under this sub-theme. One suggested a role for employers in paying for professional designations since they are in the employer's interest. Another suggested that evaluation quality problems that have been touted are as much attributable to employer practices as to those of evaluators. Let's listen,

> Obviously the federal government has to be an active player and buy into the credentializing philosophy and process for its employees who are engaged in evaluation and for its contractors. If the government requires all of its evaluators to be CPEs, then, I believe, it becomes a job requirement and the employer (i.e., the government) has to pay, as a taxable benefit, the membership fees. If the government does not require its employee evaluators to be CPEs, then they might not have much of an incentive to do so. (EDÉ-L)

> The problem lies at least as much with demand as with supply. Our experience in working with evaluators in the federal government in the national capital region indicates that the quality of evaluations has been eroded because consumers of evaluations have increasingly accepted, and even sought, "quick and dirty" evaluations. The primary source of a need for designation in any context is to protect consumers of a service from unqualified providers. Apparently gone are the days when consumers of evaluation services were almost as knowledgeable as the suppliers. Should we insist on designating the consumers as well? (Partner brief)

Other sub-themes emerging with less frequency

Some participants referred to the resources available to initiate the development of a system of professional designation. They referred to the availability of brain power within the Society and to the funds generated by the 2005 Joint CES/AEA conference. Such comments were associated with a sentiment of 'the timing is right' for professional designation.

Finally, some participants made reference to the relationship of CES and evaluators to other professional societies, making arguments both for and against professional designation as a route to pursue. While some identify similarities of CES to other professional domains of practice that have established systems, others view CES and evaluation practice to be quite unique and not as amenable to the development of

such systems. One person commented on the deleterious effects professional designations had within the community of psychology practice.

> … just look at the role that psychologists are playing in the health system now and 15 years ago. In many sectors (especially hospitals), psychologist-related services have been completely phased out or are used on a limited basis because they have priced themselves out of the market thanks to professionalization. (EDÉ-L)

Diverse opinions were expressed with regard to other professional organizations, in particular auditors. The responses came frequently from the auditors themselves.

> I strongly endorse certification for evaluators - to differentiate it from related professions, like audit and management consulting...most people with audit experience only have financial audit training - they have the analytic part but not the management part. And managers may have the admin savvy but are not always educated in data collection and analysis. (EDÉ-L)

> ….. why shouldn't auditors do evaluation? The objective of CES should not be to build empires. It should be to promote effective evaluation - wherever it takes place. Maybe evaluators should be hired by Audit branches? (EDÉ-L)

Implementation Strategies and Challenges

Deciding to install a system of professional designations is one thing, but if such as decision is made, the professional society would face a plethora of logistical challenges and implementation issues. In responding to the invitation for consultation we observed that many participants discussed potential strategies or raised challenges and issues that CES would need to address along the way. We now turn to a summary of various sub-themes that emerged in this general area.

Strategies

An abundance of strategies and suggestions on how to go about developing and installing a system of professional designations was forthcoming from the analysis. These included clarifying terminology, putting the decision to move forward to a membership vote, developing a marketing campaign, drafting a concrete action plan and developing a system that begins with credentialing and works toward the establishment of exam-based certification. Several participants commented on the need to involve partners in the process: key stakeholders such as universities and government were mentioned. One person provided an interesting caveat in an email.

> Any implementation of professional designation without federal government participation and compatibility will fail over the medium to long term. (I have seen some very highly touted but disappointing efforts from the federal government to professionalize its own staff in isolation from societal standards and movements: personnel administration, IT professionals, and the list goes on and on - let's not add evaluation to it)

Other comments centred on the importance of including a flexible assessment mechanism that takes into account practical experience in evaluation. Yet some remarks were critical

of the Consortium's action plan on this very point, proffering the view that letters of support of the interim strategy for awarding the Certified Professional Evaluator would be insufficient and problematic. One individual expressed concerns about the criteria to be used to establish eligibility for professional designation. He suggested that some clients would own the intellectual property of evaluations and it would therefore not be necessarily feasible to produce one's best work for assessment purposes. He also raised concerns about potential conflicts of interest putting the issue this way:

> Confidentiality is extremely important in certification processes. …This will be even more important in the evaluation domain, where it is highly probable that there will be evaluators on the assessment board who may be the direct competitors of applicants….There is also the issue of competitive advantage for those of us who compete for evaluation contracts. The elements of my company's approach to evaluation are what make us sought after in our field, and while I am always open to sharing new ideas, I am not prepared to submit the details of my work to a competitor for scrutiny. (Email)

Finally, some participants had concerns for the establishment of an administrative board. One mentioned that members from all of the provinces (presumably chapters) ought to be involved. Another, who argued against establishing a system of professional designation, posted these thoughts on EDÉ-L:

> Similarly, the challenges of setting up an administrative body that decides which courses and which types of degrees are acceptable for entry into the hallowed grounds of evaluation will be both costly and divisive. Who is to judge?

A number of additional helpful comments and definitions were provided outlining strategy as well as assumptions and other fundamental considerations to implementation of a professional designation. It was noted that

> The CES can become the "plaque tournante" that brings home the efforts of a multitude of practitioners in response to their perception of societal needs. It can bring together research, best practice, professional development, advice of people of wisdom and experience and, as well, pull elements from fields other than evaluation. For this, it has to gradually assume the shape (and the proportions!) of a duly constituted profession. (EDÉ-L)

Costs: Fiscal and Human Resource

This sub-theme was a popular focus of attention. Reference was made not only to the cost of establishing and maintaining a system of professional designation but the cost implications that individual evaluators and CES members would face. On the latter, some were of the view that costs to individuals would be relatively minor because the costs of training and development ought not to be included since it is naturally and currently a cost associated with doing good evaluation.

> The costs of knowledge acquisition are attributable not to the designation as such but rather to the achievement of the goal of good evaluation. It's only the costs of testing that are properly attributable to the designation. And even on the basis of an extreme high-

> end estimate, such costs are small both in the absolute and as a proportion of the total cost of evaluation. (EDÉ-L)

Yet others were of the view that professional designation would be affordable by some but not by others. In some cases, training costs could be offloaded to employers, but this is certainly not the case across the board, argue those working in the community volunteer sector. Several respondents provided input on this theme. Here are some illustrative extracts.

> Member fees would increase significantly and it is more likely there would be a decrease than an increase in value to members. (EDÉ-L)

> CAMC fees are over $500/year including GST. I don't think that there are many public servant evaluators who would want to spend that amount of money. Such a cost might inhibit growth in membership especially if public servants comprise a significant amount of the evaluators. (EDÉL)

In addition to the cost likely to be borne by individuals electing to achieve professional designation, there is the matter of the costs of developing and establishing the system. The Consortium action plan makes the case that much of these costs would be offset by relying on *pro bono* participation of members in developing the system. This assertion stimulated some reaction as can be seen in the following extracts.

> I share the Council's skepticism that these costs should not be considered as an impediment, and resent the suggestion that in any event these costs can be largely offset by pro bono work (presumably by members) and fees charged to members who wish to apply for and maintain professional designation. I agree with Council's assessment that significant administrative assistance would have to be hired to manage such a system. (EDÉ-L)

> Costs do not go down through pro bono work or transfers. … The National Council response at least recognizes that members working for free only offset costs to CES. I suspect National Council also recognizes that fees are just a cost transferred to its members. But this view is too narrow when deciding whether to proceed. (Partner brief)

Finally, a partner brief suggested that a more careful analysis of the cost of developing the knowledge base that would underpin a system of exam-based certification should be carried out. This brings us to the next sub-theme for which we observed considerable discussion; evaluator competencies.

Evaluator competencies

We observed some debate as to whether it would be possible or feasible to develop sufficiently the knowledge base for the purpose of professional designation. Some did not see this as a significant problem and advocated further development of the Core Body of Knowledge (CBK) as one route to pursue. There were actually several independent suggestions along these lines. The strategy was seen as being relatively cost-effective. It was generally acknowledged that the approach suggested by Long (2007) was reasonable in that it would be easier and quicker to develop a basic level knowledge base and reserve more specific competencies associated with various specialized areas of

evaluation practice as a separate task that could be tackled by interested subgroups within the membership. Some raised the concern that the knowledge base is constantly being developed as new methods and techniques become available, but this point was effectively countered with reference to other professions with multiple designations (i.e., medicine) and a similar if not greater pace of knowledge development.

Some participants acknowledged that an action plan for educational or experienced-based credentialing would not require the well developed knowledge base a system of exam-based certification would demand.

> I support the cautious reasoned approach in the National Council's response to the Action Plan for Professional Standards - credentialing now, certification later …credentialing places less emphasis on competencies, which are difficult to measure, and more on knowledge and experience, which at least can be quite readily documented. (Email)

Others provided independent support for striking a balance between emphasis on practical knowledge and wisdom and academic study, recognizing that much of what is required of an evaluator is learned through procedural application and interaction in the field as opposed to solid course based knowledge in methods and practice and theory.

Still, others were not persuaded that it would ever be possible to capture in a knowledge base what is required of practicing evaluators. The following remark reflects that particular sentiment quite well.

> I totally agree with the Bud Long's assertions about the folly of proceeding with any form of professional recognition without developing a solid and defensible foundation. I also agree with Council's assessment that in its current state the CES CBK is not sufficient, and is unlikely ever to be sufficient to support certification. In fact, I would turn that statement around and say I believe credentialing can never do justice to the diversity of member's backgrounds, beliefs, skills and knowledge, and the diversity of contexts, arrangements and areas of application of program evaluation. (EDÉ-L)

Yet, this sort of sentiment is juxtaposed with counter-perspectives such as the following.
> Most evaluators in the public sector have job descriptions and core competency requirements. I think it should be possible to review these quickly and identify the list of core skills in the profession. (EDÉ-L)

Access to training and development opportunities

It is well understood, we observed, that educational opportunities in evaluation are relatively limited as compared with most other professions. It was recognized that no training pipeline exists that would serve to restrict entry, as it would in other domains of professional practice. Several federal sector members commented on how previously available courses, associated with TBS or the Comptroller General's office, are no longer available and that access to courses is a general problem. Some expressed concern that access is somewhat differentiated by geographic region and that future course and program development needs to be sensitive to the use of web-based technologies, thereby permitting more choice in remote areas. There was some discussion about post-secondary level training and the potential involvement of universities and colleges, but in some

cases such suggestions came with caveats as revealed in the following points taken from a partner brief.

- Course work, such as social research methods, statistics, independent research and report writing should be recognized and accredited.
- University degree attainment not viable for career professionals – need for training courses targeted to employees in the workplace.

Other sub-themes emerging with less frequency

Regional concerns were not limited to the issue of access to educational opportunity. Concerns were expressed that in remote and isolated areas, if the use of certified evaluators became a requirement for publicly funded programs, there would be a detrimental trade-off in knowledge of local context. The counter argument to this position was presented by a contributor: it is not the setting or context that is critical to quality, so much as the evaluator knowledge and skill.

Participants expressed mixed views about the prospect of 'grandparenting'. Some were of the view that it runs the risk of having an impact that would be opposite to that intended by certification in the first place. Others argued that broad criteria should be set so as to be inclusive of experienced evaluators and to promote buy-in for the system. For example,

> There was strong agreement that grandparenting should be part of any introduction of a designation process. It was noted that it will help to ensure buy-in from current members and, depending on how it is introduced, streamline the large upfront administration. (Chapter)

There were general observations that grandparenting schemes or alternatives were not well developed in either of the Consortium's action plan or the Council response. It would be prudent to develop such schemes further in order to understand their potential implications.

Finally, as might be expected from a population of evaluators, periodic review of the knowledge base and independent evaluation of the professional designation system were advocated.

Consequences

The final emergent category of responses from the consultation relates to observations, concerns and predictions about potential immediate, intermediate and long terms effects of installing a system of professional designation, or not. The comments fall loosely into thoughts about potential benefits and liabilities. We tried to discuss each within the bounds of specific sub-themes to follow.

Improvement in evaluation quality

Several of the comments were associated with this sub-theme, as contributors envisaged the potential consequences that a system of professional designation might generate. On the upside, folks talked about the pros outweighing the cons and made general references to the quality of evaluation being improved. One chapter brief presented a list of advantages and disadvantages, stating that the majority of its members saw the benefits of moving towards a system of professional designation. A comprehensive list of benefits cited by the chapter brief follows:

- Baliser la profession d'évaluateur, en particulier, le niveau de connaissances et compétences nécessaires pour effectuer des évaluations
- Baliser la formation en évaluation
- Exercer une pression sur les universités pour enrichir les formations en évaluation
- Favoriser le respect des normes
- Favoriser l'amélioration de la qualité des projets d'évaluation
- Offrir une plus grande visibilité à l'évaluation
- Augmenter la crédibilité de la fonction
- Maintenir la pérennité de la fonction
- Contribuer à diminuer les résistances face à l'évaluation (puisque l'évaluation est en compétition avec d'autres formes de soutien à la prise de décision dans le secteur public)
- Constituer un attrait pour la relève
- Permettre la reconnaissance des évaluateurs à travers le Canada et dans le monde, et ainsi faciliter la mobilité des travailleurs

In many cases, references were made to professional designations having a positive impact on the extent to which evaluators would adhere to a system of professional standards that increased employer confidence. Consider the following reflections:

…it would be valuable to have a mechanism or mechanisms in place for use by consumers of the evaluators' services so they may be assured that the person or firm selected adheres to professional standards set by CES and can do the job. (Email)

…l'établissement d'un système de titres professionnels pourrait constituer une avenue pour améliorer la qualité des évaluations produites par les évaluateurs de programmes. En effet, la qualité des évaluations devrait être meilleure si un tel système permet d'imposer des normes d'éthique et une meilleure formation aux praticiens de l'évaluation. (Chapter)

The main benefit for users of evaluation services is that a professional designation provides some degree of assurance that the person providing the service has the skills, knowledge and competencies to do a satisfactory job. (EDÉ-L)

If anyone can call him/herself and evaluator without the basic skills this could ultimately bring the whole field down. We do have numerous examples of just descriptive, narrative evaluations. (Chapter)

Overall, the implications for evaluation will be profound – it will strengthen the credibility of evaluators and will ensure that those with substandard practice are limited in opportunity. (EDÉ-L)

Despite these optimistic views, challenges were noted by those raising concerns that a system of professional designation may not only fail to improve evaluation quality but may ultimately lead to deleterious effects. Some people stated that systems of professional designation could lead to diminished quality and rigidity:

> If successful in promoting the idea that only certified evaluators are able to conduct evaluation, it would also reduce the amount of useful evaluation being undertaken. (EDÉ-L)

> I oppose, given the importance of creative thinking in evaluation, trying to make a credential a qualification for work. Over-dependence on credentials can create a certain rigidity, as the price of some minimum level of qualification. (EDÉ-L)

One participant identified deficiencies in current practice that may actually be exacerbated by professional designation.

> Recent emphasis has shifted from evaluation to monitoring and performance measurement. Such indicators of program success are preferred because they are quick and relatively inexpensive to implement. But are they a product of a somewhat lax tendency among evaluators to look for answers where the data are more easily obtained rather than where the full truth lies.… Before one can rely on short-term measures, their ability to predict long-term outcomes must be validated. Unfortunately, professional designation will likely exacerbate this problem because it will focus on a lowest common denominator of evaluation skills. Simplistic methods cannot provide the serious research that competent evaluation requires. (Partner)

In addition, another individual believed that quality evaluation work might be undermined by virtue of having been produced by a non-certified evaluator, despite the fact that the work actually could be superior on many levels.

Enhanced validation of evaluation as a profession

Some of the remarks, generally positive, were directed at implications for the field. The credibility of both the profession and individual evaluators would be enhanced.

Parmi les avantages évoqués :

- Offrir une plus grande visibilité à l'évaluation
- Augmenter la crédibilité de la fonction
- Maintenir la pérennité de la fonction (Chapter)

> Pro:
> -Move the profession towards its identification as a unique profession with unique skills
> -Promotes many to a level of leadership and mentorship or others
> -Spearheads the profession into larger organizations
> -Networks the profession
> -Celebrates the achievement in the profession (EDÉ-L)

> The professional profile of evaluators would be raised…. The move to professional designations may help clearly define what evaluation is and is not and provide opportunities to ask "What do you want evaluation to be?" (Chapter)

One contributor on EDÉ-L provided a caveat, that departure from the three pronged approach put forward by the Consortium would run the risk of diminishing this benefit. In his words,

> The three-prong system as a whole demonstrates that evaluation is more than a practice, that it is a profession that people support, enter into and grow into… A simpler system of membership and credentialing would suggest that evaluation is a junior activity that is unable to define itself at the senior, most professional level. (EDÉ-L)

To the argument that a professional designation would be very exclusionary, a counter response pointed out that this is to some extend always the case when one distinguishes between levels of competency or knowledge.

> …. a designation will be no more elitist or exclusionary than a university degree.

> Although I believe the Council's skepticism about my time-estimate was unfounded, it did not in any case suggest that a valid body of knowledge was impossible. (Which is just as well, since it would be necessary to have largely the same body of knowledge for selecting the university programs whose completion would result in the "credentialing") ...(EDÉ-L)

Constraints related to diversity in the field

A counter perspective to the enhancement of the professional image of evaluation, either at the individual or professional level, is that a system of professional designation could lead to sever constraining influences. Ultimately, we may be witness to a significant narrowing of the field, according to some. In general, remarks laid out in this respect were grounded in community sector evaluation. In the words of some of those raising the concerns,

> Professional designation will define who is to be legitimately considered an evaluator. It will also, more disturbingly, define who is legitimately considered not to be an evaluator, and by extension what is legitimately considered to not be evaluation. Professional designation will involve carving out a particular piece of practice territory and assigning ownership of it to an elite group who meet a self-defined set of requirements. In my view, we should be doing the exact opposite: rather than keeping evaluation to ourselves, we should be giving it away. (EDÉ-L)

The same contributor went on to foreshadow some potentially significant unintended exclusionary consequences.

> Moreover, the line-drawing is likely to have exclusionary and discriminatory effects…. Over and above the elitism and the self-congratulationism evoked by notions such as credentialing boards (shorthand for this is "middle-aged white guys in suits protecting their turf" - I need not go further as I'm sure you are already sensitive to this perception), I believe that adopting designation will disproportionately exclude those at the margins of the fields (those who most need to be reached with support and resources!): part-time evaluators who hold other responsibilities (1), evaluators outside of central Canada (2) and evaluators in smaller organizations without a long history of evaluation or where evaluation is not valued and (again, where need is greatest!). Those that are excluded will find it more difficult to access the crucial supports that CES can provide, such as professional development, awareness of standards, and a sense of belonging to a

community (3). We need to embrace our margins and at every opportunity, widen our inclusionary borders. (EDÉ-L)

The risk of the profession becoming uni-dimensional and the narrowing of the field were echoed by other individual and chapter contributions to the dialogue. Another interesting take on the issue of inclusiveness is the suggestion that a system of evaluation professional designations may actually lead to the effect of driving evaluation underground. That is to say, we observed a general sentiment that folks currently working in evaluation may opt not be become certified but continue to practice anyway. Those with specialization and training in economics and engineering were specifically mentioned by two contributors. Another comment sums up the argument nicely.

> If we place restrictions on the name 'evaluator', then people will adapt and come up with something else to call themselves. Witness the use of the term 'counsellor', 'therapist', 'consultant' in the area of psychological services and you'll see how people get around this and the market forces will support this adaptation based on costs alone. (EDÉ-L)

One chapter brief expressed concern over the effects that an exam-based approach or accreditation program may have on diverse evaluation approaches:

> Par ailleurs, plusieurs pièges sont à éviter dans la mise en œuvre du système de titres professionnels. Les examens d'agrément et le processus d'accréditation risquent de ne pouvoir tenir compte de la diversité des approches en évaluation.

The same respondent continued by emphasizing the importance of considering the diversity of the evaluation field:

> En développant le système, il faudra garder à l'esprit que pour un grand nombre de membres, l'évaluation se pratique dans un domaine particulier: éducation, santé publique, services sociaux, développement économique, etc. Le processus de désignations professionnelles doit avoir suffisamment de flexibilité pour s'adapter à différents domaines d'application de l'évaluation. (Chapter)

Running counter to at least some of these arguments were thoughts about attracting new blood to the profession, the focus of the next sub-theme.

With regard to diversity in the field, it was also mentioned that particularly in government, people and positions change frequently, making it difficult to see the field as a desirable long term career.

> In my experience in the Ontario government, people in evaluation get little support and are routinely moved to more important program delivery/management jobs. At one point a policy was implemented that required Ministries to submit evaluation reports annually to Management Board. No one told them that the two people who were to receive those reports had been moved on to elsewhere and not replaced.

Implications for recruitment and renewal

As the argument goes, according to some participants, enhancing the professional image of evaluation would help to raise awareness about it and attract new interest in

terms of career choice. In the ideal, the move toward professional certification or credentialing would help to stimulate the development of training opportunities and these would heighten even further the profile of evaluation as a *bone fide* profession and career choice. Several commentators offered a positive view in this regard, including this person:

> [A 3-pronged system of professional designations] tells this to evaluation practitioners, to evaluation users and to students who may be considering evaluation as a career; a student who sees that there is a clear path to accessing the evaluation profession and a goal of certification that they can strive for is more likely to take this career seriously than if the discipline remains shapeless and ill-defined. (EDÉ-L)

The sentiment was echoed in a chapter brief,

> Professional designations will improve the availability of evaluation professionals by clearly defining this as a viable career path – more intentional instead of accidental evaluators.

One contributor noted that

> ….as with a university degree, potential employers and clients will likely use it in recruitment, and to the extent they do so, it will be an incentive to evaluators to upgrade their knowledge and

> possibly their experience. It will thus help to achieve the professional development objective.

Yet, as is the case with most of these consequence sub-themes, alternative opinions were offered. In the present case, concerns were raised about long term impact on not just recruitment to the profession, but to CES member roles. The following quotes illustrate the concern raised by a few participants.

> It is my view that certification would reduce the number of people interested in joining the CES to those who wanted to pursue careers in evaluation and only those that could afford the increased cost. (EDÉ-L)

> Although the intent of professional certification/designation is to develop a standard, too rigorous of a credentialing process will have a negative affect on the evaluation community so I recommend a simplified approach. (EDÉ-L)

> A related issue is that of evaluator supply, shown to be a serious concern both for current evaluation clients and in terms of the next generation of evaluators. I find it illogical to think that setting up additional barriers to accessing the evaluation field will increase the supply of evaluators, especially in the short term. This likely should be tested further, but I would argue that there is a risk that professional designation will further strangle evaluator supply in Canada. (EDÉ-L)

Additional concerns pointed to the role of managers in recruitment of evaluators and assessment of relevant skills.

> …managers may have the admin savvy but are not always educated in data collection and analysis. We need evaluation skills to be taught and certified to define the trade of

evaluation. Otherwise people float into doing evaluations without knowing what they are doing.

Implications for the professional society

Several contributors commented about potential favourable and unfavourable fallout to CES as a consequence of a decision to pursue professional designation. The point was made that CES has an opportunity to demonstrate leadership globally in this respect. For example,

> The issue of professional recognition has a currency in CES that is unlikely to be found elsewhere globally. (EDÉ-L)

> The evaluation profession in Canada is highly regarded, world wide and needs to take a leadership role in professionalizing evaluation. Norms and standards adopted in other realms (OECD, World Bank, UN), Japan established certification and many organizations and jurisdictions are defining training requirements for evaluation programs. (Chapter)

One downside issue that was listed was associated with a decision to use interim measures in setting up a certification system. Specifically,

> … any method of designation risks diminishing the esteem with which the CES and designated evaluators will be regarded if it depends at the outset on interim measures that deliver less in the way of quality assurances than can be delivered before the required educational supports can be implemented. (Partner)

Exchanges on the CES Website posit practical consequences for a professional society.

> There seems to be arguments against credentialing/certification not on the principle of it but rather for practical reasons. Some of them seem to say they do not have the confidence in the CES to pull it off.

And the requirement for CES to

> Decide first if we want to be a profession.....a real profession.... or is it an association we want: a group of like-minded practitioners and researchers. The latter describes more or less adequately what the CES is today: a trade association (short of a better word) and a good one at that! It is largely a network that comes together through annual gatherings where practitioners exchange, show off their wares and socialize.. Its excellent publication is another important gathering of sort. Both of these manifestations are really "professionally" done. But if we know what a profession is, however a great organization CES happens to be, and I think it really is, our CES falls short (EDE-L)

> Life is evolving rapidly and getting more complex and evaluation as a discipline of review must keep up. Dispersed or scattered as it is now, evaluation will evolve thanks to the ingenuity and commitment of individual evaluators. But that informal process could be helped and innovation could be accelerated if the CES was going to transform itself as a profession with the duty of pushing the frontiers of knowledge in the discipline and ensuring its body of knowledge is shared and adopted by the membership. It could be said only the critical mass of a profession will bridge the islands of innovation, keep the membership at the state of the art and even contribute to raise it higher. (EDE-L)

Some other potential undesirable consequences for CES were mentioned above but we repeat them here for continuity. First, the development and establishment of a system of professional designation runs the risk of transforming CES from one that is supportive of its members in the interest of fostering good evaluation to a policing organization. On the other hand, maintaining the status quo by not moving forward runs the risk of diminishing CES leadership profile in the Canadian evaluation community, particularly if other organizations such as government proceed with the development and installation of evaluator certification. Contributors argued passionately that if CES does not move ahead with professional designations, it is inevitable that others will. In fact, TBS has been identified as having taken steps in the direction already.

Legal issues

Finally, some participants raised various legal implications of the decision to implement a system of professional designation. These comments were really quite heterogeneous. One person wondered about the legal implications for non-certified members. Another responded to concerns about people fraudulently using a CES designation. Mentioned above was this person's reference to 'certification marks'.

> I don't think we (the Consortium) heard from any organization that [certification marks were] inadequate. Indeed, it seemed that the threat of going to court with, thanks to the "marks", a very high probability of success was enough to prevent almost all intentional fraudulent use. (EDÉ-L)

Another person was of the view that a the credentialing system posed by CES National Council would be less subject to legal threat than would be certification. The reference presumably was to CES being sued by unsatisfied applicants. Finally, one of the chapters voiced the concern that legal issues and implications had not yet been thoroughly explored.

Summary

The integration team, in developing this report, has been committed to the provision of a balanced synthesis of the input from CES' consultation on professional designations. Our intention has been to remain neutral and descriptive and to represent the discourse in the voices of those participating in the consultation, whether through individual public submissions, private emails, or through collective responses generated through local Chapter consultation exercises or from partner briefs. Our analysis of the results emerged into four main categories or themes as follows.

- *Professional designation options*: thoughts about what professional designations might look like and arguments either for or against specific approaches. Comments and concerns generated were grouped into sub-themes: professional designations in general, exam-based certification, the concept of voluntary certification, educational and experience-based credentialing, and other less

frequently addressed issues. The section ended with a description of initiatives currently under development with TBS that have significant implications for CES.

- *Rationale*: reasons for or against establishing a system of professional designations. Issues raised were: demand for professional recognition and identication by evaluators, the multidisciplinary nature of evaluation as a domain of professional practice, roles for the professional society, environmental forces at play, the needs of employers and purchasers of evaluation services, among others.

- *Implementation strategies and challenges*: suggestions, comments and concerns about the business of developing and establishing a system of professional designation. Discussed here were: implementation strategies, fiscal and human resource costs, evaluator competencies, access to training and development opportunities and other issues.

- *Consequences*: reflections on the probable effects of establishing a system of professional designation, or not. The sub-themes that emerged were improvement in evaluation quality, enhanced validation of evaluation as a profession, constrains related to diversity in the field, implications for recruitment and renewal, implications for the professional society and legal issues.

Regardless of the issue or the sub-theme under discussion it is fair to say that significant diversity in opinion exists among the contributors to the consultation process. To that end, the consultation has succeeded in raising in undeniably thorough fashion the issues that must be taken into account as a basis for deciding for or against embracing the establishment of a system of professional designations as an overt objective for CES. We sincerely hope that this document, coupled with further input from the town hall meeting session will help National Council to make an informed choice on behalf of the CES membership and the Canadian evaluation community. We also hope that the members of the Canadian evaluation community, whether individual or organizational, will benefit from a deeper understanding of the issues as a result of this report.

References

Canadian Evaluation Society National Council. (2006). *Request for proposals: Fact finding regarding evaluator credentialing*. Ottawa: Author.

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Gauthier, B., Halpern, G., McDavid, J., Long, B., Love, A., Borys, S., et al. (2006). *An action plan for the Canadian Evaluation Society with respect to professional standards for evaluators*. Ottawa: Authors.

Halpern, G., & Long, B. (2007). *Interview results professional designations for evaluators*. Ottawa: Authors.

Huse, I., & McDavid, J. (2006). *Literature review: Professionalization of evaluators*. Victoria: University of Victoria.

Long, B. (2007). *Minority report with respect to professional designations for evaluators*. Vancouver: Author.

Appendix A:
Letter of Invitation to CES members for consultative input

Dear CES member:

CES National Council invites you to participate in a web-based consultation process using our national listserv EDÉ-L (Evaluation Dialog Évaluation – Listserve) http://evaluationcanada.ca/ -l/ -l.html or through Member Services Committee jimcullen99@msn.com .

The questions guiding consultation are:

Should CES establish a system of professional designations for evaluators?
Why/why not?

If so, what should it look like?
Multi-tier?
Certification?
Credentialing?
Other?

Issues that you may wish to take into consideration may include at least the following:
- benefits;
- costs (fiscal, human resources);
- feasibility;
- utility;
- regional sensitivities;
- availability/access to educational opportunity;
- employer demands;
- agreement about essential evaluator competencies;
- implications for local CES Chapter(s);
- implications for evaluation in Canada;
- implications for CES globally.

Rationale and Background

Due to increasing interest among members of the Canadian evaluation community in evaluation quality assurance and in the prospect of professional designations for evaluators, CES National Council initiated in May 2006 a Request for Proposals for the development of an action plan for evaluator credentialing.

Council had in mind the development of a concrete basis for consultation around professional credentialing. In a 'credentialing' system members would be awarded professional credentials on the basis of educational and practical experience in evaluation.

The contract was awarded to a Consortium of well known and respected Canadian evaluators, headed by Gerald Halpern. The Consortium negotiated with Council to develop an action plan which would feature professional credentialing within a more protracted continuum of professional designation including exam-based 'certification'.

Council received early in 2007 the Consortium's final report consisting of (1) an action plan for professional designation (2) a supporting literature review and (3) a supporting report of an interview study of 15 professional organizations which have invoked professional designations.

Council subsequently prepared a response to this report and now requests consultative input from the CES membership via EDÉ-L http://evaluationcanada.ca/ede-l/ede-l.html or through email submissions jimcullen99@msn.com. In addition, Council is seeking consultative input from CES regional chapters, partner organizations and evaluation employers such as government and Non-Governmental Organizations.

Consultative input will be synthesized and summarized in advance of the CES National Conference to be held in Winnipeg June 3-6, 2007. At the conference, CES National Council has arranged a Town Hall meeting session from **2 p.m. to 5 p.m. on Tuesday June 5** to further discuss the issues.

Council therefore requests that consultative input be provided by **May 14, 2007** to allow for the preparation of a synthesis document.

What resources should you review and consider?

CES has made available the following support documents in 'pdf' format. Some of them include reference lists for those interested in further reading (i.e., Consortium Literature Review, National Council Response)

Original Request for Proposals
Request for Proposals for an action plan on professional credentialing was issued in May 2006. That document titled *Fact Finding Regarding Evaluator Credentialing* was issued by National Council [http://www.evaluationcanada.ca/txt/1_rfp_e.pdf .It should be noted that the contract signed by the Consortium included provisions for the development of an alternative action plan to that envisioned in the RFP, one that would situate professional credentialing within a broader continuum of professional designations including professional certification.)

<u>Consortium Action Plan and Support Documents</u>
Consortium action plan for professional designation: *Action Plan for the Canadian Evaluation Society with respect to Professional Standards for Evaluators* January 2007. The primary authors of the document are Benoît Gauthier, Gerald Halpern, and James C. McDavid, with input from 8 additional Consortium members.

Consortium action plan support document *Literature Review: Professionalization of Evaluators.* November 2007. The document is authored by Irene Huse and Jim McDavid. It is available in summary
[http://www.evaluationcanada.ca/txt/2_literature_summary_e.pdf] or complete
[http://www.evaluationcanada.ca/txt/2_literature_e.pdf] form.

Consortium action plan support document *Interview Result: Professional Designations for Evaluators* February 2007. The document is authored by Gerald Halpern and Bud Long with support from 7 additional Consortium and research team members
[http://www.evaluationcanada.ca/txt/3_interviews_e.pdf].

<u>Minority Report by Consortium Member</u>
The report titled *MINORITY REPORT with respect to Professional Designations for Evaluators* was authored by Bud Long and received by Council in January 2007
[http://www.evaluationcanada.ca/txt/5_minority.pdf]. Mr. Long is a member of the Consortium which produced the action plan.

<u>National Council Response</u>
National Council met in February 2007 to consider the information provided and to develop a response for consideration by the membership and partners in the Canadian evaluation community. This document, finalized in March 2007, is titled *Response to Proposed 'Action Plan for the Canadian Evaluation Society with respect to Professional Standards for Evaluators'* and is authored by CES National Council
[http://www.evaluationcanada.ca/txt/6_council_e.pdf]

How can you participate in the consultation process?

If you have not already done so, you can join the EDÉ-L listserv on the CES website (see below). EDÉ-L (Evaluation Dialogue Évaluation– Listserv) is a forum similar to EVALTALK sponsored by the American Evaluation Association that is familiar to many evaluators world wide. You may use the following link to join EDÉ-L

http://evaluationcanada.ca/ede-l/ede-l.html

Once you have logged on, go to the topic 'Consultation on Professional Designation' and provide your input. You can make your opinions known as well as comment and interact with others who have joined the discussion. The discussion will be in both official languages.

Alternatively, you can provide private feedback to Jim Cullen, Chair of Member Services Committee by sending an email to jimcullen99@msn.com. Be sure to type 'Consultation on Professional Designation' in the subject line.

Provide your input by **May 14, 2007** in order to ensure that it will be considered in the preparation of the synthesis paper.

You can participate also by attending the CES Town Hall meeting, scheduled for **June 5, 2007, 2 p.m. to 5 p.m**. at the CES National Conference. The session will involve short presentations by Consortium and Council members followed by extended discussion and input from the floor. Discussion at this meeting will be recorded for future consideration.

How can you join EDÉ-L?

Go to the website of the Canadian Evaluation Society and under 'Resources' click 'EDÉ-L mailing list'.

Click 'Join or leave the list (or change settings)'

Enter your email address and name and click 'Join the list'

You will then be notified as follows:
"To confirm your identity and prevent third parties from subscribing you to a list against your will, an e-mail message with a confirmation code will be sent to the address you specify in the form. Simply wait for this message to arrive, then follow the instructions to confirm the operation."

Once you confirm your identity you will be able to log on to EDÉ-L at any time. You can customize your subscription to EDÉ-L to suit your needs.

To join the consultation discussion, locate the topic "Consultation on Professional Designation" originally posted in March 2007. You will then be able to review comments posted by other members and to reply to them or post your own comments.

Your input is needed.

We are at a critical juncture and decisions arising from this consultation process will have long lasting implications for the evaluation profession in Canada. Your input on these important matters is needed. Weather you choose to share your thoughts publicly through EDÉ-L http://evaluationcanada.ca/ede-l/ede-l.html or privately through Member Services jimcullen99@msn.com, please do so prior to **May 14, 2007.**

We look forward to hearing from you!

Frankie Jordan
President CES

Appendix B:
List of partner organizations and agencies to which request for consultative input was sent

Altruvest Charitable Services
American Association of Fundraising Counsel
American Association of Grant Professionals
ARNOVA
Association for Healthcare Philanthropy
Association of Charitable Foundations
Association of Fundraising Professionals
Auditor General of Canada
Mount Royal College
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Canada
California Association of Non-profits
Canadian Administrators of Volunteer Resources
Canadian Association of Gift Planners
Canadian Policy Research Networks
Canadian Social Analysts Limited
Catholic Education Centre
Duke University
University of Ottawa
CentrePoint
Charities Aid Foundation
Charity Village
CIVICUS
Community Foundation of Ottawa
Community Foundations Canada
CSTIER
Data Recognition Corporation
University of Manitoba
Laurentian University
University of Saskatchewan
Ecole nationale d'administration publique
Dusquesne University
University of Calgary
Focus on the Global South
Grantmakers for Effective Organizations
HR Council for the Voluntary/Non-profit Sector
Imagine Canada
IMPACS
Independent Sector
Institute of Charity Fundraising Managers
Institute on Governance
Interface Institut für Politikstudien
International Association for Public Participation
International Association for Volunteer Effort
International Center for Not-for-Profit Law
Carleton University
International Society for Third-Sector Research
Joint Committee for Standards in Educational Evaluation
London School of Economics
National Centre for Citizenship and Volunteer Management
National Committee of Planned Giving

National Council of Non-profit Associations
NCSU
NEA
York University
NSBA
NSF
OPPAGA
PAVR-O
Private Foundations Canada
University of Western Ontario
Children's Services
Queens University
REL Solution Inc
Réseau Circum
Claremont Graduate University
Dalhousie University
Social Planning Council of Ottawa
Murdoch University
The Aspen Institute
The Canada West Foundation
University of Indiana
University of Victoria
The Centre for Social Justice
The Commonwealth Foundation
Western Michigan University
The Ford Foundation
Harvard University
The International Development Research Centre
The North-South Institute
University of Texas
Topeka Public Schools
Toronto Rehabilitation Institute
United Way/Centraide
Universalia
University College of the Fraser Valley
University of Alberta
University of Maryland
University of Victoria
University of Victoria
Voluntary Gateway Portal
Volunteer Ottawa
Grant MacEwan College
YMCA
YWCA
Memorial University of Newfoundland
Université de Moncton, New Brunswick
Uniiversity, Nova Scotia
Algonquin College, Ontario
University of Prince Edward Island
Concordia University, Québec
University of Regina, Saskatchewan

Appendix C:
Coding Scheme: CES Professional Designation

DESIGNTATION	WHAT IS IT? Comments about professional designations: types, plans for implementing, structure, requirements.
CERT CRED LICENCE ACCRED STATUS QUO SPECIAL DESIG MEMBER DISPUTE VOL-CERT GRAND-P OTHER…	Certification (exam-based) Credentialing (education/experienced-based) Licensure (including legally reserved title) Accreditation of training or pre-service programs. Do nothing, keep status quo Specialization recognition. Unspecified system of professional designation (general) Member designation (accept guiding principles of CES) Dispute resolution mechanism Voluntary certification (non-certified person can still practice) Grandparenting Emergent codes for other forms of designation. (Specify and communicate to team members via email)
RATIONALE	WHY DO IT (OR NOT)? Comments about the rationale, impetus, and motivation for implementing (or not) a system of professional designation.
EMPLOYER ROLE-PS RELATION EVAL-D ENVIRON RESOURCE DISCIPL OTHER…	employer demands e.g., need for quality assurance for evaluation role of the professional society relation to other professional societies demand for professional recognition/identity by evaluators environment in which evaluation is practiced resource availability to support move to professional designations multiple disciplines, career paths of entry into evaluation

IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES	CHALLENGES IN DOING IT. Issues listed either in support of or as arguments against specific forms of designation.
STRAT COST-F COST-HR FEAS REGION ACCESS E-COMP REVIEW OTHER…	implementation strategy for system of professional designation costs (fiscal), financial costs to members costs (human resources), time feasibility regional sensitivities availability/access to educational opportunity essential evaluator competencies, knowledge and skill requirements review/revision mechanism to be installed for changes over time
CONSEQUENCES as ISSUES	CONSEQUENCES OF DOING IT (OR NOT). Consequences, effects, implications of implementing (or not) a system of professional designations as issues listed either in support of or as arguments against specific forms of designation
BEN LIAB UTILITY IMPL-CH IMPL-CES IMPL-CAN IMPL-GLB LEGAL OTHER…	Benefits such as evaluation quality assurance Liabilities or unintended negative/deleterious consequences utility and usefulness of having system of professional designations implications for local CES Chapter(s) Implications for CES implications for evaluation in Canada implications for CES globally Legal or litigious consequences Emergent codes for other issues associated with prospects for professional designation. (Specify and communicate to team members via email)

Appendix D:
Submission Summary Form
(one page per submission, cut and paste template)

ID #:

Data source: ❐   EDE-L
(check one) ❐   Email
           ❐   Chapter brief
           ❐   Partner brief

Overall position/opinion (check one):
        ❐   Move to exam-based certification in near term
             o   Combination (e.g., membership, credentialing, certification)
             o   Specialization in addition to basic certification
        ❐   Move to education/experience-based credentialing in near term
        ❐   Maintain status quo
        ❐   Mixed/unclear
        ❐   Other (specify): Legal mechanism for reserved title.

Codes: List designation and issue codes applied and number of unique instances

Example: *BEN (2) (two separate benefits of pro designation identified)*
                   IMPL-CH (1) (one implication for CES chapter specified)
                   REGION (3) (three separate regional issues specified)

LICENCE (3)
BEN (2)
UTILITY

Comments: Analyst's brief comments of issues, comments, suggestions, etc., that are
        worthy of note.

Appendix E:
List of CES Chapters submitting briefs

Alberta Chapter
British Columbia (BC) Chapter (2 submissions)
Manitoba Chapter
National Capital Chapter (NCC)
New Brunswick Chapter
Newfoundland and Labrador Chapter
Northwest Territories (NWT) Chapter
Nova Scotia Chapter
Ontario Chapter
Prince Edward Island (PEI) Chapter
Société québécoise d'évaluation de programmes (SQEP)

Appendix F:
List of partner organizations and agencies submitting briefs

(Note: Some partner organization responses may have been included as Email or EDE-L input. Only those explicitly self-identifying as an organizational response are included here.)

Natural Resources Canada
TNS Canadian Facts
Universalia Management Group Ltd.
University of Saskatchewan
Goss Gilroy Inc.
Groupe des responsables en analyse et en évaluation de programme
Treasury Board of Canada, Secretariat*

* Input received via face to face meeting