

**SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION:
CONDUCTING A SOCIAL AUDIT OF A COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

JENNIFER HOLDEN

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Department of Educational Studies

The University of British Columbia
Vancouver, Canada

Date September 18, 2000

ABSTRACT

Social and ethical accounting, auditing and reporting (SEAAR) is a process with a range of tools and techniques that enables an organization to measure, account for, understand, report on and improve its social performance over time.

Before 1993, British Columbia's post secondary education institutions implemented public policy and operated with a level of autonomy that enabled them to meet the needs of their students, employees and distinct communities. After 1993, public policy aimed at increased efficiency, effectiveness and accountability centralized major aspects of human resource and labour relations policy in British Columbia's public sector. This thesis describes the process, the results and the implications of conducting a social audit to assess the social performance of one particular community college.

During the years 1991 – 2000, the College grew; diligently balanced its budgets through significant entrepreneurial efforts and employees remained committed to their students and the purpose of the College. However, as entrepreneurial efforts increased, it was apparent that the increased productivity had stretched the capacity of employees to deliver services and the consequences were evident. The use of sick leave increased with a concomitant increase in the incidence of short and long-term disability leaves. More employees reported feeling stressed and expressed less satisfaction about their work at the College.

Social auditing is about accountability. Its stakeholder process complements traditional strategic planning processes. Within the context of a public sector organization, a process of social auditing, previously used in the private sector, was adapted to evaluate a broad range of organizational issues related to human resource policies and managerial practices.

The College had a foundation of human resource policies, practices and programs that had achieved some of their purposes over time, and the social audit clearly identified where improvements were required. Key findings included the need to attend to workload and work design issues that were creating stress, the need to refocus performance evaluation, professional development and to enhance programs that recognized the contribution of employees. Training, particularly in the area of technological skills was recognized as critical for ensuring that employees were prepared for workplace changes. In particular, the social audit provided feedback on communication processes and identified improvements necessary to enhance open and transparent decision-making. Health and wellness programs were recognized as key to restoring balance to employees' work lives and reducing stress.

A number of recommendations from the social audit were integrated into the College's *Strategic Plan 2000 – 2003*, and funds were allocated during the College's 2000 – 2001 budget process. In June 2000, the Board of Governors allocated additional funding to manage issues related to workload and stress that arose from the strategic plan and the social audit.

Through a reflective process, the research enabled a human resource practitioner to develop and implement a process of social auditing, examine and understand the effects of centralized public policy on human resource management and labour relations policy in British Columbia's public sector and make recommendations for improvement to human resource policy in one of British Columbia's community colleges.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

For many, work is an important part of life. The values and policies of an organization affect the quality of working life, but are rarely measured. Social and ethical accounting, auditing and reporting (SEAAR) is a process by which an organization can account for, report on and improve its social performance over time. Social auditing is a portfolio of tools and techniques to measure, understand, report on and ultimately improve an organization's social performance. Social audits are about accountability and sustainability. Conducting a social audit in the public sector is relatively rare in Canada, but new initiatives in accounting, auditing and reporting on an organization's social performance are increasing and social auditing is one method that has been used in a number of organizations in Canada, England and Europe.

Accountability, synonymous with sound financial performance and good management, might result in balanced financial statements, but at what cost to an organization in terms of its social or environmental performance? An organization's financial statements may be balanced, there may be reports of significant profit or surplus, but the work lives of employees may lack balance because of numerous factors that are affecting the workplace. Employees report working harder with heavier workloads, there are demands for increasing productivity, and employees express less satisfaction with their work. Companies claim that human resources are their most important assets, and the notion of human resources as intellectual capital is common in some organizations. If organizations ignore their social and environmental performance and only pay attention to their financial performance, can they be sustainable in the long term?

Social and ethical accounting, auditing and reporting is a generic process that describes a variety of approaches that include "a regular, externally verified process to understand, measure and report on an organization's social performance" (Gonella, Pilling and Zadek, 1998, p. 91). For ease of reading, and from this point forward, the acronym SEAAR (Social and Ethical

Accounting, Auditing and Reporting) will be used to refer to a number of ways to audit an organization's social performance. The acronym CSR will be used to refer to the term Corporate Social Responsibility, which is becoming a predominant term in Canada and the United States of America.

The process of SEAAR connects issues of governance, leadership, change, human resources and human rights. For the purpose of this research project, a process of SEAAR, called social auditing using a stakeholder approach, was adapted to assess a range of organizational issues including human resource policies, programs and managerial practices of a particular organization. By aligning the social audit with a strategic planning process that was underway at North Island College, a range of organizational issues was examined. The following describes the integration of a process of social auditing and strategic planning and examines the College's commitment to its mission, vision and values as they are translated and embedded in the College's policies, practices and programs.

This research project developed a process of social auditing that measured and established benchmarks for the organization's social performance and examined the effectiveness of the organization's management practices and human resource policies and programs. Input was invited from three stakeholder groups on a variety of organizational indicators, and an interim report informed the organization's *Strategic Plan 2000 – 2003*.

The Process of Social Auditing Used at North Island College

During the period November 1998 to February 1999, employees at North Island College collaborated in the development of a social audit questionnaire that consisted of identifying indicators of management practices and human resource policies and programs that affected the work life of employees. Seven broad areas of policy and practice were identified and statements

were approved that described aspects of employee satisfaction; wages and benefits; communications, consultation and decision making; health, safety and physical environment; workload and stress; diversity and equality of opportunity; and mission and values. A final optional section identified aspects of employee responsibility that were external to the organization. This approach ensured that many of the organization's values were assessed through their embeddedness in a particular policy, program, or practice.

As a human resource practitioner, I discovered the SEAAR process while conducting research on the concept of organizational justice and reflecting on what kind of process might contribute to an organization that was fair in its dealings with employees. Organizational justice is defined as "people's perception of fairness in organizational settings" (Greenberg, 1996, p. vii). In reflecting on the SEAAR process, it appeared to me that I might be in a better position to assess the effectiveness of policies and practices and determine their contribution to fairness and organizational justice if there were a way to understand how various stakeholders are affected by management practices and human resource policies.

The College first conducted a review of its human resource practices in 1990, resulting in the establishment of a human resource office, and the hiring of staff. If the SEAAR process could be used to assess the policies and programs that had been implemented since 1990, it might indicate where improvement was needed.

The social audit questionnaire, developed collaboratively and administered in the spring of 1999, embraced the principles and processes of SEAAR and was based on the evolving work of organizations such as The New Economics Foundation and The Institute of Social and Ethical AccountAbility in the United Kingdom. The questionnaire emulated models used by organizations such as The Body Shop (United Kingdom), VanCity Savings (British Columbia,

Canada), Sbn Bank, (Denmark, Europe), and other organizations practicing various forms of social and ethical auditing.

The New Economics Foundation (NEF) is an independent research and policy institute established in 1986 in the United Kingdom. It concentrates its research on economics related to social and environmental issues and has been a leader in the development of practical methodologies for social auditing. I attended workshops presented by the New Economics Foundation in the fall of 1998 and received support in principle to use the processes of the New Economics Foundation if credit were given where appropriate. The Institute of Social and Ethical AccountAbility is an international organization that is committed to strengthening social responsibility and ethical behaviour and promotes best practice in the area of SEAAR. It is responsible for the development of standards and accreditation procedures for professionals who are planning to practice in the field of SEAAR. Both organizations were supportive and provided documentation and assistance to queries about SEAAR throughout this research project. Later, Business for Social Responsibility, a US company provided invaluable information about progress in corporate social responsibility in the United States.

In my capacity as Director of Human Resources and as a human resource practitioner studying the process of SEAAR, I introduced social auditing to some of the employees of North Island College during a series of meetings about my research and the doctoral program in which I was enrolled at the University of British Columbia.

The social audit was conducted in March, 1999 and an interim report was presented to the Strategic Planning Committee in late April, 1999. On May 7, 1999, ninety-two employees, students and members of the Board of Governors engaged in a strategic planning process where the interim report was used, along with other information, to draft strategies and goals for inclusion in the *Strategic Plan 2000 – 2003*. In the fall of 1999, three employees representing

faculty, support staff and administration received copies of the results of the social audit questionnaire for their group, and developed independent reports suggesting improvements. These were presented to the President of North Island College for information and consideration.

The process of social auditing that was implemented at North Island College did not always appear orderly. Due to my ongoing responsibilities as Director of Human Resources for the College, and because of my enrolment in the doctoral program at the University of British Columbia, conducting a social audit with its own complexities was an addition to an already busy life. When I understood the opportunity that SEAR presented, I aligned my research with the College's strategic planning process, and I developed a social audit questionnaire through a collaborative process but without the benefit of input from focus groups. When I introduced the SEAR process, a number of change initiatives were under way, and these, along with other challenges in the internal and external environment, provided a dynamic context for a study of social auditing.

The change initiatives and challenges included:

1. The organization was in a period of transition as it refocused its management committee structure and governance processes.
2. The organization was involved in an advocacy plan to secure additional government funding to stabilize its operations.
3. The entrepreneurial division of the College continued its aggressive pursuit of additional contracts that would help the College balance its budget while providing educational opportunities for the people of communities affected by changes and downturns in their local economies. Entrepreneurial efforts at the College add approximately 7 million dollars of revenue to the College's annual budget of 17 million dollars. The profit on 7

million dollars' worth of entrepreneurial activity is approximately \$550,000, and is used to stabilize the College's budget from year to year.

4. The Strategic Planning Committee was developing the organization's third strategic plan.
5. The College is part of British Columbia's post secondary education system and is part of a system of shared responsibility for establishing labour relations and human resource policy at the sectoral level and translating this to the local college level. While the provincial policy brings equitable practices to the system, it does so with a concomitant loss of autonomy and without regard for the individual cultures of the different organizations.

Following a period of consultation and collaboration with many employees, the social audit questionnaire was pilot tested, and after the final changes were made, all employees on the payroll in February 1999 were invited to participate in its completion (Appendix A).

The social audit was designed to review a broad range of information about the function of human resources. By collaborating with members of the College, I intended to reduce any personal bias that might have occurred if the social audit were designed by me in isolation. The collaboration and consultation raised the interest of the College community, enabled me to speak about my research, and ensured that important issues were included. The collaborative approach resulted in a wider range of statements being identified and included in the social audit questionnaire and resulted in a better, albeit larger, social audit questionnaire.

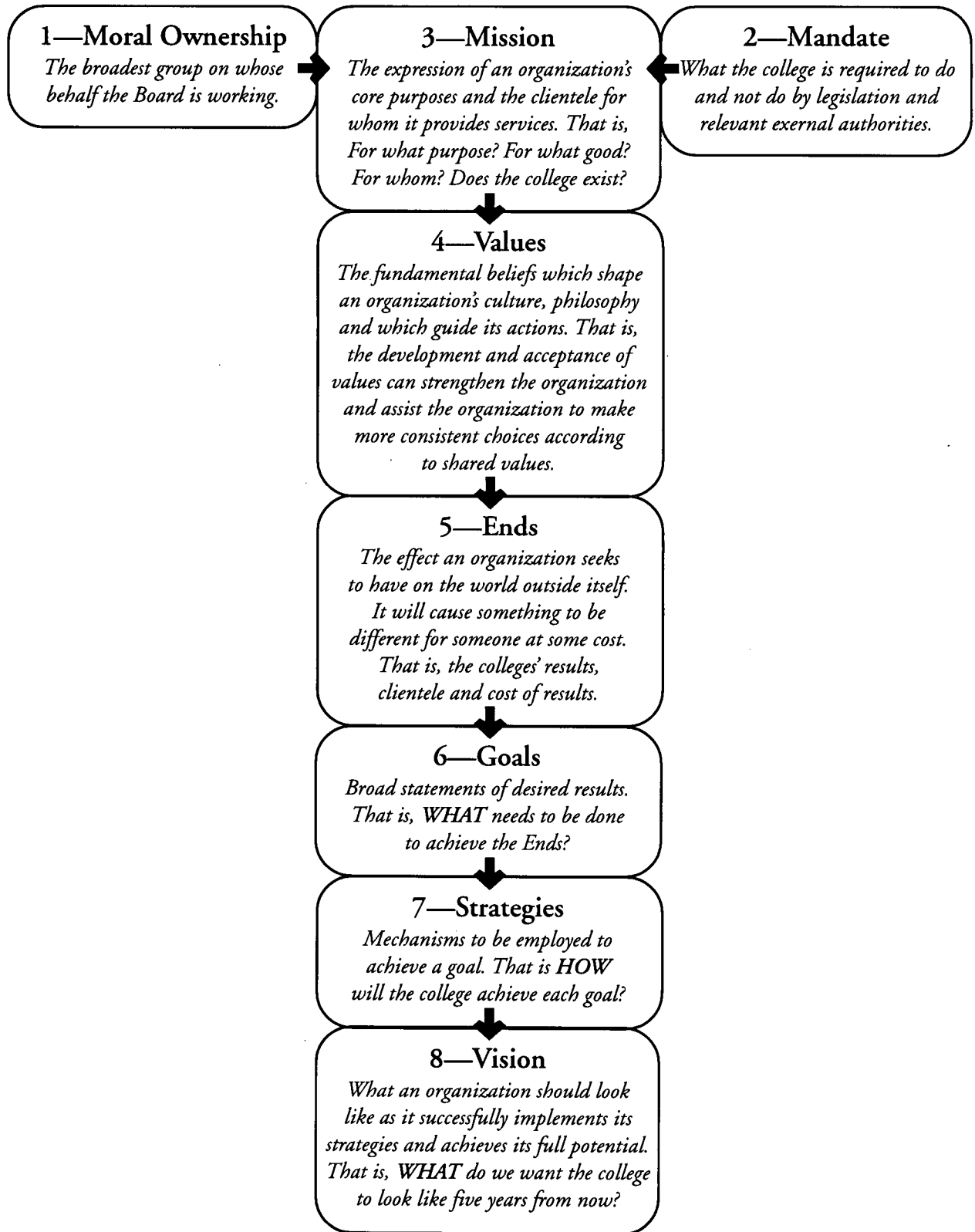
When an organization agrees to a process of social auditing, it embarks on an organizational review that lends itself to a cycle of continuous improvement. Disclosure of the interim results challenged representatives of the stakeholder groups to consider the results and reflect on how the findings might ultimately contribute new strategies and goals necessary for the achievement of the College's mission, vision, and values. Many organizations complete surveys,

but very few commit to a full disclosure of the positive and negative findings. This is one of the differences between the process of social auditing and other climate review processes. The disclosure of negative findings motivates change and improvement by focusing clearly on where improvement is needed.

The Strategic Planning Process

Within a framework of Policy Governance, the Board of Governors of the College provides a model for developing a new strategic plan. Within this framework, the Board provides and monitors overall direction about what is to be accomplished at the College and ensures that the College carries out its legal mandate. The Board defines its accountability through its moral ownership of the College, which is described in terms of the broadest group on whose behalf the Board is working. Figure 1 depicts the Policy Governance approach to strategic planning used by the Board of Governors to develop *Strategic Plan 2000 – 2003*. The Board first establishes the moral ownership and then the mandate of the College. The Board then articulates the Mission of the College. Once the Mission is determined, the Board determines the Values that will shape the college's culture, and guide its actions (*Strategic Plan 2000 – 2003*, 2000, p. 5). The purpose of the directional arrows in Figure 1 is to guide the order of activities.

Figure 1 Policy Governance Approach to Strategic Planning

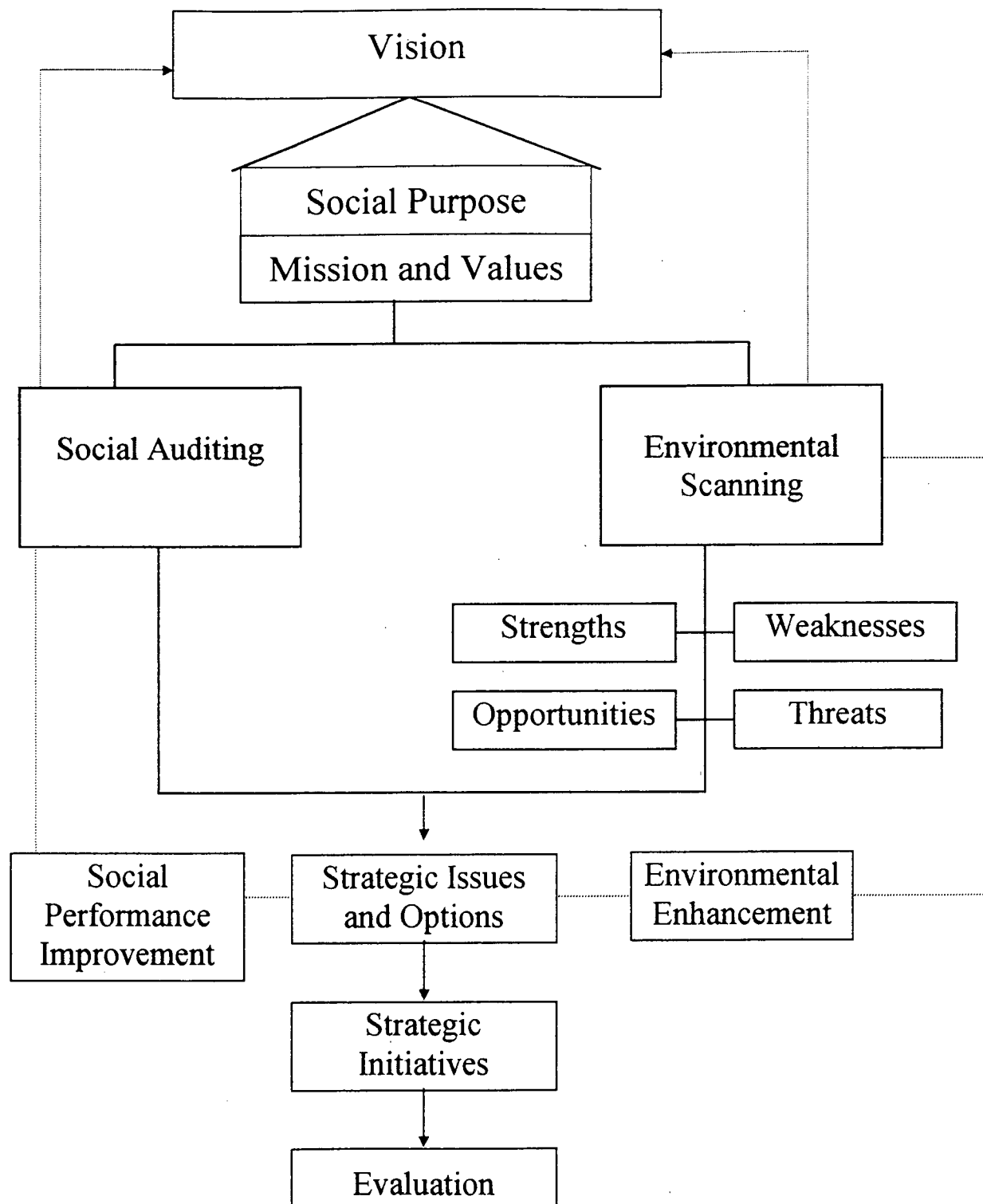


Source: North Island College, Board of Governors Strategic Planning Process, 1999

The Board is aware that the mission statement is affected by the moral ownership of the College. This requires the Board to establish a mandate that gives the College its broadest direction – the Mission. The College’s Mission Statement defines the College’s core purposes and the clientele for whom it provides programs and services and supports decision making during times of uncertainty and decreasing resources. The Vision Statement portrays an ideal and unique image of the College’s future. The Values are the fundamental beliefs that shape the College’s culture and philosophy and guide its actions. Values are intended to strengthen the College and assist the College to make consistent choices (*Strategic Plan 2000 – 2003*, pp. 4 – 9).

Finally, the most specific level of direction provided by the Board is in the form of statements called Ends, which describe the effects the College seeks to have on its world. When the Ends are achieved, “it will cause something to be different for someone at some cost” (*Strategic Plan 2000 – 2003*, 2000, p. 5). The Ends establish long-range outcomes; they are strategic, subject to evaluation, and more likely to change than the Mission and Values (*Strategic Plan 2000 – 2003*, 2000, p. 5).

Figure 2 is a strategic guidance model that includes the development of a vision and mission statement and uses an environmental scan for the collection of information described as the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats known as a SWOT analysis. The strategic guidance model has been adapted to show that the results of a social audit are complementary to the traditional “SWOT” analysis and strengthens the College’s ability to evaluate its social performance.



Source: Adapted from Lorenzo, A.L. (1993). Strategic Guidance Model, p. 57 - Managing Uncertainty: Thinking and Planning Strategically, in *Changing Managerial Imperatives*, Alfred, R.L. & Carter, P. (Eds.). (1993). Jossey-Bass Publishers: San Francisco.

The Environmental Scan produced for the College's strategic planning process consisted of a review of external factors that might influence the planning context of the College including the following:

1. Information technologies and the likelihood that the College would continue to be influenced by technological communications.
2. Growth in the service sector and knowledge work with a move to focus educational programming on changes in employment opportunities.
3. Shifts in the resource sectors, the closing of mines and mills and a significant downsizing in the fishing industry have changed the economy of the communities in the College's region.
4. The environment and the acknowledgement of the natural environment in which the College is located and the potential of contributing to the future by educating students on environmental issues.
5. The College's awareness of preparing students for participation in a global economy that requires certain literacy, numeracy and technology skills, cultural awareness and language skills.
6. Changes in demographic factors and an ageing population.
7. Training and retraining needs for people in transition.
8. Increasing competition for the delivery of education.
9. Increasing costs.
10. The ability of the College to meet the needs of First Nations peoples.

The Environmental Scan provided an external review of the challenges facing the College. The social audit and its focus on factors related to the management of human resources enabled the College to look inward.

The Issues

The development and implementation of policies and programs are an integral part of the human resource function. While some of the College's policies and programs appeared to be effective, not all of them met their intended goals. New and updated policies were required to meet emerging needs. This research project had several features. First, it provided an opportunity for me to examine and use a process of SEAAR as a human resource practitioner and to reflect on the extent to which SEAAR might be used to evaluate and enhance an organization's social performance. Second, it was inclusive, in that employees assisted with the design of a social audit questionnaire that would be used to assess and improve various human resource policies and managerial practices. Third, the timing of the research project enabled me to align a social audit with a strategic planning cycle, facilitating an evaluation of the complementary nature of both processes. Fourth, while not planned as part of the process, it provided me with an opportunity to introduce the process of SEAAR to human resource practitioners in British Columbia's post secondary education system. Fifth, the research project enabled me to examine the implications of changes in public policy that centralized the accountability for human resource and labour relations policy external to North Island College. Finally, it provided me with information that could contribute to the improvement of human resource policy and practice.

The Questions

When I first learned about the process of SEAAR, I thought that it might provide information that would justify improvements to various human resource policies and practices. Accordingly, in the beginning, I proposed that the following three questions frame my research:

1. How might the process of social auditing be adapted and implemented in a community college?
2. What are the implications of conducting a social audit in a community college?
3. What recommendations were made and what actions were taken because of implementing a process of social auditing?

As the research continued, I reflected on my progress, and a fourth question relating to public policy in the area of human resource and labour relations decision making emerged and guided the study:

4. What are the implications of conducting a social audit aimed at improving an organization's human resource policies and practices when public policy has centralized the accountability and decision making for human resource and labour relations policies?

The research project, through the analysis of the results of a process of SEAAR and reflection on public policy was used to support recommendations and processes that promised to improve work life at the College. It enhanced my understanding of the policy framework for the management of human resources in British Columbia's public sector.

Organization of the Thesis

The thesis is divided into seven chapters. Chapter One introduces the research project, the process of SEAAR and its purpose, and the complementary nature of social auditing and strategic planning. Chapter One describes the problems and the questions to be addressed. Chapter Two describes the context in which the research took place and reviews the internal and external context from a number of viewpoints – governance, economic, educational – and the

context of human resource management from an organizational, sectoral and provincial viewpoints. Chapter Three is a review of the literature pertaining to the process of SEAAR and the use of SEAAR in the United Kingdom, Europe, Canada and the United States of America. It includes a summary of the evolution of corporate social responsibility in Canada and the United States and reviews the alignment of SEAAR with traditional strategic planning processes. Chapter Four describes the methodology for modifying a process of SEAAR and conducting an audit of a community college's social performance from the viewpoint of three stakeholder groups – faculty, support staff and administrators. It describes the composition of the stakeholder groups that participated in the social audit and reviews the limitations of the research project. Chapter Five describes the findings from the social audit. Chapter Six analyzes the linkages between organizational, sectoral and provincial public policy and the effects of centralizing human resource management practices. It analyzes the social audit's contribution to the strategic plan that resulted in workplace improvements. Finally, Chapter Seven presents a summary of the research project and the recommendations flowing from the social audit, and reflects on lessons learned. A number of appendices follow that contain various documents pertinent to the research project, along with a number of tables and graphs that report various responses to the social audit questionnaire.

CHAPTER TWO: CONTEXT

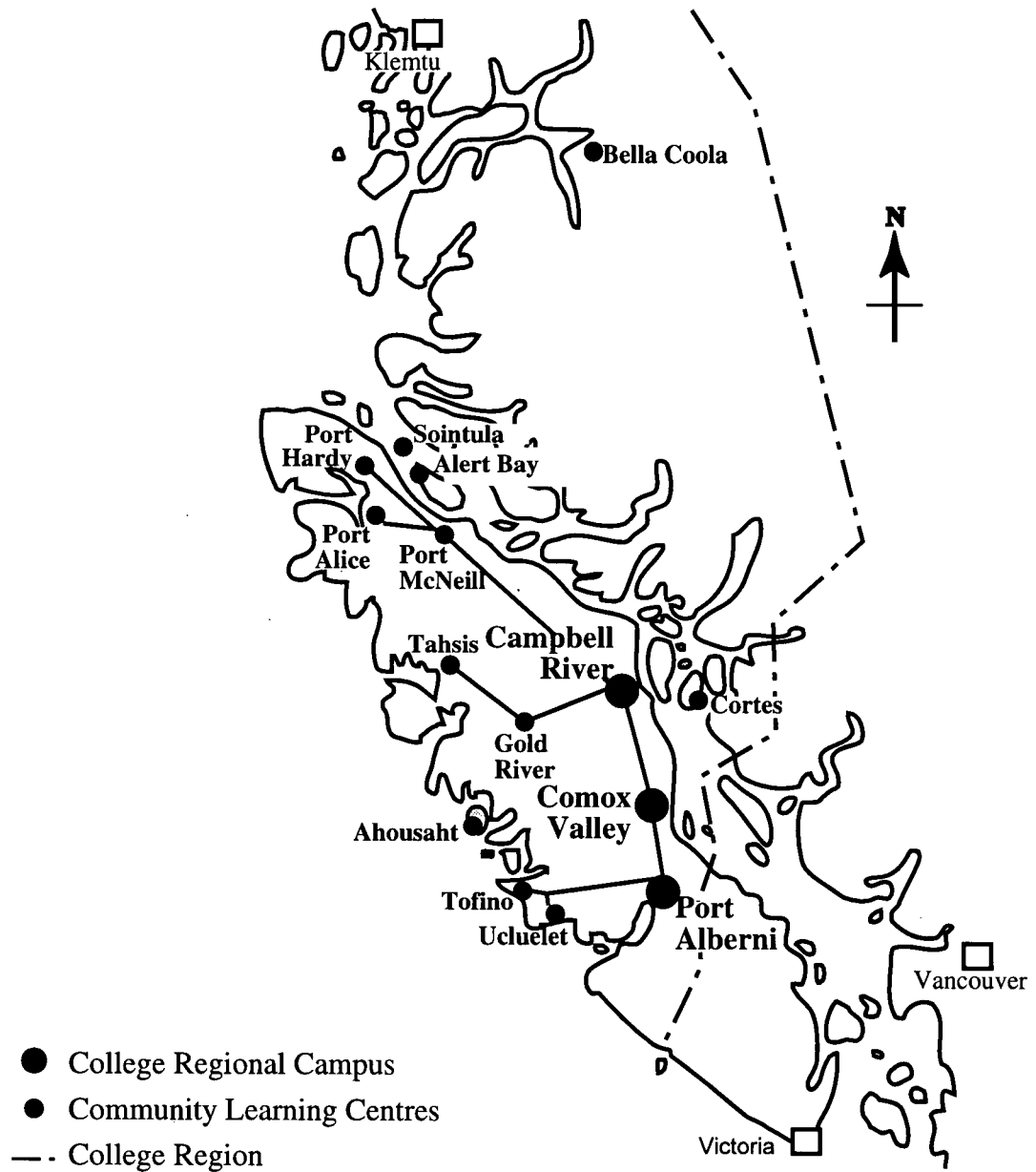
The research project was conducted at North Island College, one of the six small community colleges in British Columbia's post secondary education system that consists of universities, university-colleges, community colleges, institutes and agencies. Chapter Two describes the internal context of North Island College at the time that the social audit was conducted. It describes the external environment, including changes in public policy that affected the management of human resources because of the *Commission of Inquiry into the Public Sector* (1993); changes in the economy; and changes in post secondary education because of *Charting a New Course* (1996), the Ministry's Strategic Plan.

Internal

North Island College serves over 12,000 students per year; many already work. The average age of students is 26 and this is reducing as more high-school students graduate and complete their first year or two of studies at the College. While the trend is changing slowly, the typical student often takes less than a full-time course load, or is enrolled in a specific career or vocational program leading to job readiness. Depending on the economy and job availability, students take full-time or part-time education that meet their individual needs. The College provides a broad range of comprehensive programming leading to the granting of certificates, diplomas and associate degrees in vocational, career/technology, trades and academic studies. It has a large component of developmental programs that provide skills upgrading and qualifications for entry into other programs, accommodation for special-needs students, community education courses, and educational programs that facilitate workplace training (*Charting a New Course*, 1996, p. 11).

The College provides education and training opportunities for a large number of adult residents on the northern part of Vancouver Island and it is challenged by geographical constraints and limited financial resources. The College is funded to serve just over 2,000 full-time students. This translates to over 8,000 individual students in regular programs and more than 4,000 students in continuing education courses in fifteen different physical locations covering 80,000 square kilometers. In spite of many new and changing policy initiatives, North Island College continues to provide relevant, job related training in more than fifteen communities as indicated on the map of the northern part of Vancouver Island showing the various locations of College campuses and community learning centres (Figure 3).

Figure 3 **Map of North Island College Region**

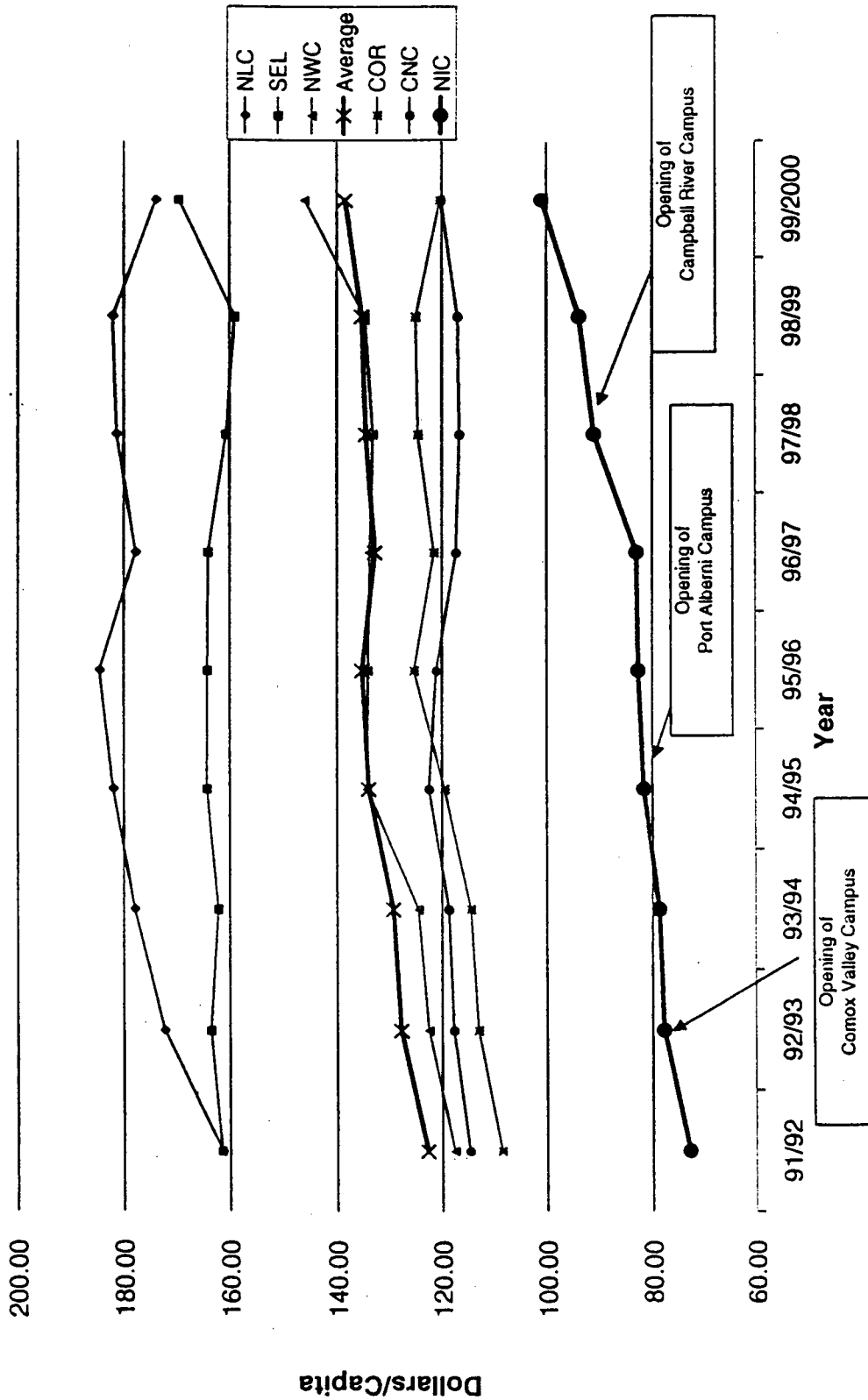


Source: North Island College. (2000). Department of Communications

North Island College has grown significantly since 1991. Figure 4 is a graph that explains the size of the College based on dollars per capita in comparison to five other colleges of similar size in British Columbia. The graph indicates that an aggressive building program resulted in new campuses in the Comox Valley in 1992, Port Alberni in 1994, and Campbell River in 1997. During this period, the number of students doubled to the equivalent of 2,000 full-time equivalent students, employees increased from approximately 100 to 424, many in part-time positions. The graph indicates that the College receives funding that is considerably lower than other small colleges in British Columbia. The graph is based on the number of people living in the North Island College region and the dollar amount that the college receives for each person in the region in comparison to the same numbers for other small colleges. This level of funding and the growth between 1991 and 1997 has significant implications for the College's infrastructure.

Figure 4 Growth of North Island College Since 1991

Dollars per Capita 1991/92 to 1999/2000



Source Data: 1) Small Colleges Project Report: IT Weninger, Sept. 1997 2) History of FTEs 1991 - 1999, Ministry of Advanced Education, Training & Technology, Sept. 1999 3) Regional District July 1 Population Estimates 1991-2000, www.bcstats.gov.bc



The College receives a base annual budget of seventeen million dollars from the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology. Entrepreneurial activity and other educational initiatives contribute between five and seven million dollars annually to revenues, and the profit from the entrepreneurial activity is used to balance the College's budget. Balancing the budget through the profits of entrepreneurial activity has consequences for the College. The increased activity has stretched the capacity of the College's employees to serve both students and clients.

One location has experimented with forms of virtual education that enabled students to enrol in colleges and universities throughout North America. At that particular location, faculty provided support services to students as an adjunct to the faculty hired to teach specific courses at the other educational institutions. Virtual education systems require additional funding to upgrade and maintain computers and software, and to ensure that faculty and students have the resources that support success.

The following describes the College as it prepared to begin a process of strategic planning in consultation with stakeholder groups that included members of the Board of Governors, students, faculty, support staff, administrators, and individuals from local communities. The College is unsettled; it has struggled with internal issues made more complex by leadership structures that included multiple models of governance - Policy Governance at the Board of Directors' level; shared governance through Education Council with its ten faculty members, four administrators, four support staff and four students; and shared decision making on various joint union-management committees. Representatives of all three-stakeholder groups – faculty, support staff and administrators – are members on the majority of committees including the recruitment of staff, faculty and administrators. In addition, a co-management

model for developing human resource and labour relations policy operates through the Post Secondary Employers' Association and the Public Sector Employers' Council.

In 1999, a review of the internal management committee structure of senior management resulted in the implementation of separate councils responsible for educational and operational management, and a third council, President's Council, is responsible for the overall policy direction of the College. Education Council is based on a shared governance model and consists of ten members of faculty, four administrators, four support staff and four students; it is responsible for educational policy.

Organizations face a number of critical business challenges, and human resource practitioners have been called on to contribute strategically while performing routine and administrative functions. Challenges include globalization; revenue growth, technology, intellectual capital, and change - all of these apply to the College (Ulrich, 1998, p. 126).

Technology, intended to enhance productive work settings, adds the capacity to offer video-conferencing, Internet courses, and distance delivery of education. Much of the College's business and communication is conducted by electronic mail and this is the preferred mode of communication at the College (Toresdahl, 1997, p. 68). Technology often affects workload – not always positively. For example, electronic mail enhances communications and allows for immediate information and responses on urgent issues, however it can interfere with productive time for working on important initiatives that have a long-term view. The cost and time to maintain the knowledge of employees and upgrade technology increases each year.

The notion of human resources as assets of the organization has been used to justify a variety of programs that may benefit employees; some organizations are advancing the notion of human resources as intellectual capital in a knowledge economy. The use of intellectual capital and the notion of knowledge as a direct competitive advantage are critical factors for an

educational organization. Ulrich states, “successful companies will be the ones that are the most adept at attracting, developing, and retaining individuals who can drive a global organization that is responsive to both its customers and the burgeoning opportunities of technology” (1998, pp. 126 - 127). The College is committed to recruiting employees who have the knowledge, skills and abilities to meet the changing needs in education. Employees who are lifelong learners and who are flexible and willing to change are valued. The College has had trouble recruiting and retaining employees. Ulrich, writing about non-stop change, and a need for continuous learning and innovation, says, “companies will need to be in a never-ending state of transformation, perpetually creating fundamental, enduring change” (Ulrich, 1998, p. 127).

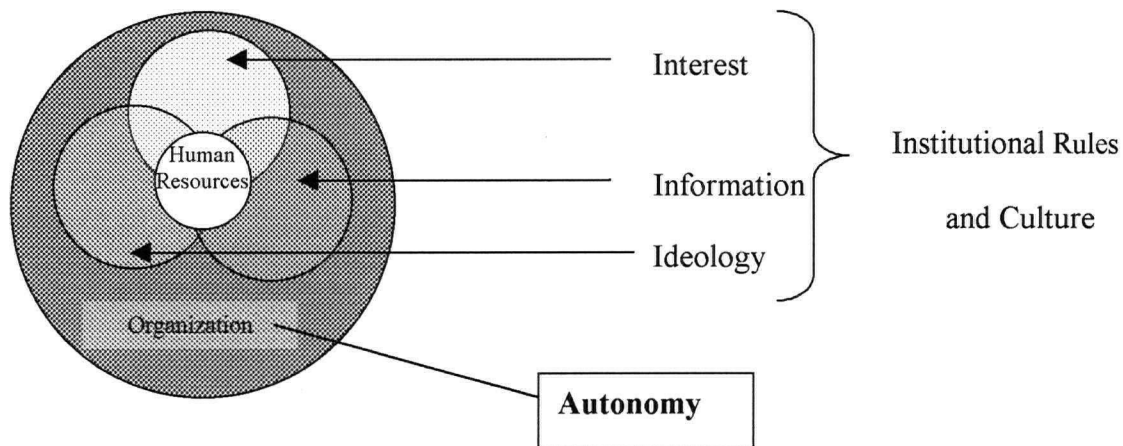
Governance and Policy

Before 1993, each of the colleges, agencies and institutes of the British Columbia post secondary education system operated somewhat autonomously in terms of their educational and administrative mandate. After 1993, public policy influenced centralized decision making concerning human resource and labour relations. The Post Secondary Employers' Association of British Columbia (PSEA), and the Public Sector Employers' Council of British Columbia (PSEC) became more influential and directive in system-wide collective bargaining, benefits, administration and executive compensation. Ultimately, colleges and unions at a local level have a role that influences but is indirect in these processes.

Figure 5 presents an analytical framework adapted from the work of Weiss and shows the interaction of ideology, interests, information and institutional rules and culture and the potential of each to affect decision and policy making in an organization (1995, p. 575). Weiss's diagram is used because it describes how policy was developed when the College had more autonomy. The diagram shows that human resource practitioners gather information, and are aware of the

ideology, the institutional rules and the culture of the organization. Collaboration would be with other key members of the organization such as unions, administrators and groups who may have a personal interest in the development of particular policy. The organization acted as an autonomous entity.

Figure 5 Policy Development at the Level of Organization (Before 1993)



Source: Adapted from Weiss, C.H. (1995). The four I's of school reform: How interests, ideology, information and institution affect teachers and principals. Harvard Educational Review, 65, (4), 571-592.

Public policy has always guided the objectives of post secondary education but before 1993, the College had more autonomy in its human resource practices. There have always been multiple levels of policy directives affecting human resource and labour relations policy and human resource practitioners were held accountable through their surveys of particular geographic or industry related markets to ensure that salaries, benefits and working conditions were competitive. Various levels of government have controlled the costs of wages through funding mechanisms and legislation aimed at stabilizing the costs of wages and benefits.

In June 1977, the Public Employers of British Columbia (PEBC) was created to act as a public sector labour relations coordination agency. Public sector employers voluntarily participated in the PEBC's operation but it did not provide the government with any real fiscal

control and it was eventually disbanded in 1988 due to a lack of funding (Korbin, 1993, p. C3). Following its closure, an informal network of human resource practitioners in the post secondary education system continued to meet to exchange information related to human resources and labour relations issues under the auspices of the British Columbia Association of Colleges (now the Advanced Education Council of British Columbia). Korbin noted that even when public sector organizations have their own boards of directors, the government has no direct control over policies and collective agreements that were adopted (1993, C3). Korbin wrote:

Employers sometimes exceed government's assigned budget expenditure for their sector or organization with the decision they make regarding compensation for excluded staff and negotiated wage settlements for bargaining unit employees. When this occurs, government is left with the choice of paying the excess required funds or accepting a cutback in services (1993, C3).

In the early 1990s, Korbin states that agreements were reached in the colleges, the health sector, and in some crown corporations without adequate analysis (1993, C8). Wage adjustments in one sector affected other sectors and Korbin noted that each public sector employer was "forced to reinvent the wheel" in terms of its human resource and labour relations practices and that this was inefficient (1993, p. C8).

A number of policy directives flowed from the *Commission of Inquiry into the Public Service and Public Sector in British Columbia* (1993). In supporting the need for change, the report called for "substantial efficiencies and more equitable and progressive human resource practices" (1993, p. 6). As a result, the development and implementation of human resource policies related to health and welfare benefit plans, the monitoring of wages and benefits for administrators and significant changes in collective bargaining policy were centralized at a sectoral level under the auspices of the Post Secondary Employers' Association. Korbin noted that the model would be based on the following fundamentals:

- The value in the autonomy of public employers.

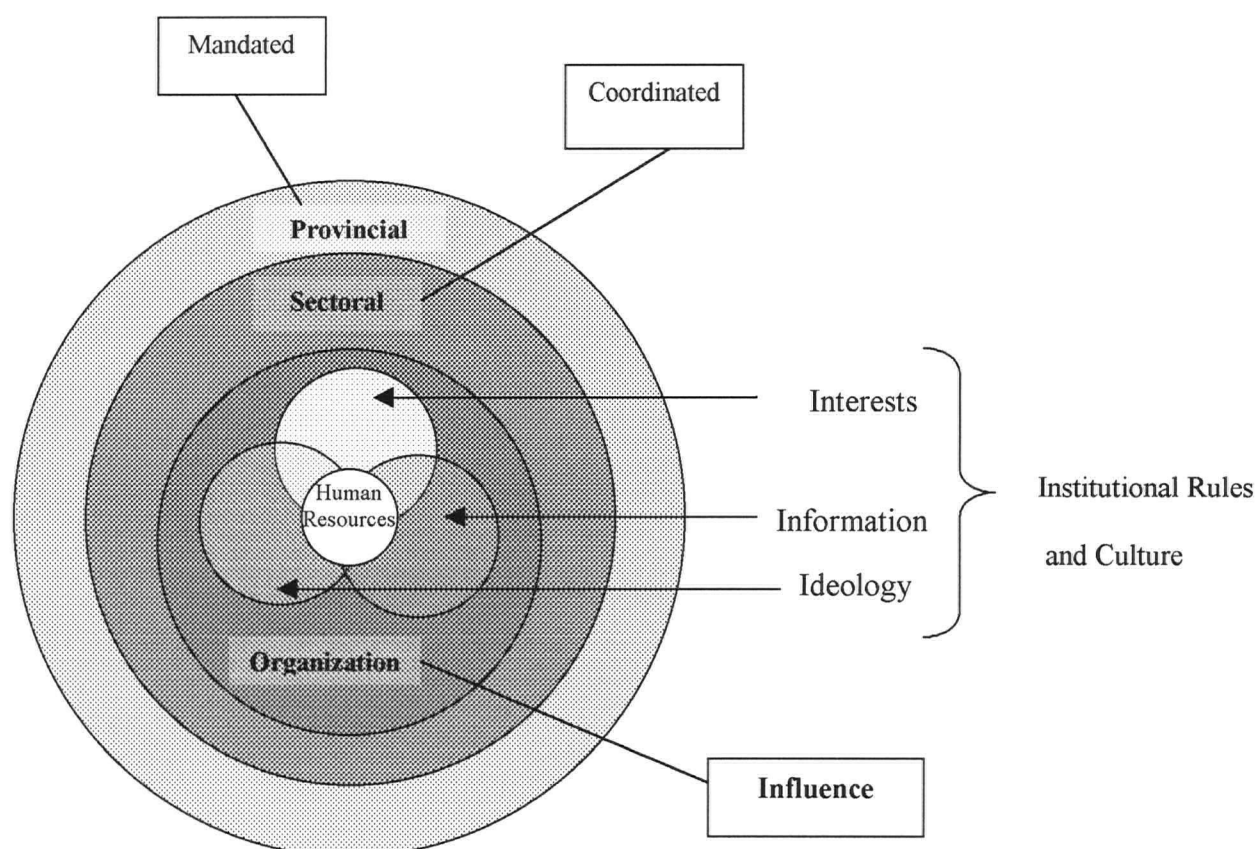
- The government's right and obligation to exercise stewardship over its expenditures and the outcome of those expenditures.
- The appropriate linkages that must be established between and among the various public sectors, and between the leadership of management in each public sector and government (1993, p. C10).

Under this co-management model, government and public sector employers jointly manage public sector human resources within the financial constraints imposed by the government. In this model, the government would "establish the financial framework for collective bargaining and exert influence to ensure that public sector employers understand and accept government's objectives and take responsibility for achieving them" (Korbin, 1993, p. C10). Public sector employers would "identify their needs as well as those of the community they serve in order to assist the government in making its decisions" (Korbin, 1993, p. C10). The report did not advocate for complete centralization of government control over public sector human resources, as there was a good policy reason for providing freedom to public bodies to create dynamic and vital organizations (Korbin, 1993, pp. C10 – C11).

Korbin called for a balance that consisted of value for money to the taxpayer, accountability and efficient utilization of resources, fair treatment of all employees, and respect for the distinctiveness of the particular communities each organization served (Korbin, 1993, pp. C10 – C11). In 1993, British Columbia's Commission of Inquiry into the Public Service and Public Sector recommended significant changes to the delivery of public services. In reporting the need for change, the commission stated, "substantial efficiencies and more equitable and progressive human resource practices could be instituted" (Commission of Inquiry into the Public Service and Public Sector, 1993, p. 6). Since that time, the public sector has rationalized and redefined human resource and labour relations policy based on effectiveness and efficiency.

Figure 6 represents the post 1993 model with policy mandated at the provincial level, coordinated at the sectoral level and with organizations influencing and implementing the mandates of government within a model of increased accountability and reduced autonomy.

Figure 6 Policy Coordination - Organization, Sector and Province – Post 1993.



Source: Adapted from Weiss, C.H. (1995). The four I's of school reform: How interests, ideology, information and institution affect teachers and principals. *Harvard Educational Review*, 65, (4), 571-592).

In the post secondary education sector, a number of human resource functions have already been reviewed and revised, and significant changes have occurred in the structure of collective bargaining and in the negotiation of health and welfare benefits. These changes have not been simple. The move to centralize a number of human resource functions at a provincial

level means that a human resource practitioner directs a human resource function with due consideration to the organization's interests, ideology, rules and culture within a system's culture. At the sectoral level, a human resource practitioner uses whatever influence is necessary to ensure that the integrity of the organization's unique mission, vision, culture and values is represented when efforts move toward a singular systems strategy. Policy has been designed and implemented without full consideration of the differences between the cultures of the colleges, institutes and agencies and sometimes the fit is not exact. While increased collaboration and cooperation enable human resource colleagues to work together, the results are increased complexity, more ambiguity and less control over the management of some human resource policies in each post secondary education institution.

During this same period, several province-wide 'intermediary bodies' – directed by boards made up of constituency representatives – were created to deal centrally with matters that had previously been the responsibility of institutions (Gallagher, 1999, p. 6). Gallagher states:

A tension between centralization and decentralization of decision making has been a continuing part of the history of community colleges in British Columbia, as elsewhere. That tension had for some 20 years been healthy and roughly balanced, as these institutions – and governments – experienced a variety of internal and external pressures over time. During the 1990s, however, as institutions struggled to keep their heads above water financially yet expand levels of service, the moves to centralization of decision making and constituency representation on policy bodies shifted the balance markedly toward centralization of direction, management, and control of the system (1999, p. 7).

Economic

British Columbia's economy has undergone fundamental change in the past decade, and this has affected the economies of the fifteen different communities served by North Island College. In 1997, the *Small Colleges Project Report* indicated that most small colleges faced a deteriorating financial situation and many were in a deficit position. The lack of financial

viability continues to affect the ability of some of the smaller colleges to meet all of the demands outlined in the Ministry's 1996 strategic plan (Weninger, 1997, p. 4). While colleges have been responsible for the development of their own strategic plans; these must be aligned with the Ministry's strategic plan (*Charting a New Course*).

Six colleges in British Columbia are part of a group called the "small colleges." North Island College is one of them, and the other five are Selkirk College, North West Community College, Northern Lights College, College of the Rockies, and the College of New Caledonia. They are considered small because of the size of their student enrollment, their operational grants, and they all serve the rural regions of British Columbia. When Kwantlen College, Malaspina College, Cariboo College, and Okanagan College became university colleges with degree-granting status, the "small" colleges continued their emphasis on teaching, preparing individuals for the workplace and responding to their communities. Nevertheless, an emphasis on small continued to permeate discussions regarding the formula for funding and the limitations of budget when reaching out to small communities. *The Small Colleges Project Report* reviewed the financial statements and audited enrollment reports for the six small colleges in the post secondary education system. The financial difficulties of the small colleges were attributed to a number of policy initiatives that were intended for the overall good of the provincial education system but unintended results have had negative consequences for the small colleges (Weninger, 1997, pp. 6 - 10). These policy initiatives included:

1. A funding formula based on a "weighted full-time equivalent student" and on a "nominal class size" was developed with the intention of bringing funding stability, equity and increased productivity to the college system (p. 6).
2. An initiative called "Access for All" increased student spaces in universities resulting in increased competition between the universities and colleges for students bound for

university programs. This initiative saw the decrease of utilization rates of students in university transfer programs in the small colleges (pp. 7 - 8).

3. An initiative that created Community Skills Centres was perceived as an enhancement of educational opportunity to the system and the added resources were intended to add services to areas that were perceived as not being served. The results indicate that the initiative was not successful. In some cases, the increased competition resulted in program duplication, and when students chose to enroll in different organizations offering a program in the same location, the program did not run at all or there were insufficient students for both programs. This initiative in the end reduced the potential for services to students in locations as neither institution could show a sufficient demand for programs (pp. 9 - 10).
4. The BC Benefits initiative resulted in the transfer of funding and responsibility for training social assistance clients from the Ministry of Social Services to the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology.

Post Secondary Education in British Columbia

Charting a New Course (1996) is the first strategic plan developed by the Ministry (then called the Ministry of Education, Skills and Training). It signalled that education was a high priority for the economic well being of British Columbia and suggested that the post secondary education system adopt an ethic of accountability to learners (1996, p. 58). An inter-related set of procedures, definitions and standards specified how the college, institute and agency system might fulfill its obligations for public accountability (1996, p. 80). *Charting a New Course* identified the goals of relevance and quality, access, affordability and accountability (1996, pp. 24 – 26). The first three aim to enhance the experience of the learner in the post-secondary

education system; the fourth goal, accountability, aims at measuring the performance of the system based on continual improvement and overall effectiveness and efficiency (1996, pp. 51 – 53). The vision of the Ministry's strategic plan included a college, institute and agency system that balanced economic and social demands, and ensured that the system was affordable and accountable (1996, p. 27).

The policy initiatives contained in *Charting A New Course*, describe a number of positive initiatives that are to be integrated with the mission, vision, goals and objectives of each college, institute and agency. *Charting a New Course* calls for flexibility in the system. It recognizes that the needs of learners have changed because of the British Columbia economy. However, the process of collective bargaining has also shifted, from a traditional model of organizational collective bargaining to a sectoral model where many post secondary education organizations negotiate together at a common table. One of the unintended results of this model is perceived to be reduced flexibility.

The Ministry's strategic plan calls for an education and training system that is inclusive, that encourages training and learning in educational institutes and the workplace, that focuses on the learner, is oriented to educational outcomes, and is integrated, flexible, and innovative. The strategic plan notes that the "future well-being of British Columbia will be best assured by a renewed and revitalized public post secondary system that will be able to respond to the challenges and forces of change" (*Charting a New Course*, 1996, p. 29).

Charting a New Course established twelve essential values including equity and access supported by learning opportunities that would be delivered in a fair and equitable manner to all British Columbians, regardless of gender, age, beliefs, disability, ancestry, place of origin, financial circumstances or current geographic location (1996, p. 9). The Ministry's strategic plan calls for a strategy aimed at learner success that involves communication and training initiatives

“to increase awareness of equity needs and cross-cultural understanding by all institutional members” (p. 35). It identifies overarching goals that include accountability, relevance and quality, access, and affordability in the post secondary education system (1996, pp. 2- 4).

Just as changes in education were introduced through *Charting a New Course* (1996), in 1993, *The Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Public Service and Public Sector* (1993) introduced a framework for redefining human resource policies in the British Columbia post secondary education system.

Human Resource Management

The *Commission of Inquiry* used an extensive process of consultation to “inquire into and report on ways to enhance the delivery of public services through an independent professional public service” (1993, p. iv). It reviewed the personnel and labour relations environment of the public service and public sector. The Commission reported that while there existed “a level of independence that allowed the development of a unique program profile for each institution,” they found that there was an “uncoordinated management approach to bargaining throughout the sector, and that this was echoed in many other human resource matters ” (1993, p. F34). The report stated, “issues such as executive and management compensation, pay and employment equity, personal and sexual harassment policies, and training and career development are treated inconsistently and on an ad-hoc basis among colleges and institutes” (p. F34).

The *Report of the Commission of Inquiry* stated that in order for the goals of efficiency, effectiveness and accountability in human resource matters to be achieved, greater coordination was required on human resource matters. The Commission recommended that the Government of BC enact legislation that would create or support the continuation of employers’ associations in the colleges and institutes, hospitals, municipalities, and schools (1993, p. F36). Each

association would report to the Public Sector Employers' Council, a tripartite council consisting of representatives from government, public sector organizations and associations and unions.

The introduction of the Public Sector Employers' Act in 1995 established the Public Sector Employers' Council (PSEC). The Council was charged with the responsibility of setting and coordinating strategic directions in human resource management and labour relations. Each sector of the public sector was required to establish an association that would act as a coordinating agency for all organizations within that sector. The Post Secondary Employers' Association (PSEA) was established to coordinate compensation for non-unionized employees, benefits administration, human resource practices and collective bargaining objectives for British Columbia's post secondary education system. The Commission of Inquiry into the Public Sector identified the principles of accountability, coordination, effective management of human resources, and the balancing of the employer and employee relationship as critical in bringing about the changes needed for a more effective and efficient public sector (1993, p. 2).

Prior to this, the Advanced Education Council of British Columbia (AECBC) provided a loosely coordinated approach to labour relations and human resources. The major objective of AECBC was advocacy for post secondary education and human resources and labour relations were not a high profile issue for AECBC. The creation of the Public Sector Employers' Council (PSEC) and the Post Secondary Employers' Association (PSEA) increased the government's ability to control and influence the accountability for human resources and labour relations in the colleges and institutes without resorting to direct legislation.

The Commission asserted that:

In order to create a well functioning human resource management system, organizations, institutions and individuals with authority and responsibility must be accountable for the decisions they make; this requirement applies to the government and to each component of the public sector. Authority for decision

making should be located where accountability for the decision will rest (1993, p. B3).

The commission acknowledged that the issues it addressed were fundamental to the “governing structures, missions and goals of many public institutions” and that the issues would deeply touch the “social and political beliefs of many British Columbians,” and that effective change could only be achieved “through the creation of as broad a consensus as possible” (1993, pp. B3 – B4). The costs of human resource and labour relations policy were to be controlled through consensus and coordination, while authority for decision making would be located where accountability for the decision rested.

Further changes occurred in 1994 when the College and Institute Amendment Act provided for the introduction of education councils comprised of a majority of faculty, and an equal number of students, staff, administrators and ex-officio board members. Other amendments to the College and Institutes’ Act added faculty, staff and student representation to the North Island College Board of Governors, resulting in shared governance. During this same period, the College adopted Policy Governance, a formal framework for governance at the Board level with specific policies and executive limitations that provided direction to the President.

Within this multi-layered and unionized environment, human resource practitioners are required to perform with both an organizational and a sectoral understanding in an environment that is made increasingly complex because of legal and human rights requirements. In 1999, colleges continued to collaborate on initiatives that included the coordination of provincial collective bargaining for faculty and support staff, exempt staff compensation systems, employee health care benefits and policy development in areas such as harassment, compensation and workplace safety. Although colleges are mandated to meet the unique educational needs of their

individual communities, the move to a model of standardization may eventually hinder their flexibility and ability to respond locally to their communities.

The functions of human resources and labour relations have a direct effect and are critical to the achievement of the Ministry's and the College's strategic plans. The Ministry's strategic plan states that "each institution, through its board, administration, education council, faculty, staff and students, will engender a sense of challenge, of opportunity and of commitment to work in an atmosphere of creativity and collegiality" (*Charting a New Course*, 1996, p. 64). Boards and senior administrators are required to commit to certain collegial management processes that are based upon communication, positive reward systems, quality and a flexibility that encourages all and required institutional members to think creatively and work effectively (*Charting A New Course*, 1996, p. 64).

The Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Public Service and the Public Sector stated that in order for the goals of efficiency, effectiveness and accountability in human resource matters to be achieved, the following was required:

- Much greater coordination and use of common resources on all human resource matters, including collective bargaining among the twenty (20) colleges and institutes.
- A structure to provide appropriate direction and influence from government to this sector, and
- Greater communication between the sectors [post secondary education, K – 12 education, municipal, hospitals, continuing care, crown corporations], and the rest of the public sector (1993, p. F35).

An examination of the context in which the research occurred indicates that the extent and the amount of policy change in the 1990s have been great but may not have always contributed to productivity, efficiency or effectiveness. Reduced funding and increased workloads may be contributing to incidents of increased sick leave, disability and the overall costs for health care benefits are increasing for the post secondary education system.

Wildavsky wrote:

The more the nation attempted to control public policy, the less control there seemed to be. A troublesome aspect of this expanding public sector was the feeling that unintended consequences were overwhelming the ability to cope. The larger each policy grows in its own sector, the more it insinuates itself into the man-made environment with which we must contend. More and more public policy is about coping with consequences of past policies. The more we do therefore, the more there is for us to do, as each program bumps into others and sets off consequences all down the line. In this way, past solutions, if they are large enough, turn into future problems. And who is to deal with such problems? Naturally, those people paid to work at it full time, namely the bureaucracy. That is how the bureaucratic sectors of policy become at once the strongest stokers and the most determined dampers of change (1979, p. 4).

Wildavsky stated that there may be unintended consequences of public policy and that when the nation attempted to control public policy, there appeared to be less control (1979, p. 4). There may be similarities between control and accountability. Both *Charting a New Course* (1996), and the *Report of the Commission of Inquiry* called for increased accountability resulting in more control of human resource functions.

A social audit has the ability to measure results and target improvements that would contribute to the goals of overall effectiveness and efficiency. It supports a framework of accountability by measuring employee satisfaction and “enhances an organization’s ability to provide an account of its activities both as an explicit record of the activities and as an acceptance of responsibility for them” (Henriques, 1998, p. 7). The measurement of an organization’s social performance and some of the indicators used in the social audit might be compatible with benchmarks described as key performance indicators (KPIs) suggested in *Charting a New Course* (1996, pp. 51 – 52).

Within a context that was complex and uncertain, the public policy that was developed following the *Report of the Commission of Inquiry* resulted in public sector organizations experiencing reduced autonomy for human resource management at the local level, while

requiring increased accountability at the local level and increased participation and collaboration at the sectoral level. Coordination and collaboration increased among human resource practitioners in the college, institute and agency system and at times the consequences of this were increased costs, less time spent at the local level, and important work that would have maintained the management of human resources not getting done. While working with colleagues at the sectoral level, I engaged in a process of social auditing that examined whether human resource policy and managerial practices were effective and efficient.

Chapter Two establishes a context for this research. In the early 1990s, most human resource management decisions were made with a fair degree of autonomy at the organizational level. By the year 2000, major decisions related to human resource management and labour relations' policy was made most often at the provincial level, and translated at the sectoral level for local implementation. Chapter Two examines issues related to the governance of the College, the economy of the communities in which the College is located and examines Post Secondary Education in British Columbia from the point of view of the College as a "small" college.

Chapter Three reviews the process of SEAAR and describes its evolution and use in Europe and the United Kingdom. It introduces Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), and describes how this form of social responsibility is evolving in Canada and the United States. The Literature Review describes traditional approaches to strategic planning and reviews the process adopted for use by the College. It examines the complementary nature of social auditing with strategic planning, and briefly examines Senge's learning organization because the College has identified itself as a community of learners.

CHAPTER THREE: LITERATURE REVIEW

The process of SEAAR connects issues related to governance, leadership, change processes, and human rights. For the purpose of this research, a process of SEAAR has been adapted in order to review human resource policy and programs, managerial practices and issues related to work life in a community college. The process of SEAAR was then aligned with a strategic planning process. Chapter Three describes the evolution of social auditing, its evolving nature and use by organizations in Europe, the United Kingdom, Canada and the United States, and it reviews the use of surveys that measures variables internal to the organization. It examines strategic planning processes and reviews the complimentary nature of social auditing and strategic planning processes.

Increased complexity and uncertainty requires organizations to become strategic in influencing change. In particular, in the past few years the function of human resources has become more complex and is required to be strategic in its influence of leadership and the development of human resource policy and practice that supports organizational sustainability and competitive advantage.

For the purposes of this study, in the term social auditing, "social" is considered as "relating to 'society'" through a "series of interrelationships connecting people together" (Gonella, Pilling, Zadek, 1998, p. 91). Ideally, the leaders of an organization aim to establish a structure and a culture that contribute to a working environment that fulfills both the goals of the organization and the goals of its employees and stakeholders working together in connected and healthy relationships.

Lawler and Galbraith indicated that human resource practitioners are increasingly required to align themselves with other managers in order to develop policy and participate in

“strategy making, expertise building and dissemination, opportunity sensing, and change orchestration” (1993, p. 73). In some cases, the policies and strategies fall short of their intended aims and despite the best intentions, some policies are symbolic; they lack procedure, explicit guidelines and training. One component of a social audit is to review policies and programs as part of the overall process and this review may result in the development of new and the replacement of outdated policies and programs.

Social auditing involves stakeholders; it uses an inclusive approach. Any process that encourages human resource practitioners to move beyond their roles of policy police and regulatory watchdogs and to become strategic players in creating and delivering value is a step in the right direction (Ulrich, 1997, p. viii). Social auditing may be such a step.

Leaders are increasingly being called on to be more accountable to their shareholders or to their stakeholders. The current call for higher levels of accountability is more than a call to be financially accountable; it is emerging as a call for increased social and environmental accountability. Organizations around the world are considering the possibility of extending the definition of organizational accountability to include social and environmental concerns as well as financial concerns using open and transparent methods.

While organizations fear that the disclosure of organizational weaknesses might create vulnerabilities, any disclosure, combined with the willingness to change and make improvements should offset potential negative public relations. Social auditing, in its initial stages, requires an act of courage, and many organizations are finding that the courage to change, to be vulnerable and to keep their promises to improve working conditions might be considered as good business practice by employees and investors who are interested in ethical investing. Increasingly, organizations are becoming respected for their social and ethical reporting. The following

examines the process of SEAAR and compares it with other practices currently used in organizations in Canada, the United States of America, United Kingdom and Europe.

Social and ethical accounting, auditing and reporting might be defined as a process of defining, observing and reporting on the social impact and ethical behaviour of an organization in relation to the aims of the organization's mission, vision and values. "[The concept of] social and ethical accounting is evolving as a portfolio of tools and techniques for measuring, understanding, reporting on, and ultimately improving an organization's social performance such that an organization develops and strengthens relationships with its stakeholders" (Zadek, Pruzan, & Evans, 1997, p. 4). The power of the process is not only in the information that it produces; it is in the strengthening of the relationship between the organization and its stakeholders.

The act of conducting a social audit provides information that assists an organization to understand its own practices and enables the organization to change. The principles and the practice of social auditing must be rigorously applied and must be ethical. Audits that include a stakeholder approach add to the knowledge of an organization and ensure that the organization measures itself based on the input of others as well as its own research. Social auditing is a method that enables and enhances organizational learning. When a stakeholder model is used, it is preferable that all stakeholders are included so that previously marginalized or silenced members of stakeholder groups have an equal opportunity for input. Zadek, Pruzan and Evans said that an "organization without a systematic way of understanding what it has or has not achieved is unlikely to succeed, irrespective of its aims or determination" (1997, p. 4). They said:

Virtuous but uncompetitive companies will not be part of our future. Socially or environmentally destructive companies must not be part of our future. The challenge is to create the conditions where social and environmental benefits go

hand in hand with competitive advantage. The language of ecology, learning, inclusivity and accountability lies at the heart of our vision of the business of the future (Gonella, Pilling & Zadek, 1998, p. 1).

The process of SEAAR promotes accountability in business and aims to strengthen social responsibility and ethical behaviour in organizations. While virtuous companies may not be sustainable in the future, many companies have profited from unethical corporate behaviours in the past. In times of increasing social awareness, and as individuals demand change, it is yet to be tested whether unethical companies will continue to be profitable. What is certain is that many companies are applying a triple “bottom line” approach to business – financial, social and environmental, and experiencing the benefits of such an approach.

History of Social Auditing

The first recorded use of the term *social audit* was by US academic Theodore J. Kreps in 1940. Kreps argued that companies needed to take on, and report against, wider societal responsibilities (Zadek, Pruzan & Evans, 1997, pp.16 - 17). In the 1950s, Bowen argued that companies should better understand their social impact, and that social auditors were needed to produce unbiased views of corporate social and ethical performance. At that time, Bowen thought that the process would be used for internal purposes only as a management tool (Zadek, Pruzan & Evans, 1997, p. 17). The open and transparent disclosure of today’s social auditing process would not have fit with the 1950s way of conducting business.

Goyder, writing about ‘corporate responsibility’ said, “financial auditing is a one-sided state of affairs and belongs to the days when companies were small and public accountability was secured” (1961, p. 109). Goyder thought that there was “as much need for a social as a financial audit” and argued that social auditing might provide management with a useful tool,

and the stakeholder with a basis to challenge and influence organizational practices (1961, p. 109).

In 1961, Likert suggested, "the measurement processes used in most companies measures are inadequate due to the gaps in the amount and kind of information available" (p. 61). He claimed, "it is now possible to measure such dimensions of organizational functioning as motivational forces, communications effectiveness, and decision-making processes" (1961, p. 5). Likert's book, *New Patterns of Management* is filled with the findings of many research efforts conducted at the Institute of Social Research at the University of Michigan using sample-interview survey, controlled field experiments, and refined methods of statistical and mathematical analysis.

Likert wrote,

While accounting procedures reflect such end results as production, sales, profits, inventories and percentages of net earnings to sales, much less attention is given to another class of variables, which significantly influence the end results. These variables, seriously neglected in present measurement, reflect the current condition of the internal state of the organization: its loyalty, skills, motivations, and capacity for effective interaction, communication and decision-making (1961, p. 61).

Likert stated that the practice of watching closely the level of performance of the end-result variable such as production, sales, costs and earnings led to faulty conclusions as to what kinds of management and leadership yield the best results.

Likert concluded that "employee-centered" supervisors who focus on the human aspects of employee performance are more likely to achieve higher productivity than "job-centered" supervisors who concentrated only on how the jobs should be done, instructing the employee, and monitoring the employee's performance. Likert derived most of his evidence from survey research and this was instrumental in the evolution of survey feedback as an approach to organizational development.

Like the process of social auditing, Likert's survey feedback process begins with the administration of questionnaires concerning human and organizational issues. The questionnaires are then tabulated, and the results are computed for each work unit and subunit. A consultant would meet with members of the work unit and would ask the group members to discuss the results, test the data against their own experiences, and look for solutions to any problems that might arise (Bolman and Deal, 1991, p. 169). Likert emphasized that openness, interpersonal relations, and effective groups were necessary to develop and improve effective organizations, and his work provided a foundation of social research for exploring management principles and practices that might achieve the best results in organizations at the time.

Likert predicted that an organization's need for accurate measurements increases as it grows in size, as its investments in plant and equipment increases, and as it uses more effective but more complex forms of social organization (1961, p. 70). He stated that "managers need measurements which will paint for them a full and accurate picture of their experience" and noted that this would not occur until more extensive and complete measurements are obtained (1961, p. 70). Likert cautioned that when organizations measure dimensions of organizational functioning, it is unwarranted to assume that there is or should be any correspondence in the relationship between variables and noted that the interrelationships are much more complex (1961, p. 71). This same caution is critical to measuring and understanding the various indicators of a social audit.

While the use of survey feedback processes can be helpful, the process has had a mixed response with success and failure appearing to depend on how the surveys were conducted and whether a particular organization or client accepted the results (Bolman and Deal, 1991, p. 170). Likert's work in the sixties focused on the human element, the worker, management and productivity in organizations with early models focused on structure, control and rules.

In comparing the early work of Likert to the evolving field of social auditing, it can be said that there are similarities as both seek to improve human resource practices. Social auditing is committed to stakeholder dialogue and is aligned with the concept of a triple bottom line. Social auditing aims to ensure sustainability through a balanced financial, social and environmental "bottom-line." Likert and his colleagues at the Institute for Social Research emphasized the need to consider both human resources and capital resources and noted that both were assets requiring proper management (www.users.globalnet.co.uk/~cfg/likder_is.htm, September 15, 2000).

Recently, the consulting company of KPMG conducted a survey related to Managing for Ethical Practice. One thousand Chief Executive Officers of Canadian companies and senior executives in 225 public sector organizations indicated an increased interest in the subject of assurance of ethical practice, and there is a desire to protect or enhance the reputation of companies (KPMG, 1999, p. 1). Senior officers expressed a strong desire to develop codes of ethics, and more than 85% of organizations in the survey reported having written statements of values and principles; more companies reported having formal policies in place to protect employees who report ethical or legal violations (KPMG, 1999, p. 1).

The report Managing for Ethical Practice noted that the idea of a comprehensive "social audit" is relatively new in Canada and its adoption as a regular business practice is still rare (KPMG, 1999, p. 14). In the report, participants were asked to respond to five reasons for conducting a social audit including:

1. Enhancement of public image.
2. Respond to public demands for more accountability and transparency.
3. To manage well, information is needed about the organization's impacts on society.
4. To help manage risk to reputation.

5. Stakeholders right to know the impact of an organization on society (KPMG, 1999, p. 15).

According to KPMG, the most persuasive arguments for conducting a social audit were the right of stakeholders to know the impact of the organization on society, and the value of a social audit as part of risk management (1999, p. 15). In response to the five reasons for performing a social audit, more Chief Executive Officers agreed that a “social audit” might enable the organization to measure and account for its performance and its impact on society, than conducting a social audit to enhance the reputation of the company (KPMG, 1999, p. 15).

A Description of Various Approaches to SEAAR

A number of approaches have emerged in the past decade. Gonella, Pilling and Zadek (1998) describe a number of approaches that have emerged as organizations have adapted various forms of SEAAR for their own use:

Ethical Accounting is a regularly disclosed process that is based upon shared values where stakeholders develop and design future actions through public, ongoing dialogue. This method is practiced by the Sbn Bank of Denmark and by many public sector organizations in the Scandinavian Public Sector.

Corporate Community Involved Reporting is the title that describes the illustration and measurement of community involvement policies and activities including benchmarking against other company performances. Companies such as Diageo, Grand Met, and British Petroleum practice this method.

Ethical Auditing is a regular and externally verified process undertaken to understand, measure, report on and improve an organization’s social, environmental and animal testing performance through stakeholder dialogue, and is practiced by The Body Shop International.

Statement of Principles and Values is a statement that develops, evolves and describes an organization's principles in meeting its financial, social and environmental responsibilities. This is the method developed and practiced by Shell International.

Sustainability Reporting is an evolving reporting process that reports upon progress made against sustainability principles, and was used by Interface.

Social Auditing is a regular process that might be externally verified that seeks to understand, measure, report on and improve upon an organization's social performance through stakeholder dialogue. Social auditing has been implemented at Vancouver City Savings Credit Union, Black Country Housing Association and the Co-op Bank. This process was adapted for use by North Island College.

Social Balance is a regular reconstruction and aggregation of financial data across stakeholder groups, which specifies financial costs associated with "social activities." Coop Italia and UNIPOL practice this form of SEAAR.

Social Performance Assessment is an independent review and verification of an organization's social performance, and has been used by Ben and Jerry's Homemade, Inc., a US based organization since the late 1980s.

The above descriptions are found in "Making Values Count, a research report that describes contemporary experience in SEAAR (1998, p. 21). Many organizations have adapted a process of SEAAR that fits with their culture and their operational expediencies. The most important factor is their ongoing commitment to use a process to improve various aspects of their organization. SEAAR is evolving, and there are a number of similarities and differences, as Henriques explains:

The 'ethical audit' for instance, advocated by the European Institute for Business Ethics and the Nijenrode Business School, is similar in many respects to the 'social account' method applied by Traidcraft and the New Economics

Foundation. The Body Shop's 'ethical audit', on the other hand, appears to be quite different, since it represents a combination of social, environmental, and animal testing audits. This in turn is only partly comparable to the 'ethical accounting' developed at the Copenhagen Business School and adopted by Sbn Bank, along with other companies and public sector organizations across Scandinavia. In contrast BT's recent sustainability report begins to address the issues of combining financial, social and environmental considerations as aspects of a whole. (1998, p. 4)

The process of SEAAR may take many forms, but it has common elements. The US based organization, Business for Social Responsibility, offers a number of templates that can be adapted that relate to the goals, scope, metrics and standards for social auditing. Some companies start with a comprehensive audit, but many companies find it useful to begin with smaller, focused audits appropriate to their needs (BSR Education Reports, 1999, p. 5). Business for Social Responsibility suggests the following steps be taken:

- A review of statements including mission and vision, policies, advertising and marketing materials, and other organizational documents.
- Establishment of the scope and the process of evaluation. "The scope may be as narrow as a single program, department or facility, or include all aspects of operations. Evaluations can involve surveys, interviews, dialogues, focus groups and analysis" (BSR Reports, 1999, p. 6).
- Stakeholder dialogue – establishment of the stakeholder groups, methods of inquiry and consultation.
- Identification of benchmarks.
- A review of management practices.
- Analysis of findings: This may be described in terms of what was learned – the audit may provide measures of success that are described quantitatively and qualitatively. Other reports may be descriptive assessments of the findings, including costs and

benefits, a description of the company's strengths and weaknesses in terms of policy statements and management systems; the feedback from stakeholders; and a description of issues worth exploring in future audits (BSR Report, 1999, p. 7).

- Verification of the results, sharing the findings, and repeating the process: External verification is preferred, while some companies implement SEAAR as an internal practice with an internal verification process moving to an external verification process after improving some of its policies and processes.

The above compares well with the Audit Cycle described in Figure 10, Chapter Four and aligns well with the new standard for SEAAR described in The Accountability 1000 Model (Appendix B). Organizations are beginning to embed some form of SEAAR, either through a review of their ethical practices or a review of their codes of conduct, and these reviews can be aligned with strategic planning processes. As a way of enhancing openness and transparency, some organizations are sending the results of their SEAAR reports to stakeholders and making the information available on the World Wide Web.

Henriques says that there is a tendency to use the term 'ethical' where the focus is on the deepening of organizational shared values and the term 'social' where the emphasis is on the effect of the organization on key internal and external stakeholders (1998, p. 5). Henriques goes on to say that the result of comparing the various methods of SEAAR is "messy" and that:

Confusion results not from terminological differences, but differences in the systematic application of methodologies. While Diageo has to date focused mainly on its community involvement, Vancity Savings Credit Union in Canada has included its environmental assessment within its 'social accounting and auditing' process, as do many other companies. Virtually all organizations practising some form of social and ethical accounting, auditing and reporting, on the other hand, make use of financial data, but the basis of selection and the nature of the relationship with the financial accounts and financial audit are not well defined (1998, p. 6).

Why Engage in Social and Ethical Accounting and Auditing?

From a management point of view, organizations are looking for ways to ensure that they are sustainable in the long term. They want to survive and prosper in society. Leaders and managers need to know what is happening, what people think about the organization, and how best to influence the organization through their own perspectives. Society is changing and organizations are responding to changing interests and needs. Organizations are now listening to the public interest perspective and increasingly leaders are interested in the perspectives of stakeholders. There has been a value shift in business and mere reliance on traditional command and control processes are no longer trusted. Organizations and business can play a different role in leading social change in society.

Zadek, Pruzan and Evans (1997) suggest the following reasons why organizations might consider engaging in some form of SEAAR process:

- To clarify and strengthen the values that may be found in an organization's mission statement.
- To establish a baseline for determining change and comparing changes either internally after a future social auditing cycle, or against other benchmarks.
- To learn about societal expectations.
- To identify specific problems.
- To understand what motivates staff.
- To identify areas of vulnerability (p. 31).

There is an ongoing debate as to whether ethics is a meaningful term in relation to business. Anita Roddick, one of the founders of The Body Shop, has demonstrated leadership in terms of ethics, but there are reports by others that the move to ethical auditing was "rooted in an

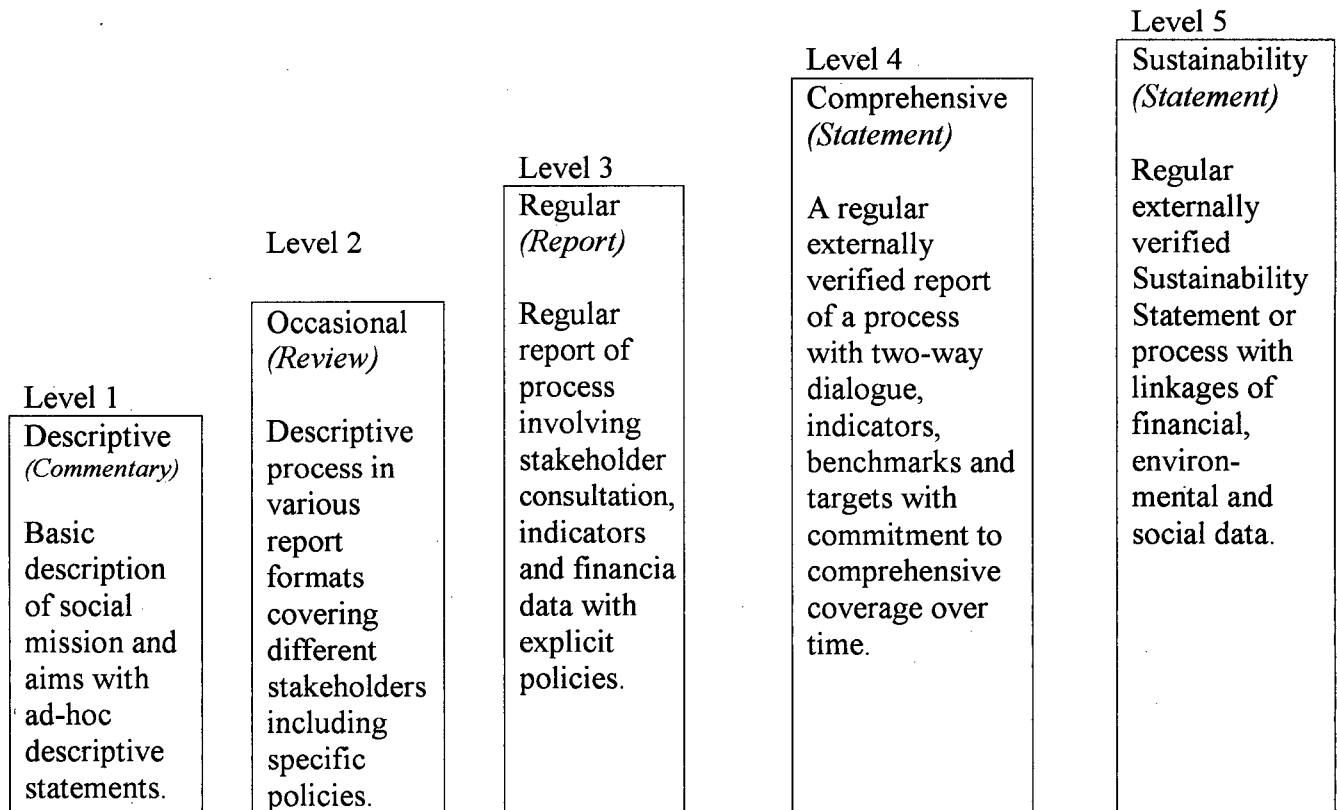
interest in manipulating the market for financial gain” (Zadek, Pruzan & Evans, 1997, p. 21).

The motivation behind ethical auditing and processes of SEAAR might be questioned and questionable, but when practices are reviewed, and the information is fully and accurately disclosed, resulting in changes and improvements in the human condition, then sustainability is achieved. The accusation of manipulation might continue, but improvements in workplace well being should speak for itself.

Open social auditing processes may benefit organizations with increased staff loyalty and productivity, increased customer sales and customer loyalty, enhanced decision making effectiveness, effective risk management, community receptivity, government assistance and support, and share price and price stability (Zadek, Pruzan & Evans, 1997, p. 32). While many of the topics apply to the private sector, a public sector organization ought to be as concerned about its social and ethical impact as private sector organizations, and there is compatibility between the sectors.

Figure 7 describes a five-stage model for assessing the practice of social and ethical accounting and reporting developed by the New Economics Foundation. The model enables an auditor to identify good practice and encourages organizations to improve their practices such that successive audits result in higher stages of achievement. For example, an organization may wish to conduct a social and ethical account of its practices, use the report for its own information and delay an external verification process until later audits. A first audit might establish the accounting and reporting at the Stage One or Stage Two level. The organization is required to subscribe to a form of public disclosure through external verification before it is acknowledged as having performed a Stage Three audit.

Figure 7 Model for Assessing Social and Ethical Progress and Disclosure



Source: Zadek, S., Pruzan, P., and Evans, R. (1997), *Building Corporate Accountability: Emerging Practices in Social and Ethical Accounting, Auditing and Reporting*. Earthscan Publications Ltd. London, p. 45.

The following describes each of the five stages:

Stage One

Stage one occurs when an organization conducts a social and ethical accounting of its practices that only includes a report of the organization's social mission and aims, along with an ad hoc description of the elements of a social and ethical audit and how it might apply to the organization.

Stage Two

This is a review with an occasional descriptive report covering different stakeholders and adds to the commentary achieved in Stage One by reviewing specific policies.

Stage Three

This is a regular report with full stakeholder consultation, development of performance indicators, financial data, with a review of explicit policies and internal systems.

Stage Four

This is a regular, externally verified report with two-way stakeholder dialogue, targets and benchmarks with a commitment to comprehensive coverage over time.

Stage Five

At this stage, an organization achieves a Sustainability Agreement. The organization has made a commitment to conduct regular social and ethical audits along with public disclosure and externally verified statements that link environmental, economic and financial data to the organization's business.

As at October 1998, no organization had yet received a Stage 4 designation for their audit using a process of SEAAR. This is partly due to the infancy of the process and the regularity with which organizations would have been able to conduct a social audit. In theory, the practice of social auditing combined with public disclosure and improvement over time should result in more organizations achieving the kind of sustainability agreement described in Stage 5.

The Institute of Social and Ethical AccountAbility advocates the use of eight principles or standards that may be used to judge the stage of development and commitment of an organization to the process of SEAAR. The most important reason for standards, however, is to "ensure quality in the process of accounting, auditing and reporting to support improved corporate social responsibility" (Zadek, Pruzan & Evans, 1997, p. 53).

Zadek, Pruzan and Evans described eight principles that are fundamental for ensuring quality when conducting a process of SEAAR. They are as follows:

Inclusivity

The views of all stakeholders, not only those who have historically had the most influence over the evolution of the organization's formal Mission Statement, but those who may be marginalized or silenced in the organization (1997, p. 42).

Comparability

Comparison may be of the performance of the same organization over time, or with external benchmarks drawn from the experience of other organizations, statutory regulations or societal norms (1997, p. 42).

Completeness

No area of the organization's activities can be deliberately or systematically excluded from the assessment. This principle is to ensure that there is no 'malicious exclusion' in the hope of showing only the most positive social performance (1997, p. 42 - 43).

Evolution

An organization's social performance cannot be assessed in any one-off exercise. Issues vary over time, as do the composition and expectations of key stakeholder groups. The approach must therefore be one that demonstrates 'learning' and continual change. It is a process that must follow an evolutionary path over time (1997, p. 43).

Management Policies and Systems

It is not enough to get one glimpse of an organization's performance; it is essential that clear policies be developed and implemented covering all processes, systems and procedures (1997, p. 43).

Disclosure

Disclosure of information must be rooted in meaningful communication to all key stakeholders and the wider public, and written in language that is easy to understand for all stakeholders (1997, pp. 43 - 44).

External Verification

This strengthens accountability and legitimacy. In this context, it means that the verifier is involved throughout the whole accounting process (1997, p. 44).

Continuous Improvement

The identification of the organization's performance improvement over time in relation to its values and objectives, its stakeholders, and broader social norms (1997, p. 44).

Figure 8 summarizes the types of practice that might be analyzed during a social audit.

Figure 8 Types of Practice for Inclusion in a Social and Ethical Audit.

| <u>Voluntary</u> | <u>Mandatory</u> |
|----------------------------|---|
| Health and Safety | Employment Data |
| Racial and Sexual Equality | Pension Fund Adequacy |
| Redundancies (layoffs) | Consultation with Employees |
| Employee Training | Employment of the Disabled |
| Mission Statement of | Contingent Liability Statement for |
| Social Responsibility | Health, Safety or Environment Remediation |
| Environmental Protection | Charitable Donations |
| Consumer Protection | Product Safety |
| Community Involvement | Value-added Statement |

Source: Adapted from R. H. Gray (1991, p. 3) Trends in Corporate Social and Environmental Accounting, British Institute of Management, London.

The practices described in Gray's lists were compiled from reviews of British Annual Reports. Gray referred to the description of the reports as a form of "silent social accounting"

implying that organizations were practicing limited forms of social accounting by generating qualitative as well as quantitative information (Gonella, Pilling, & Zadek, 1998, p. 38). In Gray's study of silent accounting, he selected arbitrarily a large corporation, and extracted information from the organization's annual report and then rewrote the information to show that the company already practiced some form of social accounting, albeit "silent social accounting" (Gray, 1991, p. 3, Gonella, Pilling & Zadek, 1998, pp. 38 – 39).

Based on the types of practices identified in Figure 8, human resource practitioners are in an ideal place to identify areas of practice that might be measured in a social audit. Within a framework of social auditing, organizations might learn and gain a deeper understanding of the effect of practices on employees enabling improvement and change.

An Example of Ethical Accounting - The Sbn Bank

The following outlines the form that ethical accounting has taken at the Sbn Bank in Denmark. Pruzan and Thyssen proposed ethical accounting in 1988 as a means of making ethics and values-based leadership operational in an organization. Their work is based on ethics in organizations and decision-making contexts when multiple criteria are part of the characteristics of decision-making. The Sbn Bank, before adopting the practice of ethical accounting, developed "a code of values based on certain psychological theories regarding people's basic needs;" and the code included a list of so-called shared values and commitments facing employees and management if these values were to be promoted" (Zadek, Pruzan & Evans, 1997, p. 63). In their analysis, Pruzan and Thyssen pointed out certain shortcomings in the organization's code of values. First, it was top down, developed by external consultants with no internal input from employees or stakeholders, and second; it concentrated on the code itself

without concerning itself with how the values and ethics might be integrated into the company by the employees (Zadek, Pruzan, & Evans, 1997, pp. 63 - 64).

An organization uses participatory methods for developing mission, vision, values and goals statements but does not consider that individuals may not know how to make the values and ethics statements operational; and despite having well-crafted statements, the life of the organization proceeds as in the past. This is a common failing of strategic planning processes where the strategic plan is implemented but no changes occur and there is little difference in the organization at the end of the strategic planning period. Concerns about the Sbn Bank's use of external consultants to develop a code of values were explained as follows:

There was no way of determining whether the values formulated were relevant, were lived up to, and whether the commitments listed were just good intentions formulated by management. In other words, the Code of Values by itself could not provide a means for the values to be integrated into the organization, so that it could identify itself, reflect upon itself, and evaluate itself from a values-based perspective (Zadek, Pruzan & Evans, 1997, p. 64).

Ultimately, the use of Ethical Accounting and values-based leadership provided the bank with a "new vocabulary, a new frame of reference for self-evaluation and a new perspective on leadership" (Zadek, Pruzan & Evans, 1997, p. 65). Pruzan states that the implementation of Ethical Accounting at the Sbn Bank resulted in a deeper process than just identifying stakeholder values and measuring how well the bank supports these values. Pruzan states that "the real impact of Ethical Accounting at Sbn Bank is the *learning process it has instigated and the significant changes in self-reflection it has contributed to*" (Zadek, Pruzan & Evans, 1997, p. 65) (emphasis added).

The following describes how an ethical accounting statement was developed at the Sbn Bank. Pruzan, after working extensively with the Sbn Bank, provided the following explanatory statement based on the first Ethical Accounting Statement published by the Sbn Bank in 1990:

The idea behind the concept of Ethical Accounting is that ethics is socially constructive and it can and should be discussed. A discussion of ethics does not elicit any unambiguous answers, but rather initiates a process in which the parties involved, each with their own values, must determine what they agree is right and wrong. (Zadek, Pruzan & Evans, 1997, p. 67)

Zadek, Pruzan and Evans continued:

Ideally, a decision is ethical if the parties influenced by it agree. Therefore, ethics deals with values that are strong enough to be shared. The company and its stakeholders base an ethical accounting statement on the values that are shared. It demonstrates that there are other values to be promoted more than power and money. The Ethical Accounting Statement measures the degree to which the company lives up to these shared values and thus supplements the financial statement's bottom line. (Zadek, Pruzan & Evans, 1997, p. 67)

Phillips, writing about ethics as social artifact posed two questions that apply to organizations and the process of social auditing.

1. Given the current facts of the matter, how might people organize their lives together?
2. What standards might be adopted and what standards are needed in the future? (1994, p. 14).

The questions suggest that information based on the responses might initiate continuous improvement that contributes to an organization's moral progress. Philips says, "moral progress marks a departure from the moral status quo and the considered moral judgment associated with it" (1994, p. 37). The process of SEAAR calls for input by marginalized groups who may have been previously silenced, and any dialogue about standards may be considered advances in moral progress when all are involved.

When people in an organization work with democratic processes, it is difficult to contemplate that everyone is not included. There is little awareness that there might be marginalized individuals or groups of employees who are silenced even in a democracy. Bureaucratic and democratic processes might silence individuals and groups. Unions traditionally have provided voice to previously silenced collectives but may unknowingly silence

particular individuals or groups of employees. In the midst of our democratic processes and our comfort with democracy, the silencing of individuals continues.

Social auditing is designed to ensure that everyone is given a voice again. Conditions for learning are created when the disclosure of the results of a social audit are open and transparent and result in change and improvement. Philips says, human history is, to a large extent, a record of the domination and exploitation of the weak by the powerful, and the powerful rarely believe that they might be engaged in “brutal, selfish, unjustified exercises of naked power” (1994, p. 35). I have heard administrators and union members lament that they are not respected; respect is not defined. I have heard administrators say they have no power, and power is not defined. Philips says that “according to traditionalist, socialist arguments at least, standards governing capitalistic, economic relations promote aggressive and competitive individuals and undermine our sense of mutual responsibility and concern” (1994, p. 51).

Zadek, Pruzan and Evans (1997) state that there is every reason to believe that the process of SEAAR will contribute to improved accountability processes in the public sector. While private sector organizations have provided a leadership role in this emerging process, public sector organizations such as municipalities, hospitals, universities, community colleges and schools may benefit from this process of accountability measurement because “all organizations have social ‘footprints’ and face ethical dilemmas that they must address” (1997, p. 58).

The ethical banking statement used by the Sbn Bank in the 1990s called for a form of values-based management and leadership focusing on the values shared by the stakeholders and employees rather than a focus on financial accountability, rules and power (Zadek, Pruzan, & Evans, 1997, p. 73). The Sbn Bank in Denmark provides the following explanation for its particular use of an ethical accounting statement:

It is vital for the bank to know its major stakeholders - its employees, private and corporate customers, shareholders and local community. But to 'know' necessitates dialogues where a shared language develops and interests become explicit. Therefore, at a pragmatic level, the bank considers its Ethical Accounting Statement as measuring the extent to which it lives up to its values. On a deeper level, however, there is far more to the process than just identifying stakeholder values and measuring how well the bank supports these values (Zadek, Pruzan & Evans, 1997, p. 65)

These two paragraphs embody the essence of what must come together in order for meaningful change to take place in a community college. A learning process combined with self-reflection is a requirement for any change process. A move to become a learning community will support the difficult and often challenging evolution from traditional management and traditional education to learning communities that are inclusive of the needs of students, employees, and stakeholders. The use of a process that embraces SEAR principles may provide a deeper and meaningful look at whether the college demonstrates its values throughout its operations. The possibilities of implementing learning processes that deepen the ability to self-reflect can only add to the successful implementation of social auditing and contribute to the organization's move towards becoming a learning community.

An organization that is not rule bound and where employees act according to their knowledge of the organization's values holds promise. However, all too often the act of asking for forgiveness rather than permission is based on the personal values of the employee rather than the organization's values and this difference often produces unexpected results. In its work with ethical accounting and value-based management and leadership over the past ten years, the Sbn Bank summarized their experience as follows:

Successfully implementing the process required considerable time and patience. It took several years before the employees were accustomed to communicating in terms of values and before *mutual trust*, which is a precondition for value-based dialogue, developed between the employees themselves in their working units and between the employees and management. This was a challenge to the organization in an epoch when everyone speaks of turbulence and uncertainty and

when young MBAs consider the ability to make quick decisions as the sign of a leader. (Zadek, Pruzan & Evans, 1997, p. 82)

Jørgen Giversen, the former CEO of Sbn Bank, said:

We live in a society with large changes; therefore, we must work with leadership models that prepare the organization for co-existing with permanent instability. The bank has chosen to lead itself using values. In an enterprise like ours, which thrives on change and service, money and power are insufficient for steering the organization. Shared values and visions are necessary and these presuppose dialogue. (Zadek, Pruzan & Evans, 1997, p. 82)

Criticism of Social and Ethical Accounting, Auditing and Reporting

While there seems to be a general level of enthusiasm and acceptance for the concept of social and ethical auditing, the process has its critics. In 1996, Nitkin noted that social and ethical auditing might be perceived as another attempt to control workers and noted that since the early part of the 20th Century workers' muscular power was controlled through scientific studies of steps of production leading to assembly line production. Later, corporate programs with benefits, childcare, and charitable-giving campaigns were implemented and, while accepted, may have exercised a degree of control over the social dimension of workers' lives. The Corporate Ethics Monitor reflected on whether visioning exercises, popular books on ethics and social audits was a corporate attempt to control workers' souls (Nitkin, 1996, pp. 76 – 77).

If social auditing is perceived as another process to control the lives of workers, perhaps this might be avoided by including employees in the development of the social audit questionnaire, by disclosing all the results – good and bad – and by actively engaging employees in a review of aspects of organizational life that need improvement. The role of the organization is to commit to the improvements, and to commit to future cycles of social auditing.

Programs that aim to improve organizations are often criticized. The description of a program as a fad, a quick fix, the flavour-of-the-month describes the extent to which

organizations search for processes of improvement. Social auditing is not a quick fix – it is time consuming, and must be conducted more than once; it is a process that requires careful and considered thinking. It is continuous, cyclical, and incremental. Employees who expend their energy in participating in the design of the process or in the completion of extensive surveys and questionnaires must see that their effort has contributed. If social auditing is to add to the sustainability of an organization, it must be embedded in an organization's practices and it is likely that benchmarks will move upwards as organizations become more socially responsible.

The Body Shop (UK) provides the following advice based on its practice of social auditing:

1. Social Auditing is not a short-term commitment; it is a long-term strategy, and organizations must plan at least two audit cycles.
2. Train people involved in social auditing. It is a new science and the principles and pitfalls must be understood.
3. Good social auditing improves an organization's ability to be more responsive and efficient – focus on social performance measurement and disclosure for all stakeholders.
4. Take into account minority views – do not allow one stakeholder voice to outweigh the others.
5. Use a good external verifier or verification process that will act as a wise counsel and maintain a balance between the voices.
6. Have courage – include both good and bad aspects of social performance. If there is an area of social performance that requires improvement, include this in the survey. The act of disclosure may bring forth a commitment to improve.

7. Allow plenty of time to draft and finalize the social statement.
8. Involve all departments, managers and staff at every level – especially in deciding the scope of the audit.
9. Publish the social statement (The Body Shop, 1998, p. 38).

A social audit may produce some form of criticism, but bad practices produce even more criticism. Conducting a social audit moves an organization towards defining in conjunction with its stakeholders how its accountability will be measured and reported and begins a process of defining the organization's individual indicators or social performance. The following examines how the social performance of an organization might be defined at this time in the evolution of the process of SEAAR.

Defining Social Performance

Zadek, Pruzan and Evans ask what organizations have done to understand, report on and improve their social and ethical performance (1997, p. 8). At the time of conducting this study, more attention has been concentrated on the development of a standard methodology for guiding social auditing leaving the organization and its stakeholders to define social performance (Peirce, 2000, p. 21).

As a component of sustainability, social accountability can be attained through social auditing, a process that enables an organization, through stakeholder dialogue, to understand, measure, report on and improve its social performance (Gonella, Pilling and Zadek, 1998, p. iv). However, the working definition of social auditing suggested by Gonella, Pilling and Zadek does not use the words “define social performance” and assumes that the organization will define its social performance through dialogue with stakeholders, through social auditing processes and begin to “understand” and commit to improve its social performance.

The primary purpose of engaging stakeholders is for them to be involved in an accountability process whereby stakeholders provide feedback on the organization's performance such that the views of stakeholders are integrated into organizational decision-making (Hale, 2000, p. 19).

Social performance can be described as standards established in conjunction with stakeholders that are based in part on stakeholder dialogue and embedded in the organization's mission, value statements and various policies related to its relationship with people – “human stakeholders who may affect or be affected by the organization” (Sillanpää, 2000, p. 15). Social performance is defined through the aspirations that the organization sets for itself through its mission statement and through its articulated value statements. It is defined through the aspirations communicated by stakeholders, and finally, through comparability with best practices and benchmarks within established statutory and non-statutory norms (Sillanpää, 2000, p. 11).

Examples of social performance include the organization's ability to produce socially and environmentally responsible products and services, to commit to processes that ensure fairness and equity, to commit to continuous improvement of human resources and managerial practices, to commit to protect human rights and to adhere to key legislation pertaining to the treatment and welfare of people. To commit to engage in and improve ethical performance in matters relating to its financial, social, ethical and environmental impact when conducting business. Moreover, it is about a long-term commitment to be evaluated and measured through stakeholder engagement with transparent disclosure of the results. Sillanpää writes:

The development of social auditing can be traced back at least to the 1960s. The first attempts were largely concerned with expanding conventional financial reporting to include information on ‘corporate social expenditure’ in response to intensifying criticism from the general public. By the late 1970s, the majority of the US Fortune 500 companies included a page or two in their annual reports to

inform readers of their social expenditure or to provide information on such issues as equal opportunities or community relations. In the 1980s, a second 'wave' of social auditing emerged, essentially driven by the consumer movement and the ethical investment community who were keen to build up and publish profiles of corporate social performance. The 1990s have seen the beginning of a third wave in social auditing driven mostly by companies from within the progressive social responsibility movement. This time social auditing was to be driven by the organisations themselves, no longer imposed from the outside (2000, p. 11).

Stakeholder dialogue does not guarantee good social performance but the organization through its leadership and commitment to social accountability establishes standards, goals and strategies related to social performance and social responsibility through such dialogue. Each organization, in conjunction with its stakeholders, is provided with a unique opportunity to identify and commit to its own definition of social performance.

Interest is growing in developing descriptions of social performance, measuring social performance and ensuring that the independent assessment of actual performance is separate from the individual value judgements of the stakeholders involved in a social audit. While stakeholder groups evaluate an organization's performance and may provide an accurate assessment, there is mixed opinion about stakeholder dialogue and social auditing results that may be based on the perception of a particular group of stakeholders at that particular time. Sillanpää distinguishes the quantitative measures that are described as benchmarks or performance indicators and the stakeholder perception of performance against core values and states that for "effective stakeholder inclusion, perceptions are reality" and that engaging stakeholders in direct dialogue is one of the most important and sensitive processes in social auditing (2000, pp. 16 – 17).

To avoid the introduction of bias, questionnaires are designed with professional assistance, space is allowed on the questionnaires for open-ended commentary and the process of

dialogue and questionnaire survey enable organizations to explore specific stakeholder need, to allow stakeholder views and concerns to be expressed (Sillanpää, 2000, p. 17).

In order to reduce the bias of respondents and auditors, it is preferable that the same individuals evaluate the performance of the organization over time. Due to time constraints and other human factors, this is not always going to be practical (Ruf and Muralidhar, 1998, p. 122). A social audit then is considered a snapshot of the organization's social performance at a particular point in time. Social auditing is not another quick-fix program and conducting more than one social audit over time is preferred.

Comparing Social and Financial Audit Practices

Financial officers of an organization are responsible for preparing financial accounts, which are then audited. Existing accounting standards determine what is to be disclosed and the level of detail that is to be disclosed. The method of disclosure is determined to be a judgment made between management and the auditors. In contrast, and as the field of SEAAR is evolving, it is the voices of stakeholders that accounted for and reported on (Gonella, Pilling and Zadek, 1998, p. 79). In this respect, the financial reporting principles that most closely relate to SEAAR are disclosure, comparability and inclusivity. These principles in SEAAR deepen the dialogue and involvement of stakeholders and prepare the organization to commit to the process of continuous improvement (Gonella, Pilling and Zadek, 1998, p. 79).

As with financial reporting, a published statement following a social audit might comment on the strength of the overall system and build the integrity of a social audit. Some organizations such as the Body Shop have established internal ethical audit departments that

parallels the practice of control in financial auditing (Gonella, Pilling and Zadek, 1998, p. 78).

Accountability in social auditing 'begins with the premise that an organization should be accountable to all its stakeholders and the nature of that accountability is determined by the relationship of the stakeholder with the organization, whereas a financial auditor provides an account such that directors can discharge their accountability to those that might provide the finances for a company. A social auditor acts in the interest of stakeholders and ensures that the views of all stakeholders are heard (Gonella, Pilling and Zadek, 1998, p. 76).

Eventually, codes of conduct for social auditors that are accredited by various institutions will include principles of integrity, competence, rigour and judgement as well as rules concerning objectivity and independence (Gonella, Pilling and Zadek, 1998, p. 77). Over time, principles that apply to financial accounting and auditing will become central to the methodologies used in social auditing (Gonella, Pilling and Zadek, 1998, p. 77).

Corporate Social Responsibility

This section describes Corporate Social Responsibility trends in Canada and the United States and indicates that even though it may be called different names, many of the outcomes and processes are similar.

Corporate Social Responsibility – Trends in Canada

A number of organizations in Canada have become involved in various forms of social responsibility. The Conference Board of Canada and its affiliate the Canadian Centre for Business in the Community provides plans and tools that support the development of effective corporate citizenship programs. The Conference Board of Canada is an independent, not-for-profit research organization that provides research and policy analysis to its member organizations. Their aim is to anticipate and respond to an increasingly changing global

economy (1999b, p. 1). The Conference Board of Canada describes Canada's ultimate goal as "the ability to provide a high and sustainable quality of work life that includes: high income per capita; employment opportunities; a healthy and educated population; a clean environment; safe places to live and work, and economic security for all citizens (*Performance and Potential: Leadership Challenges for the 21st Century*, 1998, pp. 5 – 17).

Social auditing has similar goals. When an organization is sustainable, it provides its employees with the opportunity for secure employment in healthy and safe work environments. Organizational sustainability then contributes to individual sustainability and national sustainability.

The Conference Board of Canada has defined corporate social responsibility as follows:

Corporate Social Responsibility is the overall relationship of the corporation with its stakeholders. These include customers, employees, communities, owners/investors, government, suppliers and competitors. Elements of social responsibility include investment in community outreach, employee relations, creation and maintenance of employment, environmental responsibility, human rights and financial performance. Specifically, CSR is about producing and/or delivering socially and environmentally responsible products and/or services in an environmentally and socially responsible manner. It is about a company's commitment to being a fair and equitable employer. And it is about strategic social investment (1999, p. 2).

In an early work, the Conference Board of Canada embarked on a study of corporate social responsibility, and twenty-one private-sector Canadian organizations established a best practices benchmark group and reviewed organizational practices and standards, human resource management practices and community involvement. Values such as long term commitment, championship, inclusivity, integration and consistency, disclosure and transparency, codes of conduct and continuous improvement, and board of director involvement were included in the early Conference Board of Canada project on corporate social responsibility (Conference Board of Canada, November 1998, Institute of Social and Ethical Accountability Conference,

Vancouver).

Another Canadian organization, Ethicscan, has provided leadership in the area of social and ethical auditing using a method that includes six key components. In conjunction with traditional climate surveys, Ethicscan conducts an ethics audit that contributes to enhancements of a traditional climate survey or organizational review. Audits conducted by Ethicscan include values based standard setting, document review, benchmarking, environmental scan, stakeholder surveys, and action-enabling recommendations (1996, 75 – 77).

Ethicscan has suggested in the past that initially organizations might want to keep the results of an audit confidential and use the information to begin an internal process for improvement. The confidentiality and non-disclosure spares the organization embarrassment, and the implications of such embarrassment on shareholders, stakeholders, employees, management and leaders is lessened. Ethicscan further suggests that when the organization has improved some of its processes and conducts another audit with more acceptable results, then it might consider an exercise of public disclosure and external verification that may be more acceptable to management, stakeholders and shareholders. In this way, the Ethicscan model commits the organization to improving and correcting issues arising from a social audit, while limiting the organization's exposure to public, open and possibly negative scrutiny. The corporate veil of secrecy and confidentiality has contributed to unethical and inequitable treatment of employees, suppliers and others in stakeholder groups and will continue to be an ongoing tension as organizations considering social auditing commit to openness and transparency.

The following highlights some of the best practices that have been established by companies in Canada.

At Merck Frosst, the company recognizes that its ability to compete is based on the

knowledge, imagination, skills, diversity, teamwork, and integrity of its employees and to this end; it has established commitments such as the following:

- Involving employees in key decisions about the organization's strategy, values and commitment to CSR.
- Commitment to being a fair and equitable employer.
- Demonstrates its desire to be the employer of choice by providing a safe and healthy work environment and through job creation and security (Conference Board of Canada, 1999a, p. 8).

The Royal Bank uses a "balanced scorecard approach" to manage its relations with its stakeholder groups; and team-based work, knowledge sharing, positive communication and increased dialogue are key results that the bank measures using this approach (Conference Board of Canada, 1999a, p. 8). The "balanced scorecard" is a process developed by Kaplan and Norton that supports the tracking, measurement and evaluation of financial and non-financial long-term strategies. The "balanced scorecard" process has gained wide acceptance because it requires a balanced approach to goal-setting in four areas: financial, innovation and learning, focus on customer and focus on the internal workings of the organization (Kaplan and Norton, 1996b, pp. 75 – 78). Social auditing, and its results, lends itself to the "balanced scorecard" approach.

The Conference Board of Canada described the following human resource best practices benchmarks and noted that they are strategies designed to support the achievement of the organization's long term strategies:

- A communication strategy that informs, obtains and provides feedback on human resource policy and practice.
- Communication materials that include information on the company's commitment to social responsibility and how this is linked to human resource policy and

practices.

- Communication that is appropriate, ensures a level playing field of knowledge regarding human resource policies and practices and a method for ensuring that decisions are made and communicated in a way that is transparent and open.
- Toolkits prepare managers to introduce and discuss new and updated policies.
- An active diversity policy that will ensure the development of people and strategies.
- Succession Plans that identify key employees approaching retirement or employees identified for professional development aimed at promotion into higher or lateral positions.
- The use of a 360-degree performance evaluation process to measure leadership competencies includes an evaluation by peers, clients, the employee's supervisor and the employee's direct reports. This multi-rater performance process requires an individual to self-assess and be evaluated by his or her peers, his or her direct reports, and his or her supervisor. It includes all of the people who interact regularly with the employee to provide feedback to the employee. Active exploration by the company of ways to address social priorities (Conference Board of Canada, 1999a, pp. 8 - 14).

Pratt & Whitney of Canada has included "fireside chats" where employees have the opportunity to talk to senior managers. They have implemented an anonymous dialogue system, where questions must be answered within a specific time frame, as well as a spring report to employees on the challenges facing business. Groups of employees are involved in interactive two-hour meetings and regular management meetings where business and human resource issues

are discussed with a commitment to feedback. The results of meetings and subsequent action plans to address issues are published (Conference Board of Canada 1999a, p. 9).

Other best practices include provision of employee training and development that is designed to develop employability skills, and training plans that help employees acquire core competencies, including competencies in corporate social responsibility (Conference Board of Canada 1999a, p. 10). Through these processes, employability skills are identified and partnerships with the educational community and other partners are established to enhance training (Conference Board of Canada 1999a, p. 10). When an organization introduces corporate social responsibility as a commitment to improving its corporate citizenship, it might choose to develop CSR competencies so that employees can report on issues related to social responsibility rather than wait for an audit; employees are encouraged to become socially responsible in their practices and employees are encouraged to be leaders of CSR in their departments and when they move to other organizations (Conference Board of Canada, 1999a, p. 10).

Other benchmarks include practices in community involvement, and there is a benchmark that states that corporate social responsibility is a core value to which the company is committed on a long-term basis, even when the organization has difficult economic times (Conference Board of Canada 1999a, p. 21).

The Conference Board of Canada has developed a Benchmark Assessment Tool (CSR – BAT) to be used as a management tool that is part of a corporate social responsibility initiative. This tool provides a framework for deciding where action is required to improve performance and achievement, and enables an organization to consider eighty benchmarks relating to organizational practices and standards and to describe whether the practice or standard is “fully deployed,” “somewhat deployed,” or “not deployed” (1999, pp. 21 – 30).

Corporate Social Responsibility – Trends in the United States

The following reviews the trends evolving in the United States and describes the work of two organizations – The Social Venture Network – an organization in the United States that has initiated the Corporate Social Responsibility Implementation Network; and Business for Social Responsibility (BSR), an organization that provides global resources for companies seeking to sustain their commercial success in ways that demonstrate respect for ethical value, people, communities and the environment.

Under the umbrella of the Social Venture Network, a number of American organizations are involved in a project that requires the development of strategic plans that commit to the implementation of corporate social responsibility. The Social Venture Network has defined ethics as follows:

The company establishes, promotes, monitors, and maintains ethical standards and practices that meet or exceed industry, international, national, and local guidelines or regulations. Further, it maintains these standards and practices in dealings with all of the company stakeholders, and encourages the same of all other stakeholders, including business partners, distributors and suppliers. The company's commitment to ethical behaviour, human rights, diversity and integrity is communicated to all stakeholders in documents such as the company mission statement and code of conduct, and is rigorously enforced (Goodell, 1998, p. 4).

As part of a strategic planning process each organization is required to examine its employment practices based on the following:

The company engages in human-resource management practices that promote personal and professional employee development, diversity and empowerment. The company regards employees as valued partners in business, respecting their right to fair labor practices, competitive wages and benefits, and a safe, family-friendly work environment (Goodell, 1998, p. 4).

The Social Ventures Network identified ethics, governance, accountability, concern for stakeholder interests, financial return to investors and lenders, community involvement and economic development, value of products and services, employment practices, business

relationships, and protection of the environment as important indicators in relation to social responsibility.

Another example of social responsibility is from the US based organization, Business for Social Responsibility. They offer advice related to the goals, scope, metrics and standards for social auditing and recommend that while some companies start with a comprehensive audit, many find it useful to begin with smaller, focused audits appropriate to their needs (BSR Education Reports, 1999, pp. 5 - 7).

Business for Social Responsibility suggests a format that includes:

- A review of mission and vision, policies, advertising and marketing materials, and other organizational documents.
- The establishment of the scope and the process of evaluation as well as stakeholder dialogue and the establishment of the stakeholder groups.
- It recommends methods of inquiry and consultation and the identification of benchmarks that include a reviewing of management practices.
- It recommends an analysis of what was learned and a description of the company's strengths and weaknesses in policy statements and management systems.
- It recommends a list of issues worth exploring in future audits, verification of the results, sharing the findings, and repeating the process (BSR Education Reports, 1999, pp. 5 - 7).

As organizations embed some form of assessment of their social performance, it is worth considering how social auditing might be compatible with another business process – strategic planning. The following examines aspects of strategic planning and provides linkages between social auditing and strategic planning.

Strategic Planning

The effect of mission, vision and values occupies a great deal of organizational attention, creating vital forces that cannot always be defined but become evident, in their absence, once articulated by the organization (Wheatley, 1992, p. 12). This section examines strategic planning and the linkage of strategic planning with social auditing and organizational learning. It begins with a number of questions about planning and strategy posed by Mintzberg (1994). It examines aspects of Kotler and Murphy's (1981) strategic planning process for higher education, a stakeholder process in strategic planning by Freeman (1984), a strategic planning process for non-profit organizations proposed by Bryson (1988), and concludes with Senge's model of shared vision and continual learning (1990).

Mintzberg states:

Strategy is created at the intersection of an external appraisal of the threats and opportunities facing an organization in its environment, considered in terms of key factors for success, and an internal appraisal of the strengths and weaknesses of the organization itself, distilled into a set of distinctive competencies. Outside opportunities are exploited by inside strengths, while threats are avoided and weaknesses circumvented. Taken into consideration, both in the creation of the strategies and their subsequent evaluation to choose the best are the values of the leadership as well as the ethics of the society and other aspects of so-called social responsibility. Once a strategy has been chosen, it is implemented (1994, p.36).

Mintzberg's description of strategy creation almost precludes implementing a process of social auditing as it implies that if strategic planning were effective, the organization would not need a social audit. Mintzberg's description of strategy includes a recognition of the ethics of society and raises a concern that in the zeal of developing a strategic plan – with its vision, mission and values – the basics are overlooked, implied in the work, or ignored along with “other aspects of so-called social leadership” (Mintzberg, 1994, p. 36).

Mintzberg asks, “What is planning anyway?” and suggests four formal definitions of planning to answer this question (1994, pp. 6 – 7). First, consider planning as future thinking; Mintzberg finds this problematic because the nature and management of work implies that, at some point, all work must be planned (1994, p. 7). Second, consider planning as controlling the future; Mintzberg states that when this occurs the distinction between planning and controlling is lost (1994, pp. 7 – 8). Third, consider the notion of planning as decision making, and fourth consider planning as a process that integrates decision making across the organization (1994, pp. 10 – 11). If planning is about thinking that integrates decision making across the organization and controls the future, then this defines strategic planning.

Ackoff said:

Planning is required when the future state that we desire involves a set of interdependent decisions; that is, a system of decisions ... the principal complexity in planning derives from the interrelatedness of the decisions rather than from the decisions themselves (1970, pp. 2 – 3).

In the past, organizations relied on planning and control to manage simple systems. As organizations became more complex, strategy focused the coordination of interrelationships in order for critical decisions to be made and approved at a single point of time. Mintzberg’s next step to understanding planning involves formalization (Mintzberg, 1994, pp. 11 – 12). Formalization in this context means to decompose, to articulate, and “to rationalize the processes by which decisions are made and integrated into organizations” (Mintzberg, 1994, pp. 12 – 13). Mintzberg states “planning is a formalized procedure to produce an articulated result, in the form of an integrated system of decisions” (Mintzberg, 1994, p. 12). Mintzberg asks what is planning and asks why plan? While acknowledging that organizations plan so that activities are coordinated, and to ensure that the future is taken into account, Mintzberg cautioned that

planning and control had to be achieved without reducing motivation, participation and the facilitation of consensus (1994, pp. 15 – 20).

Mintzberg then asks, “What is strategy?” (1994, pp. 15 – 20). Mintzberg suggests that a strategy is a plan, a pattern, a perspective, a position that can be intended; it is deliberate, and organizations need to think about how they might enable strategies to emerge so that learning continues (1994, pp. 23 – 27). Mintzberg notes that strategies often fail in organizations, remain incomplete, or are abandoned (1994, p. 25).

Bryson recommends that if an organization is unable to implement new goals and strategies, it should not embark on a strategic planning process (1988, p. 13). If implementation is going to be difficult, then key decision makers are advised to focus attention on those goals of the strategic plan that can be implemented successfully, resulting in the development of a few, manageable goals (1988, p. 13).

Strategic Planning Model for Higher Education

The process of strategic planning commenced sometime in the 1960s in the business community and began to be practiced in higher education sometime in the 1980s (Cope, 1987, p. 3). Cope described strategic planning as follows:

An open systems approach to steering an enterprise over time through uncertain environmental waters. It is a proactive problem-solving behaviour directed externally at conditions in the environment and a means to find a favourable competitive position in the continual competition for resources. Its primary purpose is to achieve success with mission while linking the institution's future to anticipated changes in the economy in such a way that the acquisition of resources (money, personnel, staff, students, good will) is faster than the depletion of resources (1987, p.3).

Before the 1960s, planning was typically an internally focused process but this changed when competition increased and conditions external to the organization required both an internal and an external assessment (Lorenzo, 1993, pp. 48 – 49). Later, in the 1990s, leaders learned

that change required organizations to conduct internal and external assessments and to understand strategic interventions that caused organizations to be interrelated and interdependent of each other (Lorenzo, 1993, p. 54). A number of models emerged that began to emphasize process over product (the strategic plan). Process indicates a continual reassessment of direction; a means of monitoring operating conditions and signaling the need for change, while providing assurance that the organization is well (Lorenzo, 1993, p. 52).

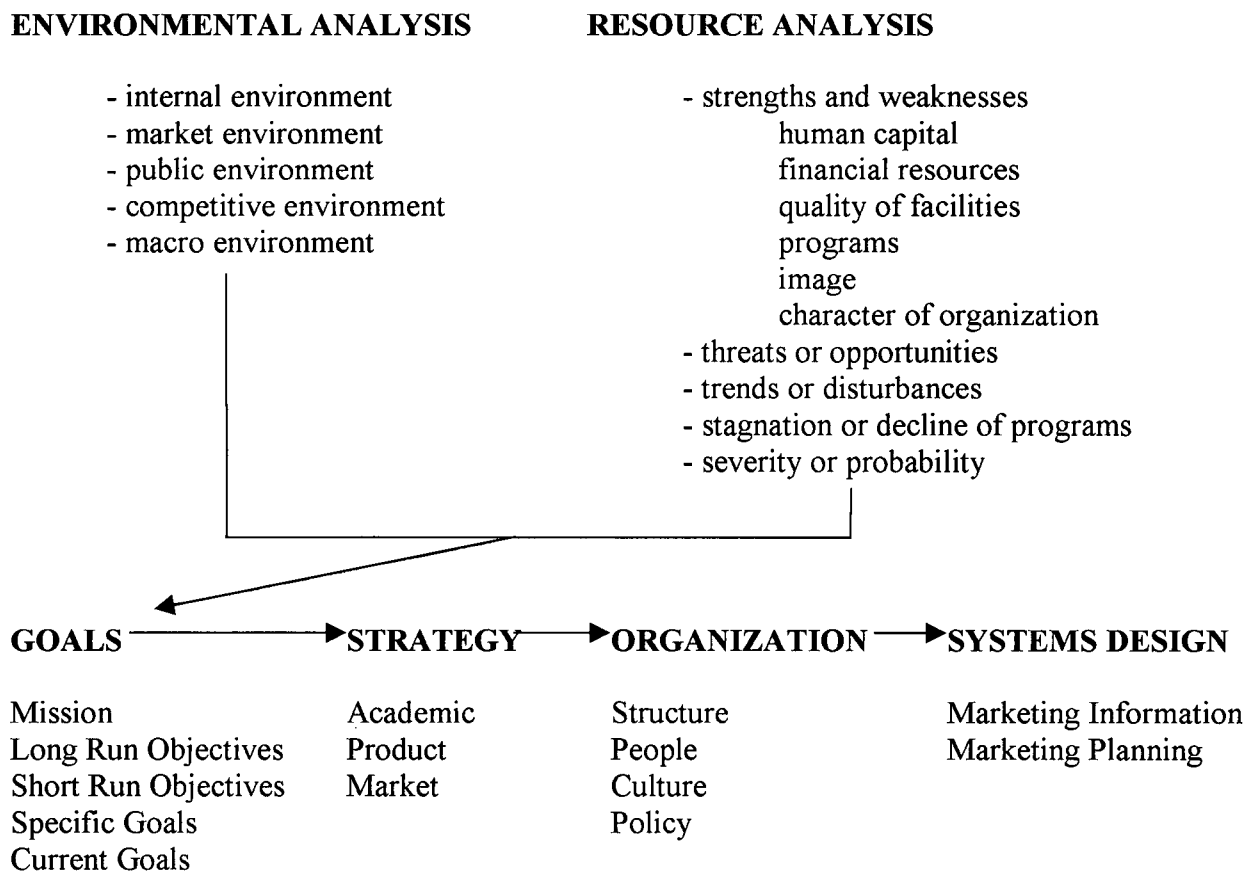
Kotler and Murphy developed an early model of strategic planning for higher education that produced a clear sense of purpose while engaging in an understanding of the larger and external environment. Kotler and Murphy suggested that higher education was good at operations – that is, efficiently doing the same things day after day (1981, p. 429). They recommended that colleges and universities adopt a tool from the commercial sector and suggested that a “strategic market planning” model might be used to develop and maintain a strategic fit between the organization and its changing marketing opportunities (1981, p. 429). This would require an extensive analysis of environmental and resource issues with the findings used to develop goals, strategies, organizational structure, and systems design. They recommended the use of an environmental scan to keep track of changes that were likely to affect the demand for the college’s services. In Figure 9, Kotler and Murphy’s early planning model included a review of economic, social, demographic, political, legal, cultural and technological factors (1981, pp. 470 – 489).

Kotler and Murphy’s model is thorough. They recommended that an environmental scan track changes that might affect the demand for services. The environmental scan would be updated regularly during the life of the strategic plan and used to manage emerging trends and needs. The model examines multiple environments including the internal environment and human capital; it builds in a marketing focus, relies on a mission but does not speak to vision and

values. Kotler and Murphy's model refers to the character of the organization and rests on concepts that include structure, people, culture and policy.

Figure 9 describes Kotler and Murphy's strategic planning process for higher education.

Figure 9 Kotler and Murphy's Strategic Planning Process Model for Higher Education



Source: Kotler, P. and Murphy, P. E., (1981). Strategic Planning for Higher Education.

Strategic Planning for Non-Profit Organizations

Bryson described three aspects of strategic planning. Strategic planning is intended to identify and resolve issues; it should emphasize assessment of the environment outside and inside the organization, and it should summon forth an idealized version of the organization – a “vision of success” (1988, p. 7).

Strategic planning is action-oriented. Change has forced the public and non-profit sectors to think strategically about what they *ought* to be doing and, like the private sector, all organizations should ask the question, “What business or businesses *should* we be in?” (1988, p. 9).

Bryson summarizes the benefits of strategic planning as helping an organization to:

- Think strategically and develop effective strategies
- Clarify future direction
- Establish priorities
- Make today’s decisions in light of their future consequences
- Develop a coherent and defensible basis for decision making
- Exercise maximum discretion in the areas under organizational control
- Make decisions across levels and functions
- Solve major organizational problems
- Improve organizational performance
- Deal effectively with rapidly changing circumstances
- Build teamwork and expertise (1988, pp. 11 – 12).

Bryson prefers a strategic planning process for public sector companies that is based on the Harvard Policy Model, a process that uses a systematic assessment of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats – a SWOT analysis. He cautions that this model does not offer specific advice on how to build strategies, other than to call attention to building on strengths, taking advantage of opportunities, and overcoming or minimizing threats or weaknesses (1988, pp. 30 – 31).

Bryson states that a “stakeholder management model” integrates economic, political and social concerns and is probably more applicable to the public and non-profit worlds (1988, p. 33). Bryson argues that key stakeholders and their interests should be identified and that an organization’s mission and values should be formulated in stakeholder terms (1988, p. 33).

Before developing a mission statement, Bryson recommends that an organization complete a stakeholder analysis and he states that this is “crucial because the key to success in

public and non-profit organizations is the satisfaction of key stakeholders” (1988, p. 52). A stakeholder analysis clarifies whether the organization should have different missions and perhaps different strategies for various stakeholders, and the stakeholder analysis should provide the organization with information on what basic social or political problems are addressed as a result of the organization’s existence (1998, p. 52).

Bryson describes the need for an organization to determine how it will manage “bad news” or “troubling events” and, in particular, how it will treat its members who bring forward such information (1988, p. 53). Negative information is as important as positive information to the organization in terms of feedback, and while both can be used to enhance performance, how each is handled is important.

A complete stakeholder analysis requires:

The strategic planning team to identify the organization’s stakeholders, their stake in the organization or its output, their criteria for judging the performance of the organization, how well the organization performs against those criteria, how the stakeholders influence the organization, and in general how important the various stakeholders are (Bryson, 1988, p. 52).

Recent work in the area of stakeholder reporting suggests that stakeholders are core to implementing values-based management and that ongoing dialogue with stakeholders provides valuable business intelligence that can be used as an “early warning” system (*The Copenhagen Charter – A Management Guide to Stakeholder Reporting* 1999, pp. 2 – 4).

Bryson suggests that organizations often lack adequate information about their performance and that this absence of information presents problems for the organization, as stakeholders will judge the worth of an organization according to the stakeholders’ criteria rather than the organization’s criteria (1988, p. 55). Finally, Bryson suggests that the absence of performance information creates and hardens major organizational conflicts. If there is no way to evaluate the relative effectiveness of strategies, resource allocations, organizational designs,

and distributions of power, then the organization must find a way to measure and inform its communities (1988, p. 55).

Senge's – Learning Organization

As organizations learn about themselves through a process of strategic planning, Senge's concept of an organization as a learning organization gained attention in the 1990s. Senge writes,

People enter business as bright, well-educated, high-energy people and end up putting in time. Commitment is lost as well as a sense of mission; ultimately organizations get very little of their energy and almost none of their spirit. The need for understanding how organizations learn and accelerate their learning is greater than ever before (1990, p. 20).

Senge says, "learning organizations are ones where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured and the role of leadership in a learning environment is different" (1990, p. 3). He said:

Leaders are designers, teachers and stewards. These roles require new skills: the ability to build shared vision, to bring being to the surface and challenge prevailing mental models to foster more systematic patterns of thinking. In short, leaders in learning organizations are responsible for building organizations where people are continually expanding their capability to share their future – that is, leaders are responsible for learning (1990, p. 9).

Strategic planning and Senge's notion of a learning organization provides for the possibility that in a learning organization, strategic planning might be different. For example, in the development of a strategic plan, the organization reflects on its past and looks to the future and establishes goals and objectives for the organization that will be completed over a three to five-year period. Senge refers to a "current reality" that exists between the past and the present and according to Senge, visioning exercises in a learning organization require the leader to manage the creative tension that comes from clearly seeing the vision for the future while telling

the truth about the “current reality” of the organization (Senge, 1990, p. 9). The gap between what is and what might be or Senge’s principle of creative tension suggests that an accurate picture of current reality is just as important as a compelling picture of a desired future (1990, p. 9). The establishment of new goals and strategies often ignores the “current reality,” and employees are left to achieve new strategies within a “current reality” that might preclude the future vision being attained. In Senge’s model, planning is a tool of continuous learning that is embedded in organizational practice and brings about the continual improvement of policies, programs and strategies (1990, p. 11). Senge said:

While policy making has been the domain of management, that view is changing, and the mandate of the learning organization is to engage people at all levels to allow ownership of these policies at a deeper level. The development and implementation of policies, strategies and structure is an effective learning process and their creation in this way is the third key design responsibility in the learning organization. In addition, to the development and implementation, the organization must ensure that processes exist for ensuring that policies and strategies are continually improved (1990, p. 11).

Senge’s model creates a tension between the current reality of what is, and a plan for what the organization may become.

The Contribution of Social Auditing to Strategic Planning

Strategic planning is one way of deciding what the organization will do next, and is a method for implementing change in an organization. Social auditing is a complementary process that concentrates on internal processes that indicate whether the organization’s performance reflects its mission, vision, and value statements as measured by various stakeholders. Social auditing is a method by which an organization examines its behaviour, reflects on its effect on society, and adds information to a strategic planning cycle. Just as strategic planning provides an opportunity for an organization to ask, “What business or businesses should we be in?” A social audit clarifies and strengthens values; establishes a baseline for change; enables the organization

to learn about societal expectations; identifies specific problems; enables the organization to understand what motivates staff; and identifies areas of vulnerabilities (van Luijk, Carmichael, Hummels, & ten Klooster, 1995, p. 1). In other words, it asks, “Who are we? What are we good at? How well are we doing? What is our effect on the communities in which we operate and society in general?”

Starting with one facet of the organization, a social audit of the human resource management function might ask the employees of an organization to consider whether its current policies, practices and programs are effective, and reflect on how the organization ought to organize itself for its people. In a strategic planning process, the mission, vision and values statements become the cornerstone of the organization. Once written, there is a tendency to assume that the mission, vision and values statements contribute to organizational effectiveness and serve the organization. When a new cycle of strategic planning commences, an organization rarely evaluates whether the previous mission and vision statements served the organization, or if the organization reached the goals it set for itself.

When a social audit is conducted over time, and the organization commits to continuous improvement, then any evaluation and measurement that is performed in conjunction with the organization's values must result in change or cast doubt on the espoused values of the organization.

SEAAR using a stakeholder approach establishes a set of standards or values by which a particular group or community regulates its behaviour. In a general sense, ethics refers to how individuals who live among other individuals might apply certain standards of morality. In SEAAR, ethics describes a specific set of standards that are examined by stakeholder groups associated with the organization. Stakeholders contribute their perspectives based on their ethical and social standards and influence decision making, resulting in increased trust. Evans

said:

Stakeholders are very important and they need to be involved in selecting which indicators should be analyzed. It's very easy to list a whole lot of things that we can measure and say, "if we can tick them off and achieve our targets, then we are being socially responsible." The social accounting method recognizes the legitimacy of stakeholders' views and their experience of the company. Even when, in the company's view they've got it wrong. Even where they haven't understood the science or they've got the facts wrong – that doesn't matter. What they see is what they see, and on the basis of what they see they'll respond and they will take whatever action they think appropriate. (1996, p. 21)

If performance indicators are clearly articulated by stakeholder groups and the indicators are achievable, then in the process of articulating standards, and in the enhancement of listening, there is potential for higher levels of ethical action leading to an improved working life.

What if a stakeholder group provided information or direction that appeared unethical? The organization, in dialogue with that stakeholder group, would state that the direction did not fit with the organization's standards. What is critical in this moment is the dialogue between the two parties, and this cannot be underestimated. It is an opportunity to deepen each side's understanding of the other. The stakeholder process involved in social auditing results in a sharing of information, values and power such that an organization's stakeholder groups have a greater voice in describing standards of ethics and accountability.

Social auditing embraces the concept of a balanced triple "bottom line" – financial, social and environmental – and is concerned with providing a framework of sustainability. When a social audit provides information that enables an organization to continuously improve its ability to balance all areas of financial, social and environmental performance, and the organization is sustainable, then it can concentrate on attaining its mission and vision.

When reflecting on the issues of learning, education, accountability, leadership and their connectedness to social auditing and strategic planning, three questions come to mind. The first

is related to the notion of educational organizations as learning communities. Can an educational organization justify not being a learning organization? The second question examines what barriers exist to an educational organization becoming a learning community. Finally, the third question asks what has to change in order for people in an organization to become a community of learners.

First, what is the meaning of the word 'learning' and what does it mean for an organization to be a learning organization or for people to work as a community of learners? Senge says, "learning has lost its central meaning in contemporary usage" (1990, pp. 13 – 14). Learning is not about taking in information – "real learning gets to the heart of what it means to be human" and through learning, people recreate themselves (1990, pp. 13 – 14). What then does learning mean in the term a "learning organization"? Senge says, the basic meaning of a "learning organization" is one that is continually expanding its capacity to create its future through generative and adaptive learning (1990, p. 14). Senge also says that learning takes time and that in our organizations people do not have sufficient time to think and reflect because of the need for instant actions and answers (1990, pp. 301 – 304).

Schön talks about reflection-in-action as a description for management action, and notes that "managers live in an organizational system which may promote or inhibit reflection-in-action" and that organizational structures, behavioural systems, the ability to surface negative information, handle dilemmas and conflict make up what Schön calls the "learning system" of the organization (1983, pp. 242 – 243).

It is one thing to adopt the concept of a learning community or a community of learners but it is another to define it, to speak of it, to use it to resolve problems and dilemmas, to recreate individually and as an organization, and to sustain this new way of relating to one another. There is an "ingrained habit of attacking symptoms and ignoring deeper, systemic causes of

problems” (Senge, et al, 1999, p. 9). Senge says that people will start discussing “undiscussable” subjects only when they develop the reflection and inquiry skills that enable them to talk openly about complex, conflictive issues without invoking defensiveness (Senge, et al, 1999, p. 9).

It is too simple to say that employees need to start talking or relating with one another about what it means to be a member of a learning community. Employees need training in terms of their current knowledge base and their potential to create new ways of thinking and working with members of a learning community. What barriers might keep an organization such as a community college from being a learning community? The first barrier is where employees of an educational organization already consider themselves part of a learning organization or a learning community because of the nature of their work. Senge refers to “mental models” or deeply ingrained assumptions, generalizations, or even images that influence how an individual understands his or her world (1990, p. 175). Faculty who teach using only a traditional system of lectures may never experience the depth and quality of learning that occurs when students learn from each other by participating in collaborative or cooperative models of learning. Even though collaborative and cooperative learning enhances learning, a learning community may not emerge until all employees commit to being learners.

Senge calls for a shift of mind that encourages people to engage in the development of their own personal mastery such that they support their connectedness to the world and stop blaming and seeing problems that are caused by someone else or something “out there” (1990, p. 12). People must eventually take responsibility and see how their own actions create the problems they experience and how they can create their own reality (Senge, 1991, p. 13).

Senge reflects on leaders:

There were thoughtful people, deeply aware of the inadequacies of prevailing ways of managing. They were engaged in building new types of organizations – decentralized, non-hierarchical organizations dedicated to the well being and growth of their employees as well as to success. Some had crafted radical corporate philosophies based on core values of freedom and responsibility. Others had developed innovative organization designs. All shared a commitment and a capacity to innovate that was lacking in the public sector (1991, p. 15).

Learning and accountability provide a unique partnership for revealing models of leadership required in a learning community. Leaders as learners and learners as leaders must be open to admitting that they do not know everything. Management processes and information that previously was secret or confidential in the past must now be transparent. A growing number of organizational leaders are part of a profound evolution in the nature of work as a social institution (Senge, 1991, p. 5). The results of a social audit and the willingness to report the results in an open and transparent manner become a mechanism for learning about the organization, and the learning is a basis for improvement (Zadek, Pruzan, & Evans, 1997, p. 4).

Senge cautions that while organizations seek to become learning organizations, they may have “learning disabilities” and organizations might survive but never live up to their potential, despite the best intentions of bright, committed people (1990, p. 18). Senge’s description of organizational learning disabilities are concerned with the individual and their relationship to their “position or job” limiting their perception of possibility, as well as the capacity of individuals to blame others when things go wrong. There is a call to be proactive but action is reactive – there is an inability for individuals to recognize their contribution to their own problems; a fixation on short-term events, an inability to adapt due to slow, gradual changes in the environment; the intelligent use of feedback is at the heart of the learning organization (1990, p. 20 – 23).

Senge describes another learning disability as the delusion of learning from experience and claims that while we learn best from experience we rarely experience the consequences of many of our most important decisions (1990, p. 23). Critical to my learning was reflecting on how an organization “breaks itself into components, institutes functional hierarchies that grow into fiefdoms and then cut off contact between functions resulting in an inability to analyze the most important problems that occur when functional lines cross” (Senge, 1990, p. 24).

Senge talks about the myth of the management team. He describes “the collection of savvy, experienced managers who represent the organization’s different functions and areas of expertise – who all too often spend their time fighting for turf, avoiding everything that will make them look bad personally, and pretending that everyone is behind the team’s collective strategy – and who maintain the appearance of a cohesive team” (1990, p. 24).

Morgan provides an excellent and brief explanation of the capacities that must be present in a learning community. He says that members of the learning community must be able to:

- Scan and anticipate change in the wider environment to detect significant variations.
- Develop the ability to question, challenge and change operating norms and assumptions.
- Allow an appropriate strategic direction and pattern of organization to emerge.
- Evolve designs that allow them to become skilled in the art of double-loop learning, to avoid getting trapped in single-loop processes, especially those created by traditional management control systems and the defensive routines of organizational members (1997, p.90).

Morgan says that many organizations struggle with the fourth element and have difficulty removing the controls and defensive routines established by traditional management and by employees and stakeholders who continue to think in traditional ways (Morgan, 1990, p. 90, Smith, 1996, p. 15).

Smith writes that to create a community of learning, “the traditional asymmetrical power relations of the classroom must be challenged” and that the “presumed consensus of the status

quo and the existing norms, values, history, stories, myths, and practices of the culture of the organization must be disturbed (1996, p. 13). Smith suggests that organizations find a way of disrupting the organizational myths and culture such that “it is not possible for the members of the organization to revert to the culture that previously existed” (1996, p. 6). Smith recommends creating communities of learning that require members of educational organizations to “rethink in radical ways the manner in which learning in human beings occurs and how it can best be facilitated” (1996, p. 13).

Summary

Increased complexity and uncertainty requires leaders to maximize their influence in the development of organizations and employees. Flexibility is required to take advantage of the opportunities provided by higher levels of uncertainty (Courtenay, Kirkland, & Viguerie, 1997, pp. 67-68). In order to achieve meaningful change, consensus building, collaboration and the strategic alignment of the human resource practitioner with leaders at all levels of the organization requires “a decline in the need for traditional control activities and an increase in the need for strategy making, expertise building and dissemination, opportunity sensing, and change orchestration” (Lawler III, Galbraith, 1993, p. 73). Human resource practitioners can contribute to organizations in four ways:

1. As a partner with senior and line managers in strategy execution.
2. As an expert in the way work is organized and executed, delivering an administrative efficiency to ensure that costs are reduced while quality is maintained.
3. As a champion for employees, representing their concerns to senior management and working to increase employee commitment to the organization.
4. As “an agent of continuous transformation, shaping processes and a culture that together improve an organization’s capacity to change” (Ulrich, 1998, p. 125).

Wheatley views the leadership and the development of a learning organization and the potential for the achievement of a strategic plan as one of guiding during chaos. She writes:

The importance of simple governing principles: guiding visions, strong values, and organizational beliefs – the few rules individuals can use to shape their own behaviour. The leader's task is to communicate them, to keep them ever-present and clear, and then allow individuals in the system their random, sometimes chaotic-looking meanderings (1992, p. 133).

Chapter Three reviewed the process of SEAAR that is rapidly evolving in major countries and reviewed strategic planning which is now considered traditional and embedded in the regular planning process of many organizations. The review of strategic planning noted that in some of the early models, a stakeholder process was a prominent part of strategic planning but, over time, it appears that the importance of a stakeholder process was replaced by a focus on environmental scanning.

Chapter Four that follows describes the process of SEAAR that was adapted, the methodology that was used to conduct a social audit at North Island College, and the backgrounds of the respondents who participated in the completion of the social audit questionnaire.

CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY

Chapter Four focuses on the process of SEAAR that was used to assess the social performance of the College. It describes the methodology and introduces the process of social auditing and its alignment with the College's strategic planning process. The social audit enhanced the information normally gained through an environmental scan of an organization's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) and resulted in new strategic directions for the management of human resources.

This was the first social audit conducted at the College and due to timing and funding constraints, a decision was made to narrow the focus of the social audit to a review of certain managerial practices, human resource policies and programs and environmental issues related to health and safety. At all times, the key principles of SEAAR were kept in view and the integrity of the process was maintained during an intense period of learning and research.

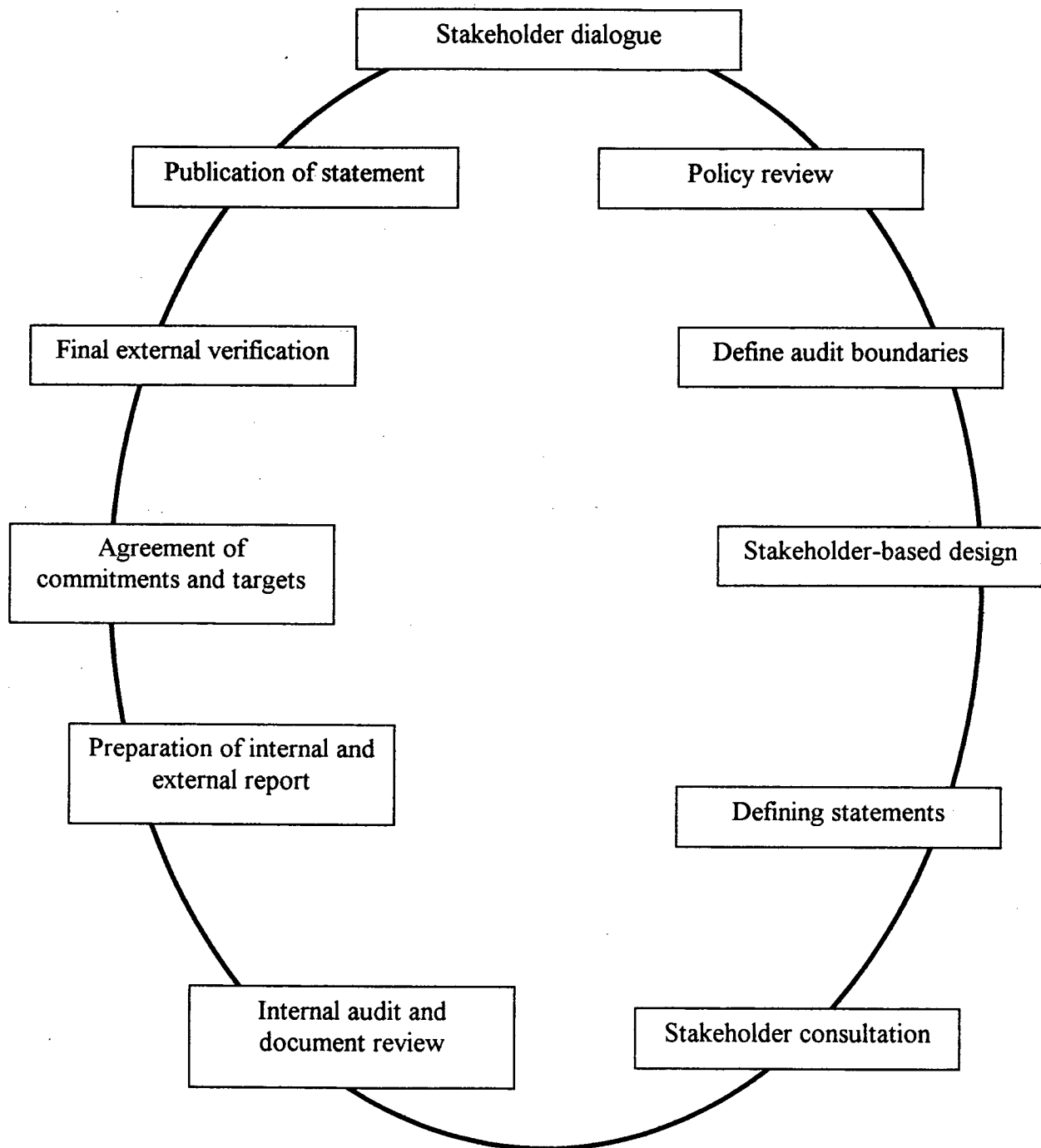
During the development of the social audit questionnaire, I read and learned about the process, sought advice, and shared early drafts of a social audit questionnaire with employees, colleagues and friends. As my confidence in the process of SEAAR increased, I sought feedback from employees whom I respected and from those whom I expected to be critical; rigorous and even skeptical about a social auditing process in a community college. The social audit questionnaire evolved over a three-month period; the responses from even the toughest critics were supportive and encouraging; the advice was invaluable, and the form of the social audit questionnaire took shape in consultation with many employees. In the absence of an external verification process, an internal process of consultation and collaboration was used for a number of reasons. First it reduced personal bias on my part; second it created an inclusive process with as many people as possible involved in the design of the questionnaire, thirdly it created learning

and contributed to people thinking about the social performance of the College. As part of a learning process and a personal research project, and initially without funding or additional resources, a method emerged for implementing the social audit questionnaire. The social audit questionnaire and a description of the research project was submitted to and received the approval of University of British Columbia's Ethical Review Committee (Appendix C).

Principles and functions of SEAAR were examined, adapted and implemented, and the process aligned with the College's strategic planning business cycle. Unlike a financial audit, which is performed within generally accepted accounting principles, social auditing is a voluntary process of accounting, reporting and disclosure. A financial audit is a verification exercise, often conducted by an external auditor who is responsible for verifying the accuracy of and the process used to manage the financial affairs of an organization. A social audit is strengthened by an external verification that assures bias reduction, accurate data and a fair and true view of the evidence.

Designing the Social Auditing Process

The social auditing process at the College was adapted from the literature of the New Economics Foundation (NEF), the Institute of Social and Ethical AccountAbility (ISEA), both headquartered in London, England, and other organizations practicing various forms of social and ethical auditing. The first two organizations provided verbal permission for me to use their processes if full credit was given to both organizations. The Department of Ethical Auditing of The Body Shop (UK) provided assistance by sharing examples of questionnaires and a description of their methodology. Figure 10 describes the audit cycle that was adapted from the methodology used by the Body Shop as part of their ethical auditing process; it enables work to begin at various stages of the cycle.



Source: Adapted from The Body Shop Approach to Ethical Auditing, January 1998, p. 18.

The questionnaire consisted of seven sections with sixty-seven statements related to human resource policies and programs, managerial practices, and organizational life, including a section related to community and family life. The development of a questionnaire with a broad number of statements through a collaborative process avoided the omission of important statements and reduced the likelihood that researcher bias would substantially influence the types of statements included and the eventual results. The process of designing and conducting the questionnaire component of the social audit began in November 1998, and concluded in the spring of 1999. The social audit questionnaire evolved through a number of drafts before being formally tested in a pilot project by fifteen employees consisting of five faculty, five staff and five administrators.

Following the development of the social audit questionnaire, and the implementation and review of the social audit pilot test, final changes were made to the questionnaire, and Dr. Lou Dryden, President of North Island College, provided approval to conduct the social audit (Appendix D). The social audit questionnaire (Appendix A) was distributed with a letter (Appendix E) that described its purpose, and invited all employees to participate in the process.

Scope of the Social Audit

The Social Audit Questionnaire

An organizational survey serves many purposes. In this case, the social audit questionnaire promised to establish an internal benchmark for how the College's policies and programs were performing at a certain point in time. The dimensions for developing statements for the College's social audit questionnaire were identified through a study of questionnaires used by other organizations, a review of human resource policy and program areas to identify

gaps, personal reflection on the effectiveness of current policies and programs and the collaborative effort of employees and colleagues at North Island College.

Members of the stakeholder groups proposed statements and areas for inclusion, read and edited drafts, and when the final social audit questionnaire was completed, more than fifty employees had actively been involved in reading, editing and pilot testing drafts before the final questionnaire was adopted. Questions were broadly based and ample space was provided on the questionnaire for open-ended commentary on any aspect of the College's performance. Employees were informed that completion of the questionnaire was voluntary and anonymous, and arrangements were made for many employees to complete the social audit during work hours rather than on their own time.

Development of Social Audit Statements

A key strategy of social accounting and auditing includes the development of performance indicators based on stakeholder input. In this case, each statement included in the social audit questionnaire asked respondents to express their level of agreement or disagreement with a statement and the results emerged from this process. Social audit statements, performance indicators and measurements were linked to various social and environmental factors of the College and many were in policy areas related to students, employee satisfaction, business processes, employee learning, positive reputation, community linkages, trust relationships with employees, and specific indicators were related to human resources policy and practice, including health and safety issues. Policies and practices that affected the work life of employees were emphasized.

The final social audit questionnaire evolved through a number of editions. Although the sixteen-page questionnaire was long, it was comprehensive in its coverage. The final

questionnaire consisted of seven sections with a number of statements representing various policies, programs and values as follows:

Section A included twenty-five statements that were related to employee satisfaction. The initial development of statements for this section included an examination of current policies and programs, a review of organizational climate surveys used by other organizations, a social audit questionnaire developed and used by The Body Shop UK (with permission), and a review of dimensions used in the development of various organizational climate surveys (Kraut, 1996, pp. 306 - 307). The statements were developed to fit with the culture of North Island College. For example, in selecting the indicator empathy, Statement A14 was developed to read, "Employees care and support each other." This enabled employees to provide feedback on whether they agreed that the College's culture encouraged caring and supportive behaviours. A total of twenty-five statements were developed for Section A, including a mix of statements that applied to whether the College's programs and policies contribute to employment satisfaction, or whether satisfaction is derived from an employee's experience of working at the College.

Section B focused on wages and benefits and the six statements were based on the degree to which people agreed to certain statements about their pay and benefits. A general statement concerning the College's health and welfare benefits was included, along with statements on wages, wage rates and employees' views on the issue of fair compensation for hours worked. Some of the statements were deemed to be not applicable to certain stakeholder groups, and respondents were provided with the opportunity to select that as a response.

Section C focused on communications, consultation and decision making; all key managerial practices. The process of SEAAR is committed to openness and transparency; therefore, an organization interested in examining its social performance must also be committed to communications, consultation and decision making that are open, inclusive and transparent.

The statements were intended to measure transparency, inclusivity, accuracy of information and whether employees were able to trust the process of communications, consultation and decision making. The final statement in Section C asked respondents to declare whether they thought the College would take the results of the survey seriously and respond to the concerns of employees.

Section D focused on health, safety and physical environment. Some of the statements identified activities that are covered by legislation such as the Workers' Compensation Board of British Columbia regulations, and compliance is a critical feature at all College locations. This section included a broad range of statements relating to physical workspace, ergonomics, safety, well being, unsafe conditions and dealing with difficult or hostile people.

Section E had more statements and questions than any of the other sections and focused on workload and stress. Employees have expressed their concern about stress in the workplace, increased workloads, and there are increases in sick leave, disability leaves and the cost of the College's employee benefits plans have increased significantly since 1998. The issue of stress and increased workloads has been the subject of discussions on several occasions between the College and both unions that represent the employees.

A decision was made to dedicate a section of the social audit questionnaire to stress and workload and to explore the issue by asking respondents to provide information regarding stress resulting from increased workload. A series of statements and questions asked respondents to disclose information about their work hours and their perception of what factors contributed to stress and increased workloads, and it explored the mechanisms that respondents used to cope with stress.

Section F had seven statements related to diversity and equality of opportunity and asked respondents to consider whether College policies and programs contributed to an awareness of

and an ability to prevent discrimination in terms of sexual and personal harassment, and diversity.

Section G had six statements related to the mission and values of the College. In Section G, participants were asked to reflect on values that related to the support of economic, social, cultural and environmental sustainability (Statement G2), and environmental richness and biological diversity (Statement G5). Statements G2 and G5 were included as they were relatively new to the College as values. The values of environmental sustainability (G2) and environmental richness and biological diversity (G5) are value statements that might be measured in social auditing processes. I reflected on whether the college community had embraced these statements and values and included them in the social audit questionnaire.

In keeping with the notion that organizations consider the needs of the whole person when developing policy, three optional statements were added regarding childcare, elder care and volunteer activities in the community. Throughout the social audit questionnaire, ample space was provided for additional comments.

Data Analysis and Reporting

The questionnaire used the same scale for each statement. Respondents were asked to respond to each statement using a scale that consisted of “strongly disagree,” “disagree,” “neither agree nor disagree,” “agree,” and “strongly agree.”

In order to present data to employees that were meaningful and manageable, along with other information found in the strategic planning environmental “SWOT,” the survey results were recoded into categories that would indicate that the response was favourable, neutral, or unfavourable. Thus, the total number of respondents who indicated either “strongly agree” or “agree” were collapsed into a category called “Agree” and described as favourable. Neutral

results were obtained from the “neither agree nor disagree” category; and unfavourable results were obtained by collapsing the total number of respondents who indicated either “strongly disagree” or “disagree” into a category called “Disagree.” The statements that received an overall rating of “Agree” that was higher than 70% were considered strengths that could be built on, and the statements that received an overall rating that was less than 50% were considered areas of weakness that needed improvement.

Review of Current Human Resource Policies and Programs

Various policies and programs contribute to the College’s social performance and a policy review is a critical element of a social audit. The information gained from the review and from the results of the social audit questionnaire provided useful information about the effectiveness of some managerial practices and the human resource policies and programs. The policies and programs that were reviewed in conjunction with the implementation of the social audit questionnaire fell into four categories. The first category included the health and welfare programs provided by the employer that were part of collective agreements. The second category included forms of employee protection that are required by legislation, such as Workers’ Compensation Board programs, and various safety, pension and insurance programs. The third category included policies such as job sharing. A fourth category included a number of general policies and programs that cover all employees at the College rather than distinct policies for particular groups.

Pilot Testing the Social Audit Questionnaire

The February 23, 1999 draft of the social audit questionnaire was used to pilot test the survey instrument prior to the general distribution of the social audit questionnaire. I invited fifteen employees to participate in the completion of the social audit questionnaire, and all

agreed to participate in completing the social audit. The pilot test group was not selected randomly. Rather, I selected and invited employees to be part of a test group based on their representation of different stakeholder groups, their gender, and their location at the College. Most of all, I trusted these employees to be rigorous and truthful. The test group consisted of five support staff, five faculty and five administrators, and I attempted to provide a balance of responses from locations within the four major regions, with a mix of male and female respondents in full and part time positions. Table 1 describes the pilot test group:

Table 1 Description of Pilot Test Group by Stakeholder Group and Location

| Employee Group | Number | Comox Valley Region | Campbell River Region | Port Alberni Region | Port Hardy Region |
|----------------|--------|---------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Support Staff | 5 | 5 | - | - | - |
| Faculty | 5 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| Administration | 5 | 3 | 1 | 1 | - |
| Total | 15 | 9 | 2 | 3 | 1 |

Of the fifteen employees participating in the pilot test group, nine were female and six were male. Of the fifteen social audit questionnaires that were distributed, 86% (13) were returned. This was an excellent response, and of the thirteen that were returned, eleven or 85% of the thirteen pilot test respondents indicated further interest in the process and agreed to participate in individual interviews or focus groups, if these were conducted. It is worth noting that based on the results and the information in the thirteen test questionnaires that were returned there was sufficient information to convince me that a social audit would be a worthwhile process.

The participants in the pilot test of the social audit questionnaire were invited to complete the audit, and provide feedback on the process, including the length of time to complete the questionnaire. Only one person indicated that they found the questionnaire too long. That

person and one other person indicated that they had taken considerable time to reflect on the statements and to respond carefully to the social audit, and they indicated that the questionnaire took more than one hour to complete. The remaining eleven employees indicated that it took between 40 and 50 minutes to complete the questionnaire. Employees who made numerous comments that added to the understanding and value of the social audit questionnaire took more time to complete. As a result of this feedback, the instructions to complete the social audit were changed to indicate that it might take up to one hour to complete, depending on the number of comments made by a respondent.

An analysis of the pilot test of the social audit questionnaire, the results and the comments revealed a depth and a richness that reflected on the respondents' experience of organizational life. The social audit questionnaire was more useful when respondents added comments.

Following the review of the social audit pilot test, final changes were made to the social audit questionnaire and Dr. Lou Dryden, President of North Island College, provided approval to conduct the social audit, and a letter was sent to employees that invited them to complete the social audit during working hours.

Conducting the Social Audit

The social audit questionnaire was distributed to 424 employees through the College's internal mail system, and respondents returned their completed questionnaires in sealed envelopes to the attention of the Director, Human Resources. One hundred and sixty completed questionnaires were returned out of the 424 distributed, for a response rate of 37.7%. The survey was distributed to all employees based on the principles of inclusiveness. While a higher

response rate would have been preferred, this level of response is considered acceptable for an organizational survey of this size and nature (Kraut, 1996, p. 158).

Each returned questionnaire was allocated a code based on the Stakeholder Group (F = Faculty, S = Support Staff, and A = Administration), and a number. Each questionnaire was given an identification number and confidentiality was maintained. The numbers ranged between F1 and F97 for faculty, S1 and S48 for support staff and A1 and A17 for administrators. Upon receipt, each questionnaire was given an alphanumerical identification, and filed sequentially by group. I keyed and verified for accuracy the results of the survey into an SPSS database. I word processed the majority of the comments for each questionnaire into Word documents but towards the end of this process asked for and received permission from the College to hire an employee to assist with the word processing. The comments were sorted into two formats that enabled the research to be reviewed based on stakeholder group or by questionnaire section. As the data input and word processing were carried out, backup copies were made and filed for security purposes.

Sashkin and Prien refer to three ethical responsibilities concerning the development and implementation of survey questionnaires. The first is to ensure that the commitment to anonymity is maintained; the second is to ensure that the participants understand the nature of voluntary participation; and the third is the control of data during the process (1996, pp. 392 – 395). The first issue arose immediately. In the absence of an external verification process, it was not possible for employees to return their completed questionnaires to an external source to ensure absolute confidentiality. The respondents were informed that their returned questionnaire would remain confidential and would only be reported in aggregate form, and while this protected the respondents and allowed them to express their views without fear of reprisal, it probably contributed to some employees not participating in the completion of the survey. When

conducting audits of this type, it is preferable to have the questionnaires returned to an external agency. The external agency compiles the results, presents the findings to the organization and ensures that confidentiality is maintained.

The second issue involved the voluntary nature of the completion of the social audit. When a survey is voluntary, there is always a concern that there may be insufficient response. I was conscious of the fact that the questionnaires were being returned to me. At all times, I was respectful of the voluntary participation of employees in the completion of the questionnaire. I arranged for employees to complete the questionnaire during work time, and I developed reminders specifically written for each group. The reminders were sent to all employees by electronic mail, and reiterated that participation was voluntary, and confidential. The reminders were not coercive; they asked employees to provide feedback so that improvement could be made based on their needs. The reminders to each employee resulted in an increased number of returned questionnaires.

Confidentiality and access to the data was controlled by limiting the number of people who had access to the individual questionnaires to two people – an assistant who was hired to type the comments for approximately half of the questionnaires, and myself. Access to the data was minimized and providing off-site storage for the data in locked filing cabinets enhanced the issue of confidentiality. Once the data was compiled, only representatives who were authorized to review the data for purposes essential to the social audit process were provided with access, and then only to the summarized data.

Stakeholders

The possible stakeholder groups with an interest in North Island College include:

1. Students – 2000 full-time equivalent students translating to approximately 3,905 head count with an additional 4,000 students in continuing and community education.
2. Employees: Faculty: This refers to teaching faculty, non-teaching faculty, librarians and counselors who belong to the North Island College Faculty Association (259 employees).

Support Staff: refers to the staff who provide technical and administrative support and who belong to the Canadian Union of Public Employees, Local 3479 (135 employees).

Administrators: This refers to employees in positions that are excluded from either of the above unions (30 employees).
3. Unions (North Island College Faculty Association and Canadian Union of Public Employees, Local 3479).
4. Members of the Board of Governors – fourteen (14) representatives including representatives of each of the College's regions, First Nations, youth, support staff, students and faculty.
5. Members of the communities served by the College (all communities within the College region – a geographic region covered by six school districts).
6. Agencies and individuals with whom the College collaborates for the delivery of certain educational services
7. Key agencies and individuals with an interest in the College (school districts, municipalities).
8. Members of the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia who represent the communities served by the College.

9. First Nations Peoples and their Advisory Committees.
10. College Programs and their Advisory Committees.
11. Key individuals in the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology.
12. Suppliers and others who conduct business with the College.
13. Employers who hire the College's graduates.

For the purpose of this research project, and because the study concentrated on auditing the social side of the organization as a reflection of its human resource policies and practices, the social audit was narrowed to include only faculty, support staff and administration. In aligning the social audit with a strategic planning process, many of the stakeholder groups identified above were surveyed or included in other surveys being conducted at that time.

It is acknowledged that one of the most sensitive and important processes in social and ethical auditing is the engagement of stakeholder representatives in dialogue about the social auditing processes (The Body Shop International, 1997, p. 21). Stakeholders are encouraged in face-to-face meetings to discuss salient issues and it is critical that stakeholders are free to express their views and concerns in both the social audit questionnaire and in the focus groups that may be held as part of this process. The next section describes the backgrounds of the employees who completed the questionnaire.

The Sample

This section describes the sample of respondents and its composition. The College employed four hundred and twenty-four employees in February, 1999 and each employee was invited to participate in the completion of the survey. One hundred and sixty questionnaires were returned for a return rate of 37.7%. The returned questionnaires were considered

representative of the organization. A number of tables follow that describe the backgrounds of the respondents.

There are three employee groups at the College – support staff, faculty and administrators. The faculty group is the largest and represents almost 63% of the total population with 265 employees; the support staff represents nearly 31% of the total population with 131 employees and administrators make up nearly 7% with 28 employees. The respondents who participated in the completion of the survey were comprised of 30% support staff (48) respondents; almost 59% faculty (94), and nearly 11% were administrators (17). Table 2 describes the total number of employees in the College and the total number of respondents in the sample.

Table 2 Total Number of Employees in College and Total Respondents in Sample.

| Group | Number of Employees in College By Group | | Number of Respondents in Sample By Group | | Number of Respondents by Group as a Percentage of Employees |
|-------------------|---|------|--|------|---|
| | # | % | # | % | % |
| Support Staff | 131 | 30.9 | 48 | 30.0 | 13.7% |
| Faculty | 265 | 62.5 | 94 | 58.5 | 35.5% |
| Administration | 28 | 6.6 | 17 | 10.6 | 60.7% |
| No Identification | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0.6 | - |
| Total | 424 | 100 | 160 | 100 | 37.7% |

As can be seen in Figure 2, the proportion of employees responding in the different categories was very similar to the groups in terms of overall numbers and therefore, the sample can be considered representative.

Background Information on Respondents

Section H of the social audit questionnaire asked respondents to describe their background including work location, position category, appointment category, full-time or part-time status, gender, age, years of service, and educational qualifications. This enabled the findings to be examined from a variety of viewpoints. Employees at North Island College are located in more than 15 different campuses and centres with some required to work at more than one location. Most administrators and some faculty and support staff have College-wide responsibilities and are required to travel to and work in any of the College's locations, depending on the work assignment.

Location, Position, Appointment Status, Gender and Full or Part-time Status of Work

The following describes the background of the respondents by location of work, position, status of appointment, gender and whether they work full or part-time.

Description of Respondents by Location of Work

Respondents were asked to identify where they spent most of their time working, for identifying their work location, as many employees work in more than one location or have College-wide responsibilities. The Comox Valley Campus is the largest campus of the College and 39% (63), the majority of the respondents, reported working at that location. The next campus in size is Campbell River and 28.1% (45) reported working at the Campbell River Campus, followed by Port Alberni with 18.8% (30) of the respondents. Just over 5% of the respondents reported working at Port Hardy and 6% (10) of the respondents worked at one of eleven Community Learning Centres; two respondents chose not to identify their work location.

Description of Respondents by Appointment Status

The majority of respondents, 78% (124) described their appointment status as regular, meaning that they are appointed to their position until they either resign or action by the College terminates the position. 16% (26) of the respondents described their appointment status as sessional. Support staff respondents in sessional positions work for ten months of the year and have a seasonal lay off. Faculty in sessional positions work in temporary or contract positions for a variety of reasons including replacing faculty on leave, or temporary program funding; they experience less certainty about future work.

Just over 1% (2) of the respondents described their positions as temporary. Less than 1% (1) was in a substitute position and just over 4% (7) of the respondents were in contract positions. Just over 4% (7) described themselves as department chairs with a regular appointment. One respondent chose not to identify his or her appointment status.

Description of Respondents by Gender

Nearly 70% (111) of the respondents were female, and just over 29% (47) were male. Two respondents chose not to identify their gender. Programs that have as their aim the amelioration of inequities or systemic discrimination might review the mix of gender in the various administrative, support staff and professional groups. North Island College, over the past decade, has established policies to ensure that systemic discrimination is alleviated within its operational processes. The College and the North Island College Faculty Association provided nearly fifty employees in sessional faculty positions, mostly women, with regular positions that have full access to benefits, pension and professional development during the first set of collective bargaining in 1992/1993. To further ameliorate conditions that existed before 1990, the College and the North Island College Faculty Association have enhanced the pensions of

faculty, mostly women, who were denied access to the pension plan between 1970 and 1989 because they occupied sessional teaching positions.

Nevertheless, due to the amount of entrepreneurial and contract training activities, the number of part-time and temporary positions continues to grow, although where possible, based on the duration of the contacts, employees are offered benefits, and access to pension. Employees in temporary positions are afforded regular status when their length of service meets particular time thresholds. However, when there is an opportunity for permanent, full-time work and employees state their preference for part-time work, it is often a challenge to accommodate certain individual requests and maintain as many full-time positions as possible. Where possible, the College has implemented job-sharing programs that provide both employees in a job share with access to benefits and pensions.

Description of Respondents by Full or Part-Time Status

Sixty-three percent (111) respondents were in full-time positions with a further 36% (59) in part-time positions. One respondent chose not to identify. There were equal numbers of full (24) and part-time (24) support staff respondents. Sixty-three percent of faculty (60) were full-time and 36% were part-time (34). All administrators (17) were full-time. Table 4 describes the respondents by age, length of service and education.

Table 3 describes the work location, position category, and appointment status, gender and whether the respondent works on a full or part-time basis.

Table 3 Respondents by Location, Appointment Status, Gender and Full or Part-Time Work

| Category | All | | Support Staff | | Faculty | | Administration | |
|----------------------------|----------------------|------------|---------------|------------|-----------|------------|----------------|------------|
| Sample Size | n = 160 ¹ | | n = 48 | | n = 94 | | N = 17 | |
| | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| Location | | | | | | | | |
| Campbell River | 45 | 28 | 12 | 25 | 27 | 29 | 6 | 35 |
| Comox Valley | 63 | 39 | 22 | 14 | 31 | 33 | 10 | 59 |
| Port Alberni | 30 | 19 | 9 | 6 | 20 | 21 | 1 | 6 |
| Port Hardy | 9 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 6 | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| Community Learning Centres | 10 | 6 | 2 | 1 | 8 | 9 | 0 | 0 |
| No Response | 3 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 160 | 100 | 48 | 100 | 94 | 100 | 17 | 100 |
| Appointment Status | | | | | | | | |
| Regular | 124 | 78 | 39 | 81 | 68 | 72 | 17 | 100 |
| Sessional | 26 | 16 | 6 | 12 | 20 | 21 | 0 | 0 |
| Other | 10 | 6 | 3 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 160 | 100 | 48 | 99 | 94 | 100 | 17 | 100 |
| Gender | | | | | | | | |
| Male | 47 | 29 | 4 | 8 | 35 | 37 | 8 | 47 |
| Female | 111 | 69 | 44 | 92 | 58 | 62 | 9 | 53 |
| No Response | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 160 | 99 | 48 | 100 | 94 | 100 | 17 | 100 |
| Full or Part Time | | | | | | | | |
| Full-Time | 101 | 63 | 24 | 50 | 60 | 63 | 17 | 100 |
| Part-Time | 59 | 36 | 24 | 50 | 34 | 36 | 0 | 0 |
| No Response | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 160 | 100 | 48 | 100 | 94 | 99 | 17 | 100 |

¹One respondent who completed the social audit questionnaire did not indicate appointment status or whether working full or part-time. Subtotals sub to 159.

The following describes the age, years of service and education of the respondents.

Description of Respondents by Age

Nearly 50% (79) of respondents were in the 46 – 55 age group and just over 11% (18) were over 55 years of age, with the result that nearly 61% (97) were 46 years of age or older. The next largest group of respondents was in the age group 35 - 45 years, with nearly 31% (49) in this age group. Just over 11% (18) were over 55, and 6.3% (10) were between the ages of 27 and 35. Only one respondent was less than 27 years of age. Two respondents chose not to identify their age group.

Description of Respondents by Years of Service

Almost 12% of respondents (19) had less than one year of service, while the same percentage and number reported more than 15 years of service. Just over 36% (58) reported service of between one and five years, 25.6% (41) reported working for the College between six and 10 years, and 12.5% (20) had been employed between 11 and 15 years. Just over 48% (77) were hired within the last five years. With the growth of the College since 1990, the majority of respondents have been hired since 1990.

Description of Respondents by Education

Nearly 60% of the respondents (93) reported holding a bachelor's degree or higher, and many reported working on professional development programs to complete higher-level credentials. Among support staff, 79% (38) reported an education higher than Grade 12; 71% (67) of the faculty had either a bachelor's or master's degree, and nearly 6% (9) of the respondents reported having a doctorate degree.

Description of Respondents' Plans for Further Education and Training

The pursuit of further education and training for employees is a critical policy issue for organizations at any time. Just over 47% of respondents (76) indicated that they were pursuing further education; 79.4% (127) indicated that they intended to continue or pursue further education or training in the future.

Description of Respondents' Involvement in Family or Community

The social audit questionnaire asked participants to respond to three questions that measured the time that employees were involved with family and community roles so that the College could determine if the policies and practices supported these roles. Forty-five percent of respondents (72) reported that they had responsibility for childcare, and 19.4% (31) had responsibility for the care of an elder relative. Just over 67% (107) indicated that they volunteered for community projects, and in the six months preceding the survey, respondents contributed over 6,100 hours of voluntary time to community projects.

Table 4 Description of Respondents by Age, Length of Service and Education

| Category | All n = 160 ¹ | | Support Staff n = 48 | | Faculty n = 94 | | Administration n = 17 | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|-------------------------|------------|-------------------|------------|--------------------------|------------|
| | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| Age | | | | | | | | |
| Less than 27 | 1 | 0.6 | 1 | 2.1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 27 – 35 | 10 | 6.3 | 3 | 6.2 | 7 | 7.5 | 0 | 0 |
| 36 – 45 | 49 | 30.6 | 19 | 39.6 | 28 | 29.8 | 2 | 11.8 |
| 46 – 55 | 79 | 49.4 | 24 | 50.0 | 42 | 44.7 | 13 | 76.4 |
| Over 55 | 18 | 11.3 | 1 | 2.1 | 15 | 15.6 | 2 | 11.8 |
| No Response | 2 | 1.9 | - | - | 2 | 2.1 | - | - |
| Total | 160 | 100 | 48 | 100 | 94 | 100 | 17 | 100 |
| Years of Service | | | | | | | | |
| Less than 1 | 19 | 11.9 | 9 | 18.8 | 7 | 7.5 | 3 | 17.6 |
| 1 – 5 | 58 | 36.3 | 19 | 39.6 | 31 | 32.9 | 7 | 41.1 |
| 6 – 10 | 41 | 25.6 | 12 | 25.0 | 25 | 26.6 | 4 | 23.5 |
| 11 – 15 | 20 | 12.5 | 3 | 6.2 | 16 | 17.0 | 1 | 5.9 |
| More than 15 | 19 | 11.9 | 4 | 8.3 | 13 | 13.8 | 2 | 11.8 |
| No Response | 3 | 1.9 | 1 | 2.1 | 2 | 2.1 | - | - |
| Total | 160 | 100 | 48 | 100 | 94 | 100 | 17 | 100 |
| Education | | | | | | | | |
| Grade 12 | 12 | 7.5 | 10 | 20.8 | 1 | 1.1 | 1 | 5.9 |
| Certificate | 20 | 12.5 | 18 | 37.5 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 5.9 |
| Diploma | 14 | 8.8 | 8 | 16.7 | 5 | 5.3 | 1 | 5.9 |
| Trades | 10 | 6.3 | 1 | 2.1 | 7 | 7.4 | 2 | 11.8 |
| Bachelor | 33 | 20.6 | 7 | 14.6 | 26 | 27.6 | 0 | 0 |
| Master | 51 | 31.9 | 1 | 2.1 | 41 | 43.6 | 9 | 52.9 |
| Doctorate | 9 | 5.6 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 7.5 | 2 | 11.8 |
| Other | 10 | 6.3 | 2 | 4.2 | 2 | 2.1 | 1 | 5.9 |
| No Response | 1 | 0.6 | 1 | 2.1 | - | - | - | - |
| Total | 160 | 100 | 48 | 100 | 94 | 100 | 17 | 100 |

¹Some respondents chose not to identify in certain categories.

Environmental Scan (SWOT) and the Social Audit

The results of the SEAAR process complemented information that was being collected through an environmental scan that was part of the strategic planning process. The scan, consisting of a community survey and supplementary statistical information from the College's institutional research office, outlined the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. A community survey asked individuals in all College locations to provide input on various aspects of the College in their community. The report described the demography and economy of the College's various regions, programs, services, student enrolment and student satisfaction, and compared the College's performance to other colleges and institutes in the post secondary sector. The report included information on the delivery of services and the challenge of not meeting student demand in 1997/1998 and 1998/1999. It described a number of external factors that influenced the planning context of the College, including continued tuition freezes and the challenge of increased costs with limited resources (Beatty-Guenter, 1998, p. 4).

Verification

Verification is an integral part of a SEAAR process. Normally, a social auditor, skilled in verification processes, would be appointed at the beginning of the process and would work with an individual or a team assigned responsibility for the social audit. In the absence of funding to appoint an individual external to the College to perform the verification process, and in collaboration with the President of North Island College, the President later provided funds for an independent review by representatives from each employee group. The faculty and support staff representatives were provided with release time from their normal responsibilities and the results of the social audit was reviewed with members of their groups. Full information was

disclosed to each representative, and recommendations for improvements were made to the President. Summaries of these reports are located in Chapter Six.

A copy of the Social Report 2000 will be provided to the New Economics Foundation and the Institute of Social and Ethical Accountability for their files. A copy will be made available on the College's web site.

Strategy Development

As with any form of auditing, an important part of the process is setting strategic objectives and priority for the objectives. The Board of Governors of North Island College, through its process of Policy Governance, developed Ends Statements covering critical aspects that would require leadership and management if they were to be achieved. Ends Statement #7 calls for the College to be accountable, efficient, productive, and to foster employee satisfaction, personal dignity and professional development for its employees (*Strategic Plan 2000 – 2003*, 2000, p. 16).

On May 7, 1999, students, members of the Board of Governors and administration, support staff, and faculty participated in a planning day. The nine Ends (outcome) Statements of the Board of Governors were examined; culminating in the development of draft goals and strategies to address each ends statement. An Interim Report (Appendix F) based on early findings of the social audit added to the information found in the environmental audit (strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats). The goals and strategies were further refined and after extensive consultation, the goals and strategies were finalized and approved by the Board of Governors.

A number of improvements were identified and are part of the ongoing maintenance of various policies and functions within human resources. These strategic and tactical issues are

part of a human resource plan with improvements targeted for completion between 2000 and 2003. In some cases, dialogue with other administrators, faculty and staff, as well as unions, formed part of the improvement process. The next Social Audit will be conducted in 2002, before the commencement of the strategic planning process in 2003.

Preparation of Social Report 2000

The Interim Report of the social audit (Appendix F) contributed greatly to understanding the need for change in some areas that might have been otherwise ignored. Goals and strategies were established based on the interim findings, rather than reliance on perception or intuition. I promised to produce a report of the findings of the social audit, and the report was targeted for publication in late 1999. Due to the pressure of my workload and completing this thesis, I postponed the publication of the College's first Social Report until the fall of 2000, to coincide with the College's 25th Anniversary.

The Social Report will contain the most important findings based on the strengths and weaknesses identified by the respondents. There is a need for readers of the report to review the findings and on reflection, understand their role in contributing to the enhanced social performance of the College. The Social Report 2000 is based on the following format:

1. A description of the purpose of social auditing and the approach that was used.
2. The methodology used for questionnaire development.
3. The purpose of the independent reports and how verification would normally fit with the process of social auditing.
4. The overall results of the social audit questionnaire reported by groups, where this adds to the understanding of certain trends.
5. Where individuals can get further information about the social audit results.

6. Where individuals can get further information about social auditing.
7. A section describing the policy process at North Island College, and which policies need revision because of the social audit, as well as the identification of new policies.
8. A description of the plan that will establish recommendations for improvements for many human resource activities.
9. A statement from the President, setting out his reaction to the views found in the social report, noting where progress has been made, and plans for a future social audit.

Limitations

This study adapted a process of social auditing previously used in the private sector and through the collaborative development of a social audit questionnaire asked various stakeholders for their perceptions about working conditions and performance at a particular community college during a specific time. The limitations relate to the methodology, which is still evolving. The use of a social audit questionnaire, while useful for collecting the views of stakeholders, was time consuming and cumbersome when the compilation of data is considered. As the number of indicators was large, it was not feasible to place or evaluate any relative importance to any of the indicators.

Of the 424 employees on staff at the time, only 37.7% or 160 participated in the survey, and it might be assumed that the response rate was adversely affected because of the large number of statements.

The results of the social audit presented in this study also have some limitations. At this time, there is no consensus on how social performance is defined in a public sector organization.

Instead, through a collaborative effort involving a number of stakeholders, dimensions of performance were identified and the specific indicators chosen in this study could be criticized as lacking theoretical guidance. Future research is needed to identify a set of social performance indicators that have a strong theoretical basis, which can be compared over time against best practices, and on which consensus can be reached.

Another limitation is that as the data largely represents the perceptions of various stakeholders about working conditions and the performance of the institution, it is possible that these perceptions could be based on inaccurate information or limited experience. In the performance of a social audit, when negative perceptions of the institution's performance are described, that performance should be validated using other data from institutional or other sources to confirm the validity of perceptions.

The purpose of this study was to examine at a point in time certain practices and then to plan for improvements to various human resource and managerial practices. Section E of the social audit questionnaire includes specific statements related to workload and stress. While this has been of concern to the organization, no attempt has been made to establish relationships between factors such as workload and stress. In terms of this study, the results represent a snapshot of the organization and the findings can be generalized only for the particular period of time when the survey was conducted – during February and March of 1999.

From my point of view, I attempted at all times to be aware of my own bias. Some employees completed the questionnaire because they were interested in the results, others were suspicious that I conducted the survey, and I understand some refused to participate because they thought nothing would change. All of these reasons may have influenced the number of questionnaires returned. Nevertheless, the richness and the nature of the data provided me with a depth of understanding that encouraged me to continue my research in the area of social auditing

and indicated that as a tool, social auditing provides information that might subsequently be used to improve practice.

Summary

The methodology followed the practices of other organizations that have embraced social auditing as a way of measuring and planning for improvement. It focused on managerial practices and human resource policy and programs, with attention paid to health and safety factors. It did not survey the financial performance of the organization, or the environmental performance of the organization. I hope that I have done justice to a powerful and emerging process that warrants complete integrity if it is to contribute to enhancing the work life of employees. Chapter Five follows with a description of the findings from North Island College's first social audit.

CHAPTER FIVE: FINDINGS

Chapter Five presents the findings of North Island College's first social audit and establishes a framework for the analysis that follows in Chapter Six. First, a general overview of the results of the social audit is presented. Second, twenty statements that received the most and least favourable ratings from the respondents are described in terms of what these results might mean to the College. Third, the findings for each of the seven sections of the social audit questionnaire are presented, along with an in-depth review from the viewpoints of faculty, support staff and administrators. Finally, a review of the status of human resource policies and practices is compiled, along with recommendations for policy renewal or changes in practice.

Overview

The social audit was conducted in the winter and spring of 1999 and was part of a research project towards the completion of a doctor of education in educational leadership and policy. One hundred and sixty employees (37.7%) participated in the completion of the social audit questionnaire, and while this is considered acceptable for a survey of this type, a higher response rate would have been preferred. The results of the social audit provided an opportunity to recommend improvements as part of a strategic planning process and as part of the budgeting process that occurred in the spring of 2000.

Employees remained interested in the social audit, and in the fall of 1999, the President of North Island College provided special funding from the President's Initiative Fund to enable the results to be examined by a representative of each stakeholder group. Between September 1999 and January 2000, each representative was asked to assess the information, meet and discuss the results of the social audit with members of their groups, and make recommendations to the President.

During this same period, an external consultant was asked to prepare a specific report on issues related to faculty workload. The President of the College, the faculty representative and I received a copy of the Consultant's report on faculty workload. The recommendations of the three representatives and the consultant are described in Chapter Six.

While the collapsing of categories was useful for identifying areas of strength and weakness, it cannot be ignored that respondents were more likely to respond, "agree" than to respond, "strongly agree" to statements and they were more likely to respond, "disagree" than "strongly disagree." Between twenty and forty percent of respondents indicated that they neither agreed nor disagreed with many of the statements and these were considered neutral.

Appendix G contains tables that describe the distribution of responses using the collapsed categories of "agree," "disagree" and "neither agree nor disagree," as well as presenting the level of agreement for each group. Appendix H contains tables that describe the distribution of responses using the categories of "strongly agree," "agree," "neither agree, nor disagree," "disagree," and "strongly disagree." Appendix I graphs the information from the tables in Appendix H.

In addition to rating each statement, respondents were provided with an opportunity to comment on the statements in the social audit questionnaire. The comments were rich, varied and many. For example, Statement A3 asked people to rate whether the employees were committed to serving students well. In addition to receiving more than 90% agreement, respondents provided more than two hundred comments that expressed their concern for the welfare of students; the quality of programming for students and the ability of employees to meet the educational and special needs of adult students. This was significant, given that the intent of the social audit questionnaire was to evaluate the quality of work life and certain working conditions of employees. If the learning conditions for students have deteriorated because of

reduced resources, then it may follow that the working environment for employees in an educational organization might also be affected.

An overview of the results of the social audit questionnaire found that five statements (7.5%) received a rating of between 80% and 89% level of agreement, thirty-seven statements (55.2%) received a rating between 50% and 79% level of agreement and a further nineteen statements (28.3%) received a rating between 30% and 49% level of agreement. The remaining five statements (7.5%) received less than 20% level of agreement. At first glance, these findings indicated that the College had some policies and programs that contributed positively to the social performance of the organization and approximately ten of these statements received favourable ratings.

Ten Social Audit Questionnaire Statements with Highest Level of Agreement

One statement received higher than 90% “Agreement” and five statements received greater than 80% “Agreement.” These statements provided a strong foundation that could be linked with the College’s mission and value statements. The six statements included: commitment to serving students (Statement A3), commitment to performing well (Statement A5), commitment to ensuring relevant learning through accessible, quality education (Statement G1), agreement that the health and benefits program met the needs of employees (Statement B3), employee satisfaction with work (Statement A11), and an acknowledgement that employees understand their position responsibilities (Statement A1). Four other statements received ratings of between 70% and 79%. These include Statement A23 - employees treat each other with respect, Statement A14, an environment where employees cared and support each other. Statement D1, a safe physical working environment, and Statement D4, employees indicated that they knew how to handle a difficult or hostile person. This added to the sense of a safe working

environment. However, concerning Statement D4, members of faculty were more likely than administrators or support staff to respond that they did not know how to deal with a difficult or hostile person. In Statements A23 and A4, about respect and indicating that employees cared and supported each other, administrators were more likely to rate these lower than faculty or support staff.

Figure 11 displays the percentage of “agree” and “strongly agree” responses for each of the 10 most favourable statements. When these two categories are collapsed, the level of agreement for each statement ranges between 73% and 92%.

Figure 11 Selected Statements – Most Favourable Levels of Response

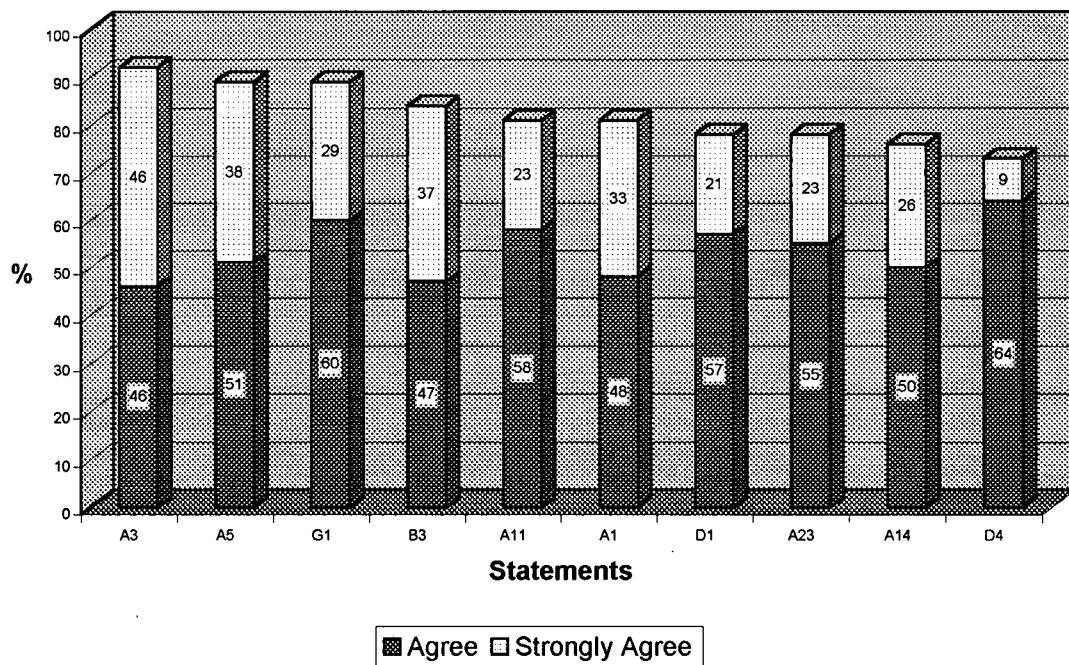


Table 5 presents the statements that received the most favourable level of response when the categories “strongly agree” and “agree” are collapsed.

Table 5 Selected Statements – Most Favourable Level of Response

| Statement # | Statement | Strongly Agree % | Agree % | Total % |
|-------------|--|---------------------|------------|------------|
| A3 | Employees are committed to serving students well. | 46 | 46 | 92 |
| A5 | Employees are committed to performing well. | 38 | 51 | 89 |
| G1 | North Island College’s purpose is to ensure relevant learning through accessible, quality education. | 29 | 60 | 89 |
| B3 | The health benefits at North Island College meet my needs. | 37 | 47 | 84 |
| A11 | I am satisfied with the work that I do. | 23 | 58 | 81 |
| A1 | I have a clear understanding of my position responsibilities. | 33 | 48 | 81 |
| D1 | North Island College provides me with a physical-working environment that is safe. | 21 | 57 | 78 |
| A23 | Employees treat each other with respect. | 23 | 55 | 78 |
| A14 | Employees care and support each other. | 26 | 50 | 76 |
| D4 | I know what to do when dealing with a difficult or hostile person. | 9 | 64 | 73 |

Ten Statements with Lowest Levels of Response

Ten statements in the social audit questionnaire received responses that were considered least favourable and indicated that improvements in policy and practice were needed. Of the ten, three were in the area of communications and decision making and included: C6 – decision

making is transparent at North Island College, C4 – information for making decisions flows openly and freely, and C5 – information is accurate and reliable. Communication and the provision of information have been and continue to be a concern at North Island College. Other statements that received unfavourable ratings included: B6 – compensation for overtime, A21 – opportunities for promotion, A10 – consistent application of policies, E3 – the pace of change is too fast, E5 – pressure of work is too great, D5 – ergonomics. The tenth statement in this category included one of the value statements of the College. Statement G5 refers to the College having programs and a working environment that reflects a commitment to sustaining the environmental richness and biological richness and diversity of the College region as part of a global strategy. Only 35% of the respondents agreed that the College was committed to this as a value, 21.3% disagreed, and 40.6% neither agreed nor disagreed. Two indicators received different responses when viewed from each stakeholder group. Statement D5 relates to the ergonomic features of an employee's workstation and administrators (82.4%) were more likely to respond that their workstation had ergonomic features that reduced their potential for health problems than support staff (33.4%) and faculty (25.6%). Statement C5 is concerned with information that is accurate and reliable, and 70.6% of administrators responded that information was accurate and reliable, while only 33% of faculty and just over 29% of support staff thought the same.

Figure 12 displays the percentage of “disagree” and “strongly disagree” responses for each of the ten statements that were least favoured. When the categories of “disagree” and “strongly disagree” are collapsed, the level of disagreement for each statement ranges between 14% and 50%.

Figure 12 Selected Statements – Least Favourable Levels of Response

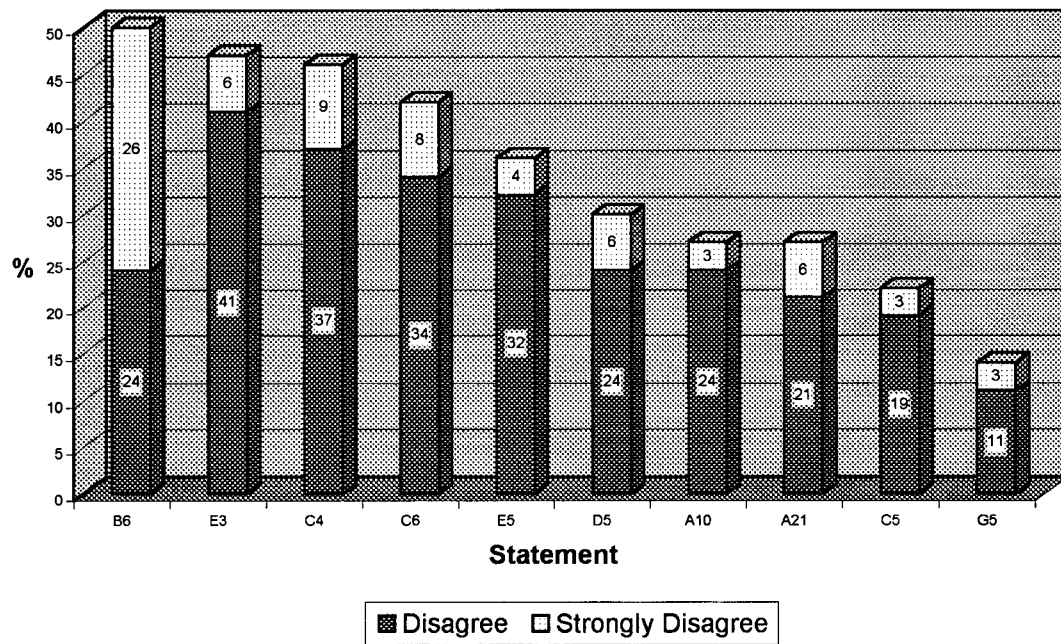


Table 6 presents the selected statements for Figure 12.

Table 6 Selected Statements – Least Favourable Level of Response

| Statement # | Statement | Strongly Disagree % | Disagree % | Total % |
|-------------|--|---------------------|------------|---------|
| B6 | I am compensated for the overtime that I work. | 26 | 24 | 50 |
| E3 | The pace of change is too fast. | 6 | 41 | 47 |
| C4 | Information for making decisions flows openly and freely. | 9 | 37 | 46 |
| C6 | Decision-making is transparent at North Island College. | 8 | 34 | 42 |
| E5 | I am under too much work pressure at North Island College. | 4 | 32 | 36 |
| D5 | The ergonomic features of my workstation reduce potential health problems. | 6 | 24 | 30 |
| A10 | Policies are consistently applied. | 3 | 24 | 27 |
| A21 | North Island College provides employees with opportunities for promotion to other positions. | 6 | 21 | 27 |
| C5 | The information communicated at North Island College is accurate and reliable. | 3 | 19 | 22 |
| G5 | North Island College's programs and working environment reflect a commitment to sustaining the environmental richness and biological diversity of the college region as part of the global strategy. | 3 | 11 | 14 |

The following examines the findings of each section of the questionnaire.

A Review of the Findings: Section A – Section G of the Social Audit Questionnaire

This section reviews each of the seven sections in the social audit questionnaire and describes the strengths and weaknesses of the College's practices from the perspective of the respondents, either as a total group or separated into faculty, support staff and administrators. Comments from respondents support the findings where this is appropriate.

The social audit questionnaire contained seven sections related to employee satisfaction; wages and benefits; communications, consultation and decision making; health, safety and physical environment; workload and stress; diversity and equality of opportunity; and values and mission statement. Each social audit questionnaire statement referred to a particular value, policy, human resource policy or program, or managerial practice. The results of the social audit questionnaire, combined with respondents' comments, contributed to the audit of the College's managerial practices and human resource policies and programs. Each of the seven sections of the social audit questionnaire revealed strengths and weaknesses, and highlighted areas for improvement. The results either confirmed my sense of the effectiveness of human resource policies and programs or provided evidence that some policies and programs required significant improvement if they were to contribute to employee satisfaction.

Section A – Employee Satisfaction

Section A asked respondents to provide a response that expressed their agreement to twenty-five statements that pertained to a particular policy or value, and measured the degree to which the College met its commitments in creating an environment that contributed to employee satisfaction. Each statement pertained to a particular policy or program already in place, or a value that had been espoused by the organization. The College's *Strategic Plan 2000 – 2003* includes, for the first time, a written statement of values, and except for the emphasis on

sustainability, many of the values were implicit in previous mission, vision and goal statements. The following represents the highlights of the findings for Section A.

Section A – Employee Satisfaction.

Four statements in Section A were among the ten highest statements in terms of percentage level of agreement among all of the sixty-seven statements. Almost 92% of respondents agreed that the College was committed to serving students (A3). Nearly 90% of respondents agreed that employees were committed to performing well (A5); 80% of respondents agreed that their position responsibilities were clear (A1), and almost 80% of employees responded that employees treat each other with respect (A23).

Conversely, significant improvements were needed in a number of major areas. Just over 44% of respondents agreed that they received sufficient feedback to improve their performance (A6); 42.5% agreed that they have the resources to do quality work (A7), and 36.3% agreed that they received appropriate training so that they could perform well (A13). Only 30% of respondents thought that the College provided promotional opportunities (A21).

The social audit results provide a view of an organization whose employees are committed to serving students and performing well, and who are satisfied with their work but concerned that they do not have the resources to do quality work. Respondents asked for feedback on their work so that they could improve their performance. Some administrators agreed that they received feedback to improve their performance and commented on the use of a 360° performance evaluation process. The 360° performance evaluation process is a multi-rater performance process where an individual assesses their own performance, and is then evaluated by peers, direct reports, and supervisor. Others commented that they have never been evaluated, and would welcome the opportunity to participate in an evaluation process. Faculty rated

receiving feedback to improve their performance (A6) as lowest with just over 39% agreement. Many respondents in faculty positions commented that they appreciated feedback from students and that this motivated them to make changes and improvements to their teaching.

While the levels of agreement from the three groups were consistent for most statements, in some cases, a policy or value might contribute to the quality of work life of one or two of the groups, but fail to support the third group. For example, with regard to Statement A9, “supervisors have the supervisory skills to do the job,” 76.4% of administrators and 68.7% of support staff agreed with this statement, only 55.3% of faculty agreed. Comments by faculty indicated that their supervisors require different skills, as their relationship is collegial rather than supervisory. Three other statements provided indications that groups often perceive a value, policy or program differently based on their needs, and this is exemplified in statement A15, “I am encouraged to learn new skills.” Only 53% of administrators and 53.2% of faculty agreed that they were encouraged to learn new skills, while 79.2% of support staff agreed that they were encouraged to learn new skills. In this regard, question H10 asked respondents if they planned to pursue further education or training in the future; 58% of support staff said yes, and just over 41% of faculty and administrators responded in the positive. The explanation for this may be that faculty and administrators already have professional qualifications at the bachelor level or higher, while the support staff may be less likely to have higher level credentials and understand the importance of education and training in a changing world. However, in an educational organization where life-long learning is valued and where a new strategic plan refers to the college as a community of learners, all employees might benefit from feedback about performance and encouraged to develop plans for their own learning. In order to achieve this, supervisors and department chairs will be offered training that includes principles of evaluation, writing and providing formative feedback, coaching and mentoring skills.

Another example of the difference in responses among the three groups is related to promotional opportunities in the College (A21). Just over 40% of administrators and support staff responded that there was an opportunity for promotion; just over 19% of faculty agreed that the College provided promotional opportunities. At the time of conducting the social audit, the College had 424 employees. Of these, thirty, or 7% were administrators. Between February 1999 and May 2000, four employees were promoted into administrative positions from their faculty or support staff positions, and three administrators were promoted to higher-level positions. In June 2000, a faculty member was appointed to a senior administrative position in an acting position. All were female.

When considering promotions for faculty, it usually means a move from the classroom to administration. Almost 80% of faculty indicated that they were satisfied with their work as teachers, and faculty are committed to the students and their passion for teaching rather than administration. Some members of faculty choose to apply for the position of department chair and this provides them with a mix of administrative responsibility and teaching, but it is not considered a promotion from a compensation perspective.

A further example of the difference in perceptions between the three groups revealed that while 59.6% of faculty agreed that a difficult or tragic event in an employee's life was acknowledged and met with appropriate support, this appeared low when compared with 82.3% agreement from administrators, and 77.1% from support staff. Most administrators and support staff build communities of support where they work on a regular basis, whereas members of faculty are more likely to align themselves with their departments that are located across the College in different locations. When employees only come together on one or two occasions per year, they are more likely to report being isolated from their peers.

A review of the background of respondents in comparison with the majority of statements revealed interesting dynamics. Seventy-nine (79) of the 160 respondents, or 49%, were female. However, female respondents in the age category of 46 – 55 were more likely to rate in the category of “agree” and “strongly agree” than men in this age group or any other age group. This implied that female respondents in the age group 46 – 55 were more likely to be satisfied with their employment than other groups. Most age groups and groups consisting of male respondents followed a pattern of responses that indicated that they agreed with the statements rather than expressing a strong agreement. Again, this analysis indicated that significant improvement was required in a number of human resource and managerial practices.

In the College’s *Strategic Plan 2000 – 2003*, values are described as “the fundamental beliefs that shape the college’s culture, philosophy and which guide its actions” (p. 5, 1999). One of the values refers to a “positive environment” and is defined as a commitment to provide a learning and working environment where individuals are treated with dignity and respect, governance is shared and excellence is affirmed” (p. 8, 1999). This value has been espoused for some time but many administrators reported that they did not feel as if they were treated with dignity and respect. One possible explanation for this is the difference between how administrators who are not part of an association or union are treated in comparison to employees who are part of an association or a union.

During the period 1998 to 2001, public policy established a three-year fiscal framework (wages, benefits and working conditions) for all public sector employees. This resulted in wages being frozen for a two-year period followed by a two percent salary increase in the third year. Unionized employees were provided with additional benefits through Accord agreements that were negotiated by the government, the unions and the employers. The costs of these accords were over and above the monetary framework policy of 0%, 0% and 2%. There was no

consideration given to granting a similar Accord agreement to employees in administrative positions who were exempt from union membership. Another example of exclusionary policies of the 1990s was the appointment of staff, students and faculty to the Boards of Governors of each post secondary education institute. While administrators were members of the Board of Governors by virtue of their ex-officio positions, (i.e. president, bursar or secretary to the Board), there was no legal right to elect an administrator to the Board. Many administrators have become disillusioned with an environment that speaks of equity and inclusion but does not afford them the same rights as other employees.

Respondents were asked to rate the level of morale (A22) in their departments. Just over 60% of administrators and 64% of support staff responded that morale was high, compared to just over 41% of faculty.

All groups consistently rated the statement, "I am recognized for my contribution to North Island College" (A 12) below 50% (44.7% faculty, 45.8% for support staff, and 47.1% for administrators).

All employees expressed concern about issues related to resource allocation. It is an issue of fairness in a College with activities in fifteen locations, and the competition for resources is great. All groups indicated to some extent that they do not have the resources to do quality work (Statement A7), and this was the only indicator in Section A with a mean rating below 3.00. Overall, 42% (67) of all respondents stated that they do not have the resources to perform quality work and equally, 62% (58) stated that they did not have the resources to perform quality work. It is not surprising to find that among the faculty respondents, 48% (45) of the faculty disagreed that they have the resources to do quality work. Faculty noted their responsibility for preparing students for employment, and expressed their concern that equipment was outdated. In particular, computers, technology, training aids and curriculum need

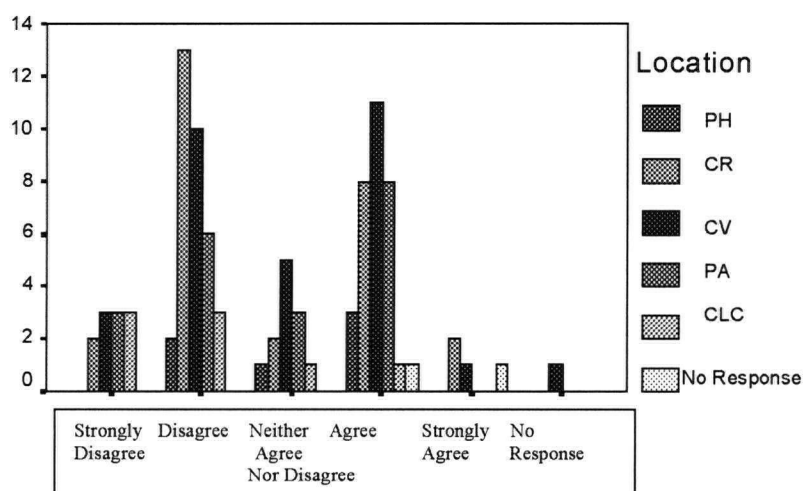
upgrading. In reviewing the issue of resource allocation by appointment status, faculty respondents in both regular and sessional appointments indicated a similar pattern of responses. Just over 43% (54) of faculty respondents in regular positions and 42% (11) of faculty in sessional positions indicated that they do not have the resources to perform quality work, while 42% (53) of respondents in regular positions and 38% (10) of respondents in sessional positions indicated that they did have the resources.

In some cases, administrators who negotiate contracts that are independent of the College's base funding may have discretionary funds that enable them to provide resources for non-base programs. The method of resource allocation causes resentment and respondents identified a need for policy that defines how decisions are made for resource allocation.

Faculty respondents in all locations were more likely to respond that they do not have the resources to perform quality work. Just over 55% (15) of faculty respondents in Campbell River, 42% (13) in Comox Valley, 45% (9) in Port Alberni and just over 78% (11) of the faculty in the Community Learning Centres indicated that they do not have the resources to perform quality work. In contrast, 36% or 34 of the faculty respondents stated that they do have the resources to perform quality work.

Figure 13 indicates an unfavourable response in various locations to the statement regarding whether faculty have the resources to perform quality work.

Figure 13 Faculty Response by Location: "I Have the Resources to do Quality Work."



Key: PH – Port Hardy, CR – Campbell River, CVC – Comox Valley Campus, PA – Port Alberni, CLC – Community Learning Centres.

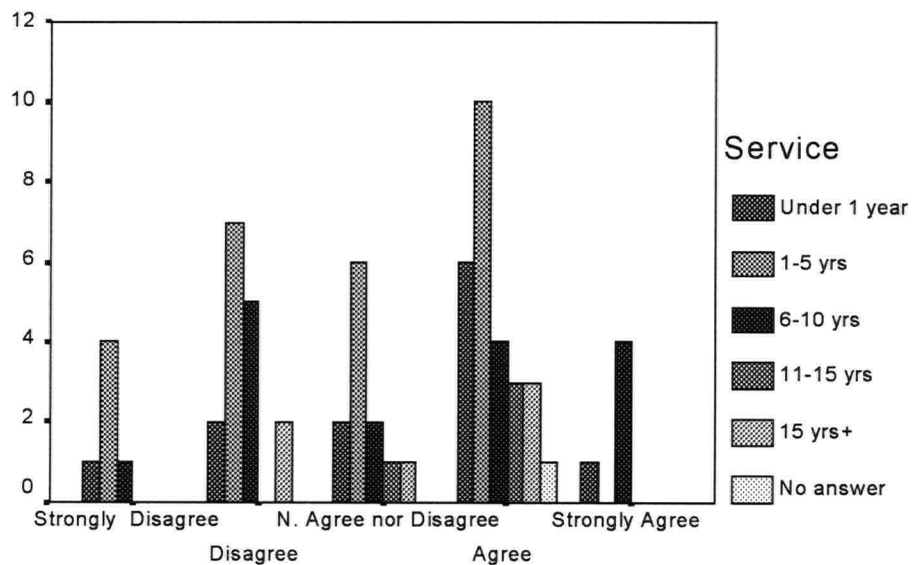
Cross tabulations were performed on many of the statements and Statement A7 – “I have the resources to do quality work” was the only one where certain demographic characteristics revealed marked differences based on when respondents were hired and their work location at the College.

Closer analysis using cross tabulations indicated that 34% (32) of faculty respondents with between one and ten years of service were more likely to say that they do not have the resources to perform quality work. While, 18% (17) faculty respondents with more than ten years of service were generally more satisfied with the resources available. This might be attributed to the aggressive expansion over the past decade that resulted in the College doubling the number of students to over 2000 full-time equivalent students and an aggressive building program with three new campuses in the Comox Valley in 1992, Port Alberni in 1994, and

Campbell River in 1997. Employees hired before 1991 are aware of the significant changes that have occurred since 1991. Employees hired after 1995, a time when the greatest growth occurred are more likely to respond that they do not have sufficient resources for their work.

Figure 14 presents the faculty responses to the statement “I have the resources to do quality work” by years of service.

Figure 14 Faculty Responses to: “I Have the Resources to do Quality Work.” by Years of Service.



Turning now to the issue of employees receiving appropriate training to perform duties (A13), and whether the College provides employees with opportunities for promotion to other positions (A21). Each group has its own professional development funds, however the professional development funds for support staff and administrators are not sufficient to support employees to keep up-to-date with technological change and to prepare employees for career changes or future promotions. There is an argument that as technology changes, the organization

is responsible for training and re-training employees. Thus, employees want to use career development funds to pursue training and development that will prepare them for future promotions or career changes rather than maintain their knowledge of their current positions. Only 36.3% of all respondents reported receiving appropriate training that enabled them to perform their duties well (A13). If continuous learning is a stated value and the vision of the college includes the notion of a college as a community of learners committed to quality, excellence, student success and lifelong learning, then the College might consider how its systems and structures might be barriers to achieving this vision.

At the time of conducting the social audit, there was no succession plan and no recognition of employees eligible for promotions. Succession planning is a sensitive process that must be balanced in a way that preserves the right of employees to have fair access to promotion opportunities. A new succession plan must recognize the concept of open competition to avoid any perception of systems that are inequitable or discriminatory. Clearly, respondents called for fair access to professional development, training in new technologies and a system that is committed to open competition and promotion from within for qualified candidates.

In conclusion, Section A contains 25 statements that might relate to policies and practices that enhance employee satisfaction. A review of each of the statements indicates that only one – A1 – “I have a clear understanding of my position responsibilities,” received a higher rating from administrators in the category “strongly agree” than in the category “agree.” Among the other statements, only A3 – “Employees are committed to serving students well,” was rated higher by support staff in the category “strongly agree” than in the category “agree.” In all other statements, respondents were more likely to rate in the category “agree,” rather than “strongly agree.”

Section B - Wages and Benefits

Section B contained six (6) statements but only one statement - B3 - has a level of agreement that is over 75%. Four statements related to wages in terms of how employees perceived their pay in comparison to that of other employees working at the College, or of others performing similar work in other organizations.

Since 1992, public sector organizations in British Columbia have been subject to a form of government wage controls. Between 1998 and 2000, the Government of British Columbia, through the Public Sector Employers' Council, introduced a framework of "monetary mandates" and allocated wage increases of 0% in the first and second year, and 2% in the third year for all employees in the British Columbia public sector. The responses to statements regarding wages in the social audit questionnaire indicated a trend towards dissatisfaction with wages.

Employees in professional positions such as faculty and administration, who traditionally have never been compensated for overtime, indicated that they resented the expectation of always having to work in excess of a reasonable number of hours of work, and signalled their dissatisfaction with the amount of "overtime" in professional positions. Administrators are excluded from legislation that requires the payment of wages for hours worked beyond what is considered a normal workweek. Administrators at North Island College do not have regularly scheduled hours of work and many reported consistently working in excess of fifty, sometimes sixty hours per week. Faculty members reported working longer hours than the traditional 35 hours or 40 hours per week, although the benefits of eight weeks of vacation and one month of professional and curriculum development during the summer cannot be ignored. Only members of the support staff at North Island College were able to claim overtime, and this is only after a supervisor has approved the overtime hours. Voluntary "overtime" by support staff employees has caused some problems and both the union and administration have monitored this issue.

Nearly 19% of female respondents (21) strongly disagreed (21) and 23% disagreed (26) with the statement B6 – “I am compensated for the overtime that I work.” Just over 34% (20) strongly disagreed and just over 25% (12) of male respondents disagreed that they are compensated for the overtime that they work. The subject of overtime, both authorized and unauthorized, reached a critical point during the period in which the social audit was conducted. Statement B6, “I am paid for the overtime that I work,” achieved a mean rating of 2.14 – the lowest of any statement in the social audit questionnaire.

North Island College is required to negotiate wages for faculty and support staff with their respective unions. The negotiation of wages has been part of the collective bargaining process since 1991 and is now predominantly negotiated at a sectoral level under provincial guidelines. Administrators’ salaries were established and monitored by the Post Secondary Employers’ Association and the Public Sector Employers’ Council for compliance with a set of guidelines similar to those that governed collective bargaining during the same time period. The Government of British Columbia’s program of wage controls restricted increases to 0%, 0% and 2% of base wages and this has built in inequities over this time period.

An organization, over a number of years, prepares for collective bargaining with unions by conducting wage and benefit surveys and ensures that the organization’s working conditions are comparable to “market” salaries. The organization would decide whether their salary market is local, provincial or national, depending on recruitment needs and competition. At the time of this study, mandates for wage increases were established at the sectoral level based on directives from the Province of British Columbia.

The social audit questionnaire revealed that employees were dissatisfied with their wages, and this has implications for the Board of Governors’ Policy Governance process. The President is expected to operate within a set of executive limitations and one of these limitations requires

the College to pay salaries and benefits that are within market. This exemplifies the College's loss of autonomy within a centralized system and raises the issue of how managers in the public sector can be held accountable when the policies for human resources and labour relations are centralized at the sectoral level. Increased workload and stress levels exacerbated the growing dissatisfaction with pay levels. In the early part of the 1990s, internal comparability remained constant, but in the latter years, salaries have fallen against the market for reasons that include ability to pay, reduction in available resources, wage controls and centralized control of management compensation. The results of the social audit indicated that some employees do not have a clear understanding of how a salary for a position is determined relative to other positions.

Section C – Communications, Consultation and Decision Making

The practice of communication, consultation and decision making is a critical component of an organization's effort to inform and include all of its stakeholder groups in dialogue that enhances decision making in an open and transparent manner. It is about accountability. Within this context, when the social audit questionnaire provided respondents with an opportunity to rate the accuracy or reliability of information (Statement C5), only 35.7% of all respondents agreed. However, 70% of administrators agreed that information was reliable and accurately communicated, while the faculty response was 33% and the support staff response was even lower at 29.2%.

Statements related to communications and transparent decision making received the lowest level of agreement in the social audit questionnaire. In response to the statement, "decision making is transparent" (C6), only 11.3% of respondents agreed, 41.3% of respondents disagreed, and 43.8% neither agreed nor disagreed. An examination of the responses by the

three groups revealed that support staff provided the lowest level of response at 8.4%, followed by faculty at 10.7% and administrators at 23.5%. Just over 49% of respondents (36) in the age group 46 – 55 strongly disagreed and disagreed, consisting of 10% expressing strong disagreement (8) and 35% expressing disagreement (28) with the statement that decision making was transparent (C6). Respondents were more likely to rate their responses in the “agree” and “disagree” categories than in the “strongly agree” and “strongly disagree” categories. Almost 44% of respondents (70) indicated that they neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement.

Employees require information to flow freely in order to make decisions. In this instance, a similar pattern emerged and nearly 26% of respondents agreed with the statement “information for making decisions flows freely” (Statement C4). Support staff provided the lowest level of rating at 14.6%, faculty at 26.6%, and administrators were divided with a rate of 53%.

The social audit questionnaire asked employees to consider the statement, “I trust that North Island College will take the results of this survey seriously and respond accordingly” (Statement C7). The highest response to Statement C7 was from administrators at 82.4%, the lowest response was from faculty at 39.3% and support staff respondents were divided about whether the college would take the results seriously.

Section D – Health, Safety and Physical Environment

Section D contained nine statements, with seven of the statements related directly to the health, safety and the physical-working environment. One statement (D9) was related to comfortable meeting locations, and between 70% and 82% of employees thought that there were comfortable locations for holding meetings.

All statements except for the statement related to ergonomics received above average levels of agreement that ranged between 57% and 78%. Safety and health issues are regulated through the Workers' Compensation Board of British Columbia and this section received higher than average ratings. Almost 31% of respondents thought that the ergonomic features of their workstations contributed to potential health problems (Statement D5); 38.8% were neutral.

However, while considering that the number of administrators responding to the social audit questionnaire was small, 82.4% of administrators agreed that their workstations did reduce potential health problems, while only 25.6% of faculty and 33.4% of support staff responded in a similar manner. Administrators have no more control over the ergonomic features of their workstations than any other employee; desks, chairs; computers and workstations are purchased through standing purchase orders. It is recognized that Administrators are less likely than support staff to spend long periods of time at their desk and this may reduce ergonomic risks but increase other risks related to other factors such as excessive travel routinely required as part of an administrator's position. In the past two years, a number of ergonomically designed chairs have been purchased and administrators routinely purchase ergonomically designed chairs for employees who spend considerable time working on a computer.

Section E – Workload and Stress

Section E contained seven statements pertaining to issues regarding workload and stress and eleven questions that asked respondents to report on their hours of work over and above the normal hours of work for their position. Some of the questions asked respondents to suggest ways of easing their workload. The final two questions in Section E asked respondents to report on whether their work was stressful and what factors contributed to their stress at work.

In responding, administrators and support staff were more likely to talk about their hours of work being in excess of contractual workloads or their perceptions that their workloads were no longer reasonable or acceptable. Faculty, on the other hand, reported on the number of hours required to maintain technological knowledge, to deal with students with special needs, and the additional work that was required to prepare for the diversity of students in the classroom.

Four statements in Section E reflect a negative orientation when there is high agreement from the respondents. Fifty-six percent of all of the respondents noted that their workload had increased over the past five years (E6), and while the faculty and support staff indicated a similar response of between 56.4% and 58.3%, 76.5% of administrators indicated that their workload had increased. In the same manner, faculty and administrators were more likely to agree that the demands of their job interfere with their private life (E4) with a response rate of 49% and 52.9% than support staff with a response rate of 23%. Faculty with a response rate of 37.3% and administrators with a response rate of 47.1% were more likely to report that their work pressure was too much (E5), than support staff at 20.9%.

Three statements concerned the pace of work, the amount of work and the ability to take scheduled breaks (mid-morning, lunch and mid-afternoon), and faculty and staff responded similarly with 45.8% of faculty and 54.2% of support staff indicating that they were unable to take their scheduled breaks. Similarly, 52.1% of faculty and 54.2% of support staff responded that the pace of work was reasonable and 46.8% of faculty and 45.9% of support staff reported that the amount of work was reasonable.

The responses to these three statements differed for administrators. Only 23.5% of administrators responded that the pace of work was reasonable and only 29% responded that the amount of work to be performed was reasonable. However, most administrators reported having more control over their work, and more administrators (58.9%) reported being able to take

scheduled breaks during the working day. Nevertheless, these results indicated that the pace of work and the amount of work were contributing to more stress in the workplace than might be reasonably expected.

Section E contained eleven general questions related to workload and circumstances of stress, and the following highlights the findings for Section E, questions 9 – 19:

Section E, Question 9

Nearly 84% (134) of respondents worked over and above their contracted hours of work.

Section E, Question 10 (a)

Respondents reported working over and above their contractual hours as follows:

- 25.2% of respondents (39) reported not working above their hours of work
- 43.8% of respondents (68) reported working between 1 and 7 hours extra per week
- 23.8% of respondents (38) worked between 7 and 15 hours extra per week
- 3.6% of respondents (6) worked between 18 and 30 hours extra per week
- 1.2% of respondents (2) worked between 35 and 40 hours extra per week
- 1.2% of respondents (2) worked between 50 and 60 hours extra per week.

Section E, statement 10 (b)

The college offers services in fifteen locations, and 67.5% of respondents (108) gave no indication of travelling on business, with the remaining 32.5% of respondents (52) reporting the following:

- 12.5% respondents (20) were not required to travel on business
- 10.7% of respondents (18) reported 1 – 3 hours of travel on business per week
- 7.0% of respondents (11) reported 4 – 7 hours of travel on business per week
- 2.5% of respondents (4) reported 8 – 10 hours of travel on business per week.

Section E, Question 10 (c)

Of the 154 who responded, 34.4% (53) reported that they did not work at home, and the remaining 101 respondents reported the following:

- 64 participants, or 41.6%, reported working up to 10 hours per week at home
- 34 participants, or 22.1%, reported working between 11 and 20 hours per week at home
- 1 participant, or 0.6%, reported working between 21 and 30 hours per week at home
- 2 participants, or 1.2%, reported working between 35 and 40 hours per week at home.

Section E, Question 11

In regard to whether respondents were required to be away from home overnight or away on college business, 31.9% of the respondents (51) reported never having to be away, a further 55.6% of the respondents (89) reported occasional overnight absences, and 12.5% of the respondents (20), reported that they were frequently away from home overnight.

Section E – Questions E 12 to E 17

Respondents were asked to describe their workload, the circumstances of their workload and what they do, could do or how their supervisors could ease their workload. The following reviews the findings for each of the three groups and highlights any patterns or trends among the three groups.

Faculty

Some faculty reported reasonable workloads, and others reported fluctuations in workloads based on particular teaching assignments. Maintaining knowledge while keeping curriculum up-to-date, rapid changes in technology and the increased expectations of students appear to be contributing to increased workloads. Comments from faculty reported a sense of a loss of teaching effectiveness when they were not prepared for class, and some noted that they do not have the time to do the type of preparation for class that makes for a quality-learning

environment for students, or that provides faculty with a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction. Many courses have excessive marking requirements that add to the workload of faculty.

Faculty reported on the difference between faculty who teach university transfer courses and those who teach in the career and vocational areas, and the difference in the length of the teaching year because of the latter teaching an additional six to eight weeks. Consequently, a career and vocational instructor was more likely to be teaching when other faculty teaching academic programs might be preparing for a new academic year, working on curriculum development or participating in professional development activities.

Many respondents in faculty positions talked about increased demands because of the special needs of students. Faculty would prefer to have equity within the teaching areas; however, workload allocation is a function of a number of criteria that includes course requirements articulated or established elsewhere, such as apprenticeship programs. Faculty descriptions of their workload ranged from manageable at one end of the continuum to excessive, exploitive and overwhelming at the other.

Support Staff

Some support staff reported that they had manageable workloads but needed help at peak times, and others reported workloads where they were either too busy or had periods of time when they did not have enough to do. Support staff described their workloads as 'overwhelming' a number of times and support staff reported trying to find ways to be more organized, particularly in terms of paper and time management. Some support staff reported that they were concerned when they were on sick leave or vacation that their work piled up and no one replaced them, and they were concerned that they were stretched to capacity. Some talked about feeling guilty when work assignments were not completed in a timely manner.

Support staff referred to the growth of the College and the fact that when work is added, support staff positions are not added. They talked about lack of training, lack of up-to-date equipment and the rapid change of technology. They said that there was no sense of an overall plan, that procedures were inadequate, and when procedures were developed, but not followed by everyone, additional work resulted. Technological change and systems renewal, together with sufficient training, was an ongoing concern for support staff. Members of the support staff were not resistant to change in technology or systems as long as they received sufficient and appropriate training.

When asked what they could do to ease their workload, support staff reverted to time management techniques such as planning, establishing priorities, saying no, letting management do more “fire fighting,” and some asked for quiet time without interruptions so that they could get work done. Many reported that improved communications between departments were required, while others requested training and professional development to enhance their skills. Many said that they had already reviewed their work, eliminated duplications and streamlined processes. Some support staff referred to accessing the e-mail less in a day to save time, while others attributed e-mail to increased efficiency.

When asked what their supervisor or the College could do to manage workload issues, most support staff talked about the need for equitable funding of positions across departments, streamlined procedures and reduced paper work. Many suggested more hours of work if they were part-time or more full-time staff positions rather than part-time employees assigned to their departments. There appeared to be a growing sentiment that training must be provided during the employees’ work hours rather than during their personal time.

Administrators

Some administrators also used the word “overwhelmed” to describe how they felt about their workloads. However, administrators were more likely to be concerned about the College’s long-term plans. Most already use time management techniques to prioritize heavy workloads, and many work at home to keep up-to-date with their work. Some were concerned about managing their work and the work of employees reporting to them without “burning out.” Many talked about the effect of the growth in programs and expectations for continued and sometimes increased revenue generation because of contract training and entrepreneurial activities.

Administrators were more likely to talk about demands placed on them by external agencies, ministries and the fact that education in partnership with other educational providers and agencies significantly increases their workload. There is a need to attend meetings, implement consultation processes, and prepare and negotiate contracts, followed by additional monitoring and evaluation. In addition, each contract and partnership often required extensive reporting to the funding agency at the end of the contract.

Serving multiple communities on Vancouver Island was identified as a challenge, even with advanced technology. Some talked about the challenges of administering from a distance when they are the only administrators assigned to a particular region. Others referred to issues that arose when the responsibilities of the role of a regional campus director were changed during a past transition process with some employees continuing to relate to the person based on past practices. A number of administrators talked about “saying no” more often and many talked about requiring concentrated time for projects and working at home during the normal working day so that they would have quiet time to concentrate on critical projects.

Administrators used the word “delegation” a number of times, and noted that delegation was difficult when most employees already had “overwhelming” workloads. Prioritize was the

word most frequently used by administrators when reflecting on their own workload, and when asked what their supervisors could do, they talked frequently about planning and focusing on major initiatives instead of “taking on everything.” Administrators asked for training and development in technology that would make them more efficient.

Finally, administrators called for a renewed effort to establish a team or teams, a restructured administration to better reflect workloads, an examination of their workload to review tasks, and a request to review processes that were inefficient, cumbersome and poorly considered.

Section E, Question 18 – Stress

The following describes the responses concerning stress:

- One hundred and one (101), or 63.1%, said that the work was stressful
- Thirty-eight (38), or 23.8%, said that the work was not stressful
- Twenty-one (21), or 13.1%, said that the work was sometimes stressful.

Just over 63% of all respondents reported that their work was stressful. Within the three groups, 59.5% of faculty, 62.5% of support staff and 82% of administrators reported that their work was stressful. The following reviews the factors that relate to stress:

Faculty

A number of members of faculty talked about the difference in their job now and in the past when they were first hired. They stated that the role of faculty was now different, and that the College’s move from an open-learning environment to a more traditional, classroom-based college brought with it a responsibility for committee work, and insufficient time for curriculum development. They reported that morale was low in some departments.

Faculty talked about the growing number of students at risk due to a range of societal issues including childcare, poverty and drug abuse. Many talked about the fact that they lacked

the resources to provide support, and that many students have unreasonable expectations of the faculty and the College. Many employees in faculty positions said that they were not recognized for the work that they do. Faculty who were hired as a result of the College's contract training initiatives expressed concerns that their programs were not funded through the Ministry's base funding and that the contract nature of their programs meant that there was competition for clients (students) from other non-profit agencies who could apply for funding from the same Ministry.

Faculty talked about lines of communication not being clear because of a recent restructuring of administration. Many respondents talked about the needs of diverse student populations and the lack of resources to support students. Some talked about the lack of recognition when they go beyond the normal expectations of their faculty role. One or two faculty talked about the issue of safety when there was too much stress, and they talked about the sense of keeping a balance between the exhilaration of teaching as a profession that demanded ongoing performance and the exhaustion of continual stress.

Faculty were concerned about their own safety and that of the students, especially with the kinds of equipment that were used in many programs; they talked about the changes in the teaching and learning environment when students brought their personal problems to the classroom.

Many members of faculty talked about their passion for teaching and their sense of contribution to students. Overall, the responsibilities of faculty have increased. In addition to changes in curriculum, technology and the changing needs of students, the College moved to a shared-governance model because of changes in the Colleges' and Institutes' Act in 1995, which created shared accountability for key educational decisions. While there is increased

consultation and collaboration, respondents reported a lack of clarity about leadership and management from supervisors and managers at all levels of the organization.

Support Staff

Support staff reported similar issues and expressed their concerns about increased workload. One support staff talked about the lack of trust among employees that resulted in the creation of paper trails that ensured that the details were tracked and covered. Others talked about the effect of unplanned tasks and projects that arrived and interfered with scheduled breaks or lunch hours. Sheer volume of work contributed to paperwork that was “stuck on employees’ desks” and consequently delayed the completion of other tasks.

Support staff reported a lack of communication, a sense of not having the appropriate information to make decisions, and rushed deadlines. There was a sense that policy was not followed and that students were treated inequitably. Some support staff said that sometimes they were not able to “turn off their mind” at the end of the day and that sick leaves and unavoidable absences caused work to pile up. Respondents talked about their concern about not completing tasks before they moved to another task with a tighter deadline and a lack of satisfaction when tasks were incomplete.

One support staff described her concerns when the work that she was responsible for was bypassed or when another employee made a different decision that resulted in a student being admitted to courses without the proper prerequisites. Employees reported their concerns about poor communication. Support staff in front-line positions were more likely to report that clients were difficult, often demanding and there had been occasional aggressive, rude clients with potentially violent behaviour.

Administrators

Administrators referred to the political context of the public sector and the effect of change that resulted in the decentralization of certain work and the requirement to work in partnership with agencies and government, with added layers of negotiation, consultation and collaboration. Linkages and enhanced relationships with community members were deemed essential but there was no consideration given to the time that was needed to maintain community relationships.

Some administrators noted inefficiencies when lines of communication are blurred or lack clarity. Some administrators mentioned uncertainty about the future. There was a sense that while employees were expected to be more accountable, they were often given responsibility for issues that they could not be accountable for because of centralized public policy and processes. One administrator noted that it appeared that confrontation with unions was to be avoided at all costs and that in an attempt to right the wrongs of a previous administration, there were too many compromises without an understanding of the reasons for the compromise. Consequently, there was a sense that the union and management relationship was unbalanced. In the same vein, others noted that conflict between people was becoming more complex and that problems took longer to resolve.

One administrator said there was an appearance of disregard and disrespect towards administrators, and that administrators were expected to resolve conflict, manage an increasingly complex workplace and work force, and attend to increased volumes of work. An administrator noted that there were too many steps to making a decision, that decisions take too long and that when a decision was made it was often interpreted differently and that the implementation of decisions was often flawed.

Section F – Diversity and Equality of Opportunity

Section F contained seven statements related to issues of diversity and equality of opportunity and included statements related to diversity, discrimination, sexual harassment, and personal harassment. Two statements received responses from the three groups that ranged between 67% and 88%, and the remaining statements received group responses that ranged between 39% and 58.8%. Turning first to the lowest overall response, 39.4% of all groups stated that the College did not provide adequate training on the prevention of workplace harassment, with 34.1% of faculty rating this lowest of all statements. However, while there was insufficient training to prevent workplace harassment, 71.9% of all respondents stated that the work environment is free from sexual harassment and 57.6% of all respondents stated that the work environment is free from discrimination. One respondent stated that the College has the best of intentions, and practices were as good as they could be, but that the hiring policy appeared to favour candidates who were white, and that more First Nations faculty should be hired.

Respondents noted that the orientation of new employees was insufficient. One faculty said:

There is much room for improvement on diversity issues. Quite backward re: gender issues, race, culture and sexual orientation. No pro-active work obvious except minimal (token) first nations awareness. We need a taskforce to generate ideas and Administration's commitment for pro-active work to create a respectful place to work and learn (Respondent F8, 1999, p. 42).

One faculty member talked about needing clear directions for dealing with the inappropriate behaviour of students and referred to increased problems in the area of student behaviour. Another said that they felt that there was not enough protection for faculty when students made untrue, unjust or incorrect statements. Another faculty said that they had experienced workplace harassment twice and the College did not take a stand on either occasion. Another said that they have been supported after an incident of harassment.

Support staff comments in this area reported that training in all aspects of harassment and discrimination was needed and one support staff reported:

Seething power struggles undermine working relationships, i.e. union versus management, "us and them" mentality. Harassment stems from institutional systems of support. How does one deal with the harassment when the underlying patriarchal system has such a stronghold over everyone's relationships? (Respondent SS43, 1999, p. 20).

Another said:

Although North Island College's work environment is quite good, it needs a non-threatening venue for complaints to be raised. Whether real or not, there is a perception that there will be retribution if you complain. This comes from students, faculty and staff. I do not believe there is equitable treatment of staff. North Island College may be committed to it; however, the treatment is dependent on supervisors and varies greatly (Respondent SS37, 1999, p. 20).

Section G – Values and Mission Statement

Employees were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed that the College was performing against its Mission Statement and they were asked to respond to specific statements related to the Mission and two values. One of the values had been controversial during its development phase and I chose it deliberately to determine the degree to which there was acceptance of the concept of environmental sustainability.

In general, the results confirm that employees' perceptions were favourable towards the wording of the College's Mission. However, respondents were less clear and comfortable with value statements that contributed to environmental sustainability. Only 35% of respondents agreed with this statement as a value; and an opportunity for training, dialogue and increased awareness was needed, so that the College community might address how new values are integrated into the thinking, decision making and communication processes. As an educational organization, the concept of environmental sustainability can be grounded in administrative policies and action, and a number of educational programs could integrate environmental

sustainability as a part of the curriculum. Social auditing can be used to support an organization's awareness of environmental sustainability as well as social action, and again, the results indicated that much work was needed.

Almost all respondents agreed that the mission and purpose of the College was to provide relevant learning, access and quality education. This statement received one of the highest ratings in the survey with 89% expressing agreement. However, many comments from employees indicated a concern that access and the quality of education needed improvement.

Of the five statements relating to the mission and values of the College, four statements received ratings that ranged between 66% and 69% agreement. The value statement that related to the College's commitment to reflect a commitment to sustaining the environmental richness and biological diversity of the College region as part of the global strategy received only 35% agreement from all respondents. Another 36% of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with this value statement.

Social and ethical auditing includes the possibility of an organization establishing a triple "bottom line" consisting of a description of the organization's financial, social and environmental performance. What would be the nature of dialogue, training and development that would be needed in order for programs and the working environment to commit to sustaining the environmental richness of the College region? Comments from employees ranged from agreeing that this value strengthened the organization, while another thought it was pretentious, and others could not see how this value might be achieved. More than one respondent suggested that the College start simply by reviewing its recycling programs as a starting point.

A common theme that emerged from respondents referred to a need for the College to operate with the mission and values in mind. One person thought that the College needed to

create a non-threatening mechanism to feed back opinions and issues to the Strategic Planning Group. A respondent said that there was a conflict between the purpose and the fulfillment and another said that the College had become less accessible, not more. One respondent thought that quality of life, citizenship and community stretched the notion of the purpose of the College and did not fit with the College's requirement to educate and train with the aim of employment for students. One respondent said that the College could not be held responsible for enhancing employment opportunities for residents in the region (G3), because the College did not have the political ability to create employment opportunities. Another said that educating employees as entrepreneurs would result in the creation of employment. One respondent noted that over the past ten years, the College had "whittled its commitment to their community to at most, a quarter of its former self" (Respondent F83, 1999, p. 45). This respondent went on to say that "the economic base of this community is in crisis and an adequately funded college could go a long way toward helping this community diversify its economic base" (Respondent F83, 1999, p. 45). The following comments are from members of faculty, support staff and administrators, and reflect some of the final thoughts of employees as they completed the social audit questionnaire:

NIC has grown too fast to keep pace with the changes, student population growth and as a result are constantly scrambling to react rather than maintain standards and quality of working and learning environment. Streamline operations, eliminate red tape, and provide clear and confident direction. Allow staff and students the opportunity to do what they do best and support it. (Respondent F25, 1999, p. 48).

I adore my job here. Your survey does not offer an opportunity to state as much. I enjoy the enthusiasm and energy here (for the most part). I work in a group of dedicated and professional people who take their roles seriously. I would like to see more inter-program work where the skills and expertise across programs are recognized; it often feels very disconnected between programs and campuses (Respondent F16, 1999, p. 48).

I am glad that you are doing this. Please take risk with the results and present them uncompromised. (Respondent F19, 1999, p. 45).

Many times, it is a mystery why staff involvement is required then promptly ignored when hiring in management positions and other important decisions. I think the president is a breath of fresh air. I love that he is trying to make

decision-making transparent and he does not live in an ivory tower, locked away from the rest of us. I recognize that important changes take time. (Respondent SS 16, 1999, p. 23).

I have been candid in my comments. I know some of my working stress is due to self-imposed pressures and much to a lack of funding for human resource allocation. One hope is that the president's educational plan gives us some direction to facilitate the college-wide need for human resource to effectively support the plan (Respondent SS 26, 199, p. 23).

A professional/career development policy that is equitable needs to be developed. Somehow, create a more inclusive environment in the college. Although we have a disparate group, we can still have a stronger sense of community (Respondent SS21, 1999, p. 23).

Focus on collaborative work teams; value input from those required to execute. Focus on relationships in the workplaces, not on defining organizational structures. Define us as a College, not as competing regions. (Respondent A2, 1999, p. 14).

The culture is going through a long, demanding change process. Effective leadership is key to its success. We need to keep reminding ourselves how far we have come. Moreover, we need to take more advantage of our opportunities to laugh. We are human (Respondent A6, 1999, p. 14).

I would like to emphasize how important it is to treat employees with respect and dignity. The results of treating employees as if they are of little or no significance has significant impact on morale and results in a loss of self value. The individual and the institution both lose. My suggestion would be never take the good employees for granted and do something about the bad ones (Respondent A15, 1999, p. 14).

All of the comments of the respondents who participated in the completion of the social audit questionnaires are important and worthy of consideration. They should be reflected on and the wisdom, energy and enthusiasm used to create a new reality.

A Review of Human Resource Policy and Programs

The maintenance of various policies and practices related to the management of human resources at the College continues to be complex, with multiple layers. The results of the social audit questionnaire provided information that was useful for the development of new programs and policies and for ensuring that existing policies and programs were updated and able to meet the needs of the employees.

The College's employee benefits program includes a medical services plan, an extended health care plan with vision care, dental, short and long-term disability insurance, group life insurance and accidental death and dismemberment insurance. Employees can purchase optional life insurance and accidental death and dismemberment insurance for themselves and their spouses. The plan covers all employees in regular positions where the employee works more than 50% each week. All employees are covered by various statutory plans such as Workers' Compensation insurance that protects in the event of a workplace accident, and Employment Insurance that is mandatory and protects in the event of layoff or loss of work.

There are two pension plans in place, the Canada Pension Plan and a Superannuation plan. Employees may elect to have funds taken directly from their wages and placed in an optional registered retirement savings plan. The majority of employees have some form of sick leave protection and in the event of a major illness or accident, in some cases depending on the circumstances; an employee's earnings are protected to their normal retiring age. There is an employee and family assistance plan that provides confidential psychological and other counselling that enables employees to take responsibility for issues in the work place and family that affect their well being. Vacation entitlement is considered good but each employee group has different vacation entitlements, leading to a perception of inequity. Support staff earn up to five weeks a year depending on service and are paid for any overtime with additional wages or time off; administrators earn up to six weeks depending on their years of service and are not paid any overtime. Employees who are faculty are entitled to eight weeks of vacation and are entitled to an additional four weeks for professional and curriculum development. Employees can take up to three days off for a variety of personal and family reasons, and ten days of their sick leave can be used to care for members of the family during an illness. Statutory holidays add eleven non-working days and during the week between Christmas and New Year's Day, the College is

closed for an additional three days, which is in addition to annual vacation. The faculty professional development fund is equivalent to 1.5% of the worth of faculty gross salaries and benefits. The career development fund of the support staff is considered low at \$6,200 (less than 0.25% of gross salaries and benefits) and the professional development fund for thirty administrators is low at \$10,000 per year. Collective bargaining has improved the career development fund for support staff, but no improvement has occurred for the administrator's fund.

The working conditions of faculty and support staff are covered by collective agreements and because of the Government of British Columbia's public policy, these two groups have their own local collective agreements and a common agreement that is shared with similar groups in the post secondary education system. Accord agreements set out additional working conditions. Administrators are covered by a policy that is not negotiated.

Approximately twenty-five policies have been developed in the past ten years related to the treatment of employees. Policy related to compensation and benefits have evolved over the past decade, and is developed at the provincial level, implemented locally with approval at the sectoral level through the Post Secondary Employers' Association (PSEA).

The results of the social audit questionnaire identified new policies for development and noted that some required updating based on evolving practices. The following lists describe the status of policy at the College:

- Human Rights Policy (Existing)

This policy includes policy on the prevention of sexual and personal harassment. A committee with student, faculty, support staff and administrative representation developed the policy in 1992. It requires updating so that it aligns with new language in the faculty collective agreement. Training is required based on the feedback from

the social audit questionnaire and based on the growth of the college since the last training.

- Performance Management and Appraisal Review (new)

Based on information from the social audit questionnaire and as part of the Strategic Planning Process on May 7, 1999, a strategy was established to implement a performance management policy, and a commitment was made that all employees would participate in an individual performance review by 2003.

- Employee Welfare: Managing Sick Leave and Absences Policy and Procedures.

This provincial initiative will be designed at the sectoral level for implementation at the local level.

- Administrators' Pay (under review)

This was recognized in the comments of the social audit questionnaire and is under review at the provincial level. The College has experienced significant difficulty in recruiting candidates to senior administrative positions. The social audit recognized these difficulties and because of recruitment and retention difficulties, an administrative review was conducted in 2000.

- Health and Safety Policy (under review)

This was being rewritten and some of the comments in the social audit questionnaire have added to the awareness of the Occupational Health and Safety Committee.

- Recognition – Service and other forms of recognition (new)

- Employees participating in the Strategic Planning Process identified the need for a recognition program that recognized more than service.

- Health and Wellness Policy (new)

The identification of a health and wellness initiative is a direct response from the social audit questionnaire.

The Human Resources department is currently developing a tactical plan for achieving the strategies in the *Strategic Plan 2000-2003*. The results of the social audit questionnaire as well as the strategies found in the *Strategic Plan 2000 – 2003* contributed to the development of policy and programs through to the end of 2003.

Summary

The results of the social audit revealed that over 91% of employees of North Island College agreed that serving students was their number one priority. When this commitment is translated to work satisfaction, over 81% were satisfied with their work. In responding to statements about their work environment, 76% expressed overall agreement with the statement that employees cared and supported each other and 78% agreed that employees treated each other with respect.

Four separate indicators represent a view of an organization climate that is characterized by commitment to students and satisfaction with work occurring in a caring and supportive work environment where employees are respected. While key results indicate that the current organizational climate is based on the individual's commitment to the College, other responses indicated that the College must examine and manage issues that threaten the precarious stability of the College's operations. The early results of the social audit provided an opportunity for reflection, and the Interim Report (Appendix E) was used to inform the strategic planning process. Later, some of the information was used to guide changes to human resource policy and programs.

When employees were asked to rate their level of agreement with the College's recognition of their contribution, only 45.6% of all respondents agreed that they received recognition appropriate to their contribution. Only 44.6% of all respondents agreed that they received feedback that enabled them to improve their performance, and only 29.4% of all respondents agreed that employees have opportunities for promotion to other positions. In terms of performance, 89.4% of all respondents agreed that employees have a commitment to performing well. In response to the statement about employees performing well, 82.4% of administrators reported agreement, and 89.4% of faculty respondents agreed that employees had a commitment to performing well. However, only 50% of support staff expressed agreement with this statement.

Eighty-one percent of the respondents expressed agreement with the statement, "I am satisfied with the work that I do," and this arises from their commitment to the students and the needs of the communities where college services are offered, and their passion for teaching and working in an educational organization. Where the comments of the employees suggested a different picture of the organization, further investigation was necessary to fully understand the reality of the situation. The comments represent various positive and negative aspects of the organization and some respondents indicated a high level of frustration when they thought they had more to offer.

One respondent noted that the employees of the College were supportive and caring while another said that there were individuals who were difficult to confront without retribution and another said that people were overloaded with work, making it difficult for people to support each other. One respondent said:

Although North Island College indicates that its highest priority is excellence in education and service to students, I find that support at the front line does not reflect this priority. Equipment is out of date; material taught is not on the cutting

edge of technology. Workloads at the front line are so great that it is impossible to provide quality service to students (Respondent SS37, 1999, p. 2).

Based on the information from the social audit questionnaire and a review of the current human resource policies and programs, sufficient information indicated that a review of several policies was required, along with the introduction of new programs to support employees during times of change.

CHAPTER SIX: ANALYSIS – THE EFFECT OF A SOCIAL AUDIT AND PUBLIC POLICY ON HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Chapter Six analyses the findings that resulted from conducting an audit of the College's social performance integrated with a strategic planning process. Initially, the focus of this analysis concentrated on the results of conducting a social audit in a public sector organization. However, in reflecting on these results, and in attempting to understand what changes were needed at the College in order to improve the quality of work life, other issues emerged that produced a broader context for reflection and analysis. Public policy was increasingly affecting the management of human resources at the local level and work life was becoming more complex because of the need to align organizational policy with public policy that called for accountability.

Increasingly, human resource practitioners are called on to be strategic in their action, thinking and decision making within the organization. However, in the context of post secondary education, human resource practitioners are required to be strategic at the local level, and influential at the sectoral level. This analysis provided new ways of understanding the overall public sector and post secondary education system in which the College is located. It also led to a deeper understanding of the role of influence in leadership (Yukl, 1989), and provided insight on the effect of British Columbia's public policy on human resources management in the public sector.

Chapter Six provides an analysis based on four perspectives. The first perspective examines the linkages between the College's development of policy and public policy, and examines the effect of conducting a social audit when policy development and decision making for human resource and labour relations policy are centralized at a sectoral and provincial level. The second perspective examines the contribution of the results of the social audit questionnaire

to the College's strategic planning process. The third perspective examines the extent to which the college's values – explicit or implicit – are integrated into its human resource policies and managerial practices. The fourth perspective examines the independent work of others that used the social audit information to recommend improvements to the working conditions of faculty, support staff and administrators.

Analytical Framework

The effort to centralize decision making for certain human resources and labour relations policy in British Columbia's public sector and post secondary education system has not been simple. The coordination, centralization and control of a number of human resource functions at the provincial level through associations in continuing care, health care, post secondary education, municipalities, public schools, and crown corporations is considerable and often lacks coherence across the system.

In the post secondary education system, a human resource practitioner is required to maintain the human resource function organizationally, participate collaboratively at a local level with unions and collaborate at a sectoral level with colleagues and unions from other post secondary education institutions. At the sectoral level, a human resource practitioner uses influence to ensure that the organization's unique mission, vision, culture and values are considered during efforts to produce a one-size-fits-all strategy. Increased collaboration and cooperation encourages human resource practitioners to work together with union representatives at a sectoral level but shared decisions take time and there are incidences of increased complexity, ambiguity, and confusion with some policy issues.

Translating Policy into Action in the Post Secondary Education Sector of British Columbia

After 1993, the centralization of public policy for human resources and labour relations in the public sector of British Columbia resulted in at least six levels of policy decision-making. These include the Government of British Columbia, the Public Sector Employers' Council, the post secondary education sector, in this case, the Post Secondary Employers' Association, the Board of Governors of the organization, the College, and finally, policy decision-making at the level of the human resources department.

Currently, public policy controls and rationalizes wages and compensation levels, defines collective bargaining structures and monitors the standardization of employee health benefits through policy directives to the sectors' various associations from the Public Sector Employers' Council. Always, there is a perception that there are major cost savings, efficiencies and effectiveness to be gained by centralizing and controlling policy decision-making for compensation, labour relations and benefits for employees across the public sector. In 1993, this was probably true. However, the 1990s was also the decade when a large number of employees in the demographic grouping known as the "baby-boomers" began to move into their pre-retirement years. Any savings that might have existed in the early 1990s may have been lost through actuarial calculations based on the experience and utilization of each benefit plan.

The Government of British Columbia through the Public Sector Employers' Council introduced mandatory frameworks for wage increases in the public sector. In the first few years, the mandates ranged from 0.8% to 1.5%, depending on the position level of the employees. For the period 1998 – 2000, the mandate was set for three years, with 0% in the first two years and 2% in the third year. The costs of salaries and benefits were controlled through stringent fiscal frameworks and funding. At the system level of post secondary education, a number of

educational organizations came together to collaboratively design, develop and recommend the implementation of policies that benefited the whole system. The negotiation of provincial collective agreements for faculty and support staff moved to a sectoral level of bargaining, with very little collective bargaining taking place at the local or organizational level. Policy development and implementation is almost always more effective when there is some form of joint initiative, and while there continues to be effective policy development and implementation of locally-identified policies, some policies are now developed through initiatives at the sectoral level.

The third level of policy concerning human resource and labour relations is with the College's Board of Governors. At the College, Policy Governance is used to direct the development of policy. Executive Limitations direct and monitor the President's actions and in particular, executive limitations cover the treatment of people (Policy EL-2), and compensation and benefits (Policy EL-4). For example, administrators at the college are required to act within the following executive limitations:

Shall not cause or allow any practice, activity, decision or organizational circumstance which is either illegal, imprudent or in violation of commonly accepted business and professional ethics. Dealings with students, staff, volunteers and others that the President interacts with on behalf of the college shall not be inhumane, unfair or undignified, and compensation and benefits for staff not covered by collective agreements shall not deviate materially from market (Policy EL-2, 1999, p. 10).

The call for accountability for actions in the public sector has intensified over the past five years. The Board of Governors' executive limitations are intended to enhance the accountability of the president and staff. The mandatory nature of the fiscal frameworks called for public sector organizations and unions to be accountable for the cost of negotiations within the fiscal frameworks established by the Government of British Columbia, communicated through the Public Sector Employers' Council of

British Columbia and monitored through the various sectoral associations. When the call for increased accountability in the area of human resource and labour relations policy and practice is shared through multiple levels of policy decision-making, there is a sense that autonomy reduced at one level might affect accountability on another level.

If the Government of British Columbia, through the Public Sector Employers' Council directs policy that mandates terms of compensation, how can the president and staff be held accountable? Accountability must be present at all levels, and there is a greater need for the president and staff of an organization to influence, coordinate and communicate the reality of the effect of public policy on the operations of organization.

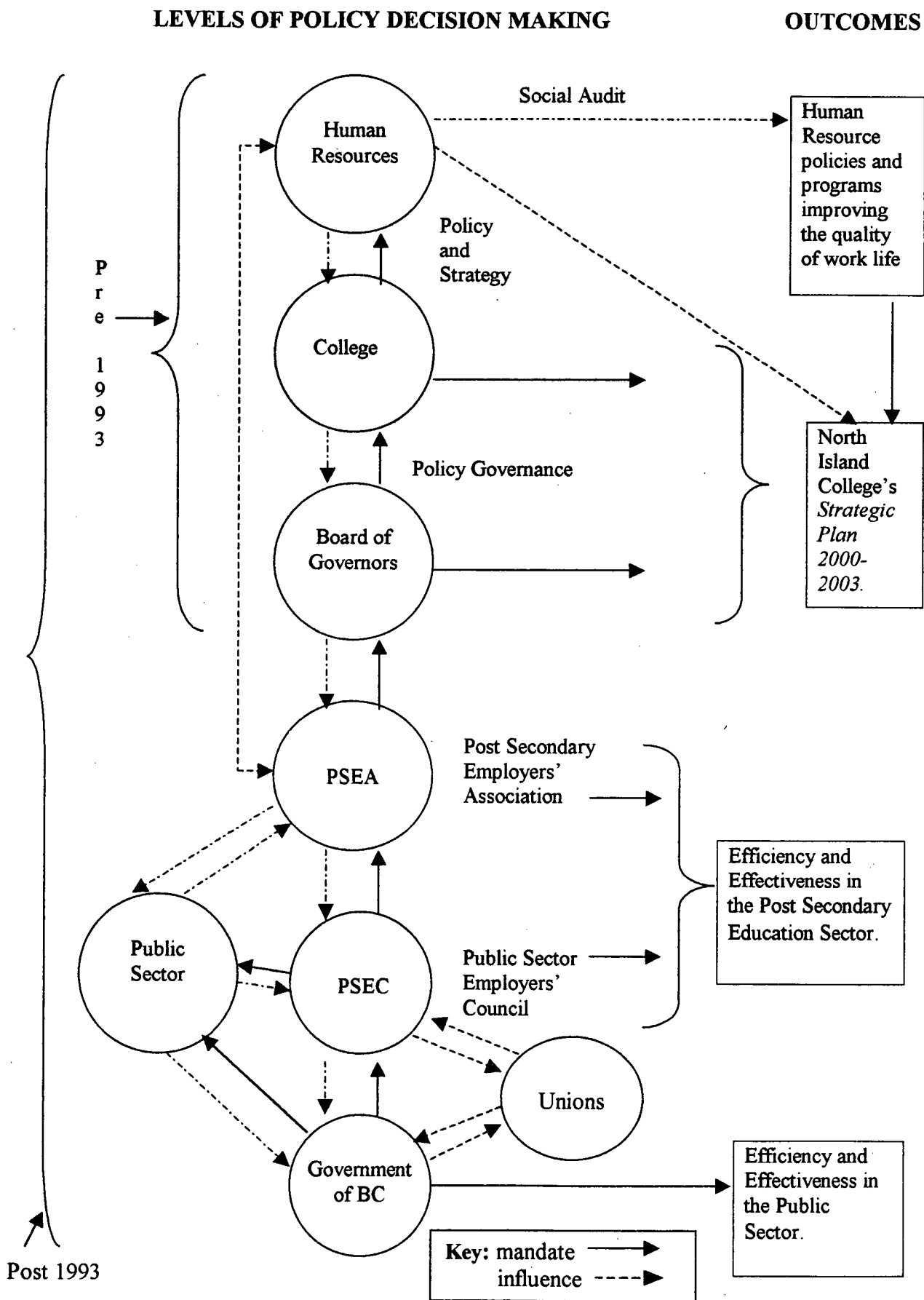
Where does the social audit fit within these layers of public policy?

The social audit was designed to examine whether human resource policies and programs were meeting or not meeting the needs of employees. The social audit contained sixty-seven statements related to human resource policy and programs; of these, six were controlled by public policy. Therefore, while a sense of reduced autonomy prevailed, the social audit revealed that a human resource practitioner remained accountable for a number of human resource policies. The social audit revealed that there were some areas of human resource policy that were handled well, but clearly significant improvement was needed especially in areas related to employee satisfaction, workload and work place stress.

A human resource practitioner is influential and acts on behalf of a college within the boundaries of local, sectoral and provincial policy. At the local level, policy is decided using collaborative processes that are based on either informal or formal models of shared governance and shared decision-making processes. At the sectoral level, the knowledge of policy and how it affects a particular structure or culture is part of a dialogue that influences and aligns with an overarching provincial policy.

Leadership in human resource policy development in the public sector of British Columbia involves influence and strategic action at the local, sectoral and provincial level. The ability to influence, make recommendations, receive, consider and implement public policy while maintaining accountability and autonomy within the organization's culture is not simple. It involves understanding the public policy and being able to interpret and communicate the policy at the sectoral and local level. It calls for the human resource practitioner to be mindful of the culture of the organization, and to ensure that the needs of the employees and the goals of the organization are met. It is complex; it is not about receiving a finished product and implementing a policy that has been developed at a centralized source. It is about maintaining a sense of local autonomy that recognizes the organization's unique culture and is achieved when policy is implemented at a local level with knowledge of the culture. Autonomy is preserved, accountability remains at the local level, and sectoral and provincial policy aims are achieved.

Figure 15 describes policy decision making in the post secondary education sector and suggests that there is an opportunity to influence the implementation of public policy at various levels.



An Analysis of the Social Audit and the College's Values

This section of Chapter Six examines the findings of the social audit in juxtaposition with the college's values, to determine the degree to which the values are embedded in practice. The College – faced with a call for greater accountability and increased demands for services to communities affected by a recession – has met these demands through increased student spaces funded by the Ministry and through increased entrepreneurial activities.

Although this is the College's third strategic plan, for the first time, the values are articulated separately rather than being embedded in the mission and vision statements. This explicit defining of values that are "the fundamental beliefs that shape the college's culture, philosophy and guide its actions" are intended to strengthen the college and assist it to make more consistent choices" (*Strategic Plan 2000 – 2003*, 2000, p. 5). The Board of Governors developed the Mission Statement and rested it on values that included: access, relevance, quality, student success, educational leadership, responsiveness, learning, accountability, ethical practice, positive environment, ecological and cultural sustainability. In the strategic plan, each value is defined, and in addition, a number of words are added that support the meaning of the value. Often, the additional words are themselves value laden. When the college conducts its second social audit in 2002, it might re-word some statements so that the College is in a better position to measure the effectiveness of the goals and strategies of the *Strategic Plan 2000 – 2003*. In the meantime, the analysis relies on the results of the social audit; the effect of the social audit on the strategic planning process and the assumptions that I made based on my knowledge of human resource policy and practice.

The following examines the Mission Statements and the College's values and begins a process of using the social audit to establish the College's first social "bottom line" as well as

developing internal benchmarks that might be used as indicators when the second social audit is conducted. The Vision and the Mission of the College are as follows:

Vision: North Island College is a responsive, community focused college, which provides comprehensive education, training, and educational leadership within the diverse range it serves. Teaching and learning are central to everything we do. The college is a community of learners committed to quality, excellence, student success and lifelong learning.

Mission: North Island College's purpose is to ensure relevant learning through accessible, quality education. North Island College is dedicated to supporting the economic, social, cultural and environmental sustainability of the college region. It is committed to enhancing the quality of life, citizenship, community participation and employment opportunities of the residents in its region. North Island College responds to the learners in its region first, but may operate provincially, nationally and internationally.

The following analysis reviews how the results of the social audit might be used to determine whether the College demonstrates its values – explicit or implicit – in practice. For the purposes of this thesis, only selected values will be analyzed because some of the values are new to the College while other values were implicit and built into previous mission and vision statements. The results of the social audit indicated that some values were embedded in our practices. The social audit indicated that some newly articulated values need time before they are fully embraced by the College and the results were ambiguous in terms of their acceptance. If a social audit is able to reveal to a governing body that there are some inherent weaknesses or resistance to its values, then perhaps communication, training or dialogue might enhance the acceptance of certain values by the college community.

For example, the Board of Governors established “positive environment” as one of its values and this value related directly to the quality of work life for employees and the quality of the learning environment for students. It states, “we are committed to providing a learning and working environment where individuals are treated with dignity and respect, governance is shared, and excellence is affirmed” (2000, p. 9). Key words included in this value are dignity,

respect, shared governance and excellence. The following statements were selected from the social audit questionnaire because they appear to fit with commonly held views of what is meant by a positive environment.

Table 7 Selected Statements - Positive Environment

| Statement # | Description of Statement | Level of Agreement ¹ | Level of Disagreement | Mean Rating |
|-------------|---|---------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------|
| A11 | I am satisfied with the work that I do. | 81.2 | 8.2 | 4.02 |
| A14 | Employees care and support each other. | 75.7 | 10.0 | 3.99 |
| A23 | Employees treat each other with respect. | 78.1 | 8.2 | 4.06 |
| A25 | A difficult or tragic event in an employee's life is acknowledged and met with appropriate support. | 67.5 | 8.8 | 4.10 |
| B3 | The health benefits at North Island College meet my needs. | 83.8 | 5.1 | 3.99 |

Note: ¹The scale used consists of (1) Strongly Disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Neither Agree nor Disagree, (4) Agree, (5) Strongly Agree. For the purpose of this analysis, in order to calculate "Level of Agreement," the results of "Agree" and "Strongly Agree" were added together as were the results of "Disagree" and "Strongly Disagree" to yield one number for the "Level of Disagreement".

In assessing whether the college practices its values in terms of establishing a positive environment, it can be seen that all five statements received a high level of agreement and for these categories it could be said that the college was meeting its values.

Statement C2 said, "I can influence decisions regarding my work" but only 46% of support staff indicated that they could influence decisions regarding their work. Just over 76% of administrators responded that they could influence decisions regarding their work; faculty reported that they have less influence (44.7% agreement). In a traditional hierarchical system, this would make sense, but not in a system where shared governance is valued. The results

indicated that while there is a stated value that governance is shared; some respondents did not perceive that they could influence decisions, even in joint consultative processes.

A similar analysis can be applied to complementary value statements - ethical practice is defined as, "we operate ethically and ensure our practices are open, honest and in the public's best interest" and accountability defined as, "we are committed to individual and organizational performance that fosters public trust and confidence" (*Strategic Plan 2000 – 2003*, 2000, p. 9). Trust and community confidence require the College to operate ethically with practices that are open, honest and in the best interest of the public. One of the major challenges of the College as it develops its budget and allocates funding to a number of different geographic locations is that decisions regarding resource allocation are sometimes viewed with suspicion. It is common for employees, and individuals in communities or regions of the College to demand that decisions on resource allocations be clarified.

Five statements were examined to determine the degree to which the college is perceived to be practicing ethically based on aspects of communication and the use of information. Table 8 presents these statements.

Table 8 Ethical Practices

| Statement # | Description of Statement | Level of Agreement ¹ | Level of Disagreement | Mean Rating |
|-------------|--|---------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------|
| A10 | Policies are consistently applied. | 30.6 | 26.9 | 3.22 |
| A18 | I can speak openly without fear of retribution. | 55.0 | 24.4 | 3.49 |
| C4 | Information for making decisions flows openly and freely. | 25.6 | 45.7 | 2.86 |
| C5 | The information communicated at North Island College is accurate and reliable. | 35.7 | 21.3 | 3.23 |
| C6 | Decision making is transparent at North Island College. | 11.3 | 41.3 | 2.81 |

Note: ¹The scale used consists of (1) Strongly Disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Neither Agree nor Disagree, (4) Agree, (5) Strongly Agree. For the purpose of this analysis, in order to calculate "Level of Agreement," the results of "Agree" and "Strongly Agree" were added together as were the results of "Disagree" and "Strongly Disagree" to yield one number for the "Level of Disagreement".

Table 8 presents information concerning the values of ethical practice, accountability and trust. Just over 30% of respondents indicated that policies are consistently applied. Only 11.3% of respondents indicated that decision making was transparent; 25.6% of respondents noted that information for making decision flowed openly and freely, and just over 35% of respondents noted that information was accurate and reliable. Values related to accountability were implicit in the college's first two strategic plans, and some values are embedded in the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology's Strategic Plan, *Charting a New Course (1996)*. Values are explicitly defined and included in the *Strategic Plan 2000 – 2003*, and there is an expectation that the college will integrate these values into everyday practices that improve decision making and communication. If the College is to enhance its ethical practice leading to accountability, then improvement is needed before there is trust in managerial practices related to information processing and decision making.

Using the Results of the Social Audit to Inform Strategic Planning

In 1999, the Board of Governors developed the mission and values and then drafted a number of “ends” statements in collaboration with the college community. The ends are described as the most specific level of direction and are the effects that the college seeks to have on its external world (*Strategic Plan 2000 – 2003*, 2000, p. 5). The Policy Governance model established ends as long-range outcomes that were strategic and subject to change and evaluation. The ends may change, whereas the mission and values may not change or may change gradually. Before the college-wide planning session in May 1999, the Board of Governors drafted nine Ends Statements, and the means to achieve these ends were developed as goals and strategies by members of various stakeholder groups and incorporated into a new strategic plan. The goals and strategies defined in Ends Statement #7 are all related to fostering employee satisfaction and were developed in conjunction with the Board of Governors, the Strategic Planning Committee, and the members of stakeholder groups – faculty, staff, administrators, board members, students, and representatives of the communities.

The Social Audit Interim Report (Appendix F) was provided to each participant, and information from it was used to draft various strategies and goals related to the improvement of human resource policy and to introduce new programs that would enhance the work life of employees.

The following analysis examines Ends Statement #7 and demonstrates the degree to which the findings of the social audit contributed to the strategic plan, and indicates the level of acceptance of the social audit results by members of the stakeholder groups.

Ends Statement #7 in the *Strategic Plan 2000 – 2003* states: “Because of North Island College, the Community will have: a college that is accountable, efficient, productive, and

fosters employee satisfaction, personal dignity and professional development” (2000. p. 16).

Four goals and a number of strategies for each goal were developed for Ends Statement #7.

The analysis of Ends Statement #7 and the four goals – professional development and performance evaluation, workload, recognition, and health and wellness – along with the multiple strategies for each goal demonstrates the extent to which the results of the social audit contributed to the strategic plan.

Ends Statement #7: Goal 1 – Professional Development and Performance Evaluation

The first goal is professional development and performance evaluation described as “all North Island College employees will engage in continuous learning through the collaborative development and implementation of an individualized professional development and performance evaluation program.” (*Strategic Plan 2000 – 2003*, 2000, p. 16).

The above goal suggests that when performance of employees is evaluated regularly and when employees have professional development plans that are achieved, then this will contribute to a college that is “accountable, efficient, productive” and that “fosters employee satisfaction” (2000, p. 16). It does not consider whether employees have up-to-date skills, sufficient resources to perform their work, and that systemic processes may create barriers to productivity and efficiency and might need to be changed or removed. It will take time to develop individual professional development plans for all employees and to develop and implement formative performance evaluation processes that support learning goals.

Table 9 includes a number of social audit statements with results that might be worthy of consideration by some administrators. New or revised policies and programs are required to support the goal of engaging in continuous learning and while there are performance evaluation programs in place, they needed to be reviewed and updated.

Table 9 describes the level of agreement, level of disagreement and mean rating of statements related to professional development and performance evaluation.

Table 9 Statements – Professional Development and Performance Evaluation

| Statement # | Statement | Level of Agreement ¹ | Level of Disagreement | Mean Rating |
|-------------|--|---------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------|
| A1 | I have a clear understanding of my position responsibilities. | 82.4 | 10.0 | 4.06 |
| A2 | North Island College is committed to continuous improvement. | 65.6 | 8.8 | 3.79 |
| A5 | Employees have a commitment to performing well. | 89.4 | 1.3 | 4.34 |
| A6 | I receive feedback that enables me to improve my performance. | 44.4 | 28.1 | 3.29 |
| A9 | My supervisor has the supervisory skills to do his or her job. | 61.2 | 13.8 | 3.79 |
| A13 | I receive appropriate training enabling me to perform my duties well. | 36.3 | 35.1 | 3.15 |
| A15 | I am encouraged to learn new skills. | 60.7 | 12.5 | 3.71 |
| A16 | I am encouraged to develop creative ideas. | 56.3 | 11.3 | 3.68 |
| A17 | I am secure in my current position. | 53.2 | 26.3 | 3.32 |
| A19 | Teamwork is encouraged and supported. | 59.4 | 15.6 | 3.69 |
| A20 | I am given the responsibility and authority to make decisions in my position. | 66.9 | 12.5 | 3.82 |
| A21 | North Island College provides employees with opportunities for promotion to other positions. | 29.4 | 26.9 | 3.11 |
| A24 | I am encouraged to be innovative in the way I do my work. | 61.9 | 10.0 | 3.81 |

Note: ¹The scale used consists of (1) Strongly Disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Neither Agree nor Disagree, (4) Agree, (5) Strongly Agree. For the purpose of this analysis, in order to calculate "Agree," the results of "Agree" and "Strongly Agree" were added together as were the results of "Disagree" and "Strongly Disagree" added together to yield one total for "Level of Agreement" and "Level of Disagreement".

Respondents indicated that they clearly understood their position responsibilities and identified that the maintenance of position descriptions was a problem. All performance evaluation programs require updated and relevant position descriptions along with a clear understanding on the part of the employees and supervisors of the standards of performance expected for each position.

Just over half of the respondents indicated that they were secure in their current positions, and professional development plans are critical for employees to maintain their skills and provide a sense of security. One of the College's challenges is to ensure that there is adequate funding for professional development for employees. On the subject of job security, support staff respondents were more likely to report being secure (58.3%) while administrators were least likely to report being secure.

Only 44.4% of employees reported receiving feedback that enabled them to improve their performance and of the three stakeholder groups, faculty respondents were the least likely to receive feedback to improve their performance. Administrators were most likely to receive feedback that improved their performance. The College plans to develop performance evaluation plans for each stakeholder group and incorporate the principles of continuous learning (mission and value statement). Just over 60% of respondents noted that they were encouraged to learn new skills (A15); 56.3% of respondents noted that they were encouraged to develop creative ideas (A16) and 61.9% reported that they were encouraged to be innovative in developing new work processes (A24). Support staff respondents were more likely to report learning new skills, developing creative ideas and being innovative.

The strategies to support Goal #1 – *Professional Development and Performance Evaluation* – were designed to ensure that employees engage in continuous learning during the period 2000 – 2002. They are:

- The college has professional development programs that enhance the quality of instruction and ensures that curriculum development processes are relevant and current.
- Faculty, support staff and administration have collaboratively reviewed their performance evaluation processes and incorporated the principles of continuous learning.
- All supervisors responsible for the evaluation of employees have received training in the new process of employee evaluation.
- All employees have been evaluated at least once using the new process (*Strategic Plan 2000 – 2003*, 2000, p. 16).

Following the development of the goals and strategies, the next challenge was to integrate these operationally using a collaborative effort. The performance review processes are part of the approved collective agreements for faculty, and the support staff's performance review process was jointly developed and support staff must be involved in the revision.

Ends Statement #7: Goal 2 – Workload

The second goal is *workload* described as “North Island College will examine, in collaboration with employee groups, workloads with a view to streamlining and simplifying them.” This goal has three strategies, described as processes for ensuring that:

- The college has established models for simplifying and streamlining faculty, administrative and support staff workloads.
- The college has implemented processes for improving the quality of work-life for employees.
- The college has examined the current concept of the reading break, and developed guidelines for ensuring that the reading break is preserved for students by examining the optimum dates for a reading break (*Strategic Plan 2000 – 2003*, 2000, p. 17).

The issue of workload and stress is of concern to the College. Increases in workload during the period 1995 – 1999 might be attributable to a number of reasons related to the increased pressure to balance the budget, changing technology, rapid growth during a time of constraint, and an economic recession in most of the small communities where the College is located resulting in demands for increased service.

Ends Statement #7: Goal 3 – Recognition

The third goal is *recognition* – “90% of employees will express satisfaction with their jobs.” This goal comes directly from the social audit item A11 that states, “I am satisfied with the work that I do.” A member of one of the strategic planning groups that met on May 7, 1999 declared that if just over 81% of respondents reported satisfaction with their work in the first social audit, then the goal of 90% should be set for the next period. This target was accepted and is now included in the *Strategic Plan 2000 – 2003* (2000, p. 17).

Two social audit items indicate that new methods were needed to recognize respondents for their contribution to the College. Social audit item A12, “I am recognized for my contribution to North Island College” received just over 45% agreement, with nearly 24% disagreeing with the statement. Nearly 90% of respondents indicated that they are committed to performing well and recognizing the commitment of employees is important. Table 11 describes the information from the social audit questionnaire:

Table 10 Aligning Selected Statements with a Need for a New Recognition Program

| Statement # | Description of Statement | Level of Agreement ¹ | Level of Disagreement | Mean Rating |
|-------------|--|---------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------|
| A12 | I am recognized for my contribution to North Island College. | 45.6 | 23.8 | 3.34 |
| A5 | Employees have a commitment to performing well. | 89.4 | 8.1 | 4.34 |

Note: ¹The scale used consists of (1) Strongly Disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Neither Agree nor Disagree, (4) Agree, (5) Strongly Agree. For the purpose of this analysis, in order to calculate “Agree,” the results of “Agree” and “Strongly Agree” were added together as was the results of “Disagree” and “Strongly Disagree” added together to yield one total for “Level of Agreement” and “Level of Disagreement”.

The following three strategies were developed for ensuring that the College enhances its program of recognition:

- The college has reviewed and enhanced its programs of recognition.
- The college, in collaboration with its employee groups, has developed and implemented a program that enhances and recognizes the involvement and participation of employees in key decision-making activities.
- The college has developed ways of celebrating the contribution and results of individuals and groups (*Strategic Plan 2000 – 2003*, 2000, p. 17).

Ends Statement #7: Goal 4 - Health and Wellness

The fourth goal is *health and wellness* described as “North Island College will develop and implement a health and wellness program that respects the health and dignity of employees” (Strategic Plan, 2000, 17). Section E of the social audit questionnaire examined in detail the issue of stress and workload and the strategies established for the strategic plan included the following:

- The college has developed and implemented a wellness program.
- The college has developed and implemented a flexible working environment that incorporates peak periods, reading breaks, and vacation utilization; that maximizes the working hours of employees; and, contributes to employee wellness as well as organizational accountability.
- Include estimates of annual resources required to implement these parts of a Human Resources Plan over three years (*Strategic Plan 2000 – 2003*, 2000, p. 17).

The development of a health and wellness program is congruent with a number of workplace issues. In some areas, there is an increase in absenteeism. Absenteeism has been identified as an issue that must be addressed throughout the public sector. It has been reported that while the national average of short-term absences is 6.5 days per year, in the public sector of British Columbia, the average was 11.97 days in 1996 and 12.26 days in 1997. A 10% reduction in absenteeism could result in savings of \$90 million within the government part of the BC Public Sector (Report by the Public Sector Employers’ Council, 1999, p. 6). However, new thinking is required in terms of how we deal with absenteeism. What are the reasons for the

absences? Are they all directly attributable to the employee, or are there other reasons that must be examined? For example, employees at North Island College reported being caregivers for their children and for their elderly parents; many reported working hours of unpaid overtime; and many faculty members reported working during their vacation time to ensure that they were prepared for the next term. One question might be to look at flexible working hours that enable employees to balance their careers and their lives.

There is growing dissatisfaction with wages and only 46.9% of employees agreed that they were fairly paid compared with others doing comparable work in other organizations while 55.6% of employees agreed that their pay reflects the responsibilities for their positions. The support staff, at 43.8%, was less likely to agree that their pay reflects responsibilities for their positions.

Many respondents use the word “stress” to describe their situation. Shain states:

The kind of stress that has been implicated in serious harm to employee health is not simply cumulative worries, annoyances and concerns; rather, it is a specific set of conditions that are produced by the way work is organized and designed. Certain kinds of stress combined with certain kinds of job dissatisfaction represents major threats to employee well being. The stress is often merely having too much to do in too short a time, along with the mental fatigue associated with prolonged effort; the dissatisfaction classically consists of having too little influence over the day to day means, manner or method of one’s work, and feeling seriously unrewarded, unacknowledged or unappreciated for one’s work” (Shain, 1999, pp. 40 – 42)

Some of the words and descriptions used by respondents are similar to research found on unhealthy workplaces. More research is needed to determine the cause of the dissatisfaction and to clarify what “stress” means in this context.

One of the benefits of the social audit is that the results described one aspect of the current reality of the college, and representatives of the College’s stakeholder groups who attended the May 7, 1999 planning day appeared to support the findings of the social audit. The

College must support the goals and strategies that contribute to wellness in the work environment. It is noted that health promotion strategies require that employees assume responsibility for their own wellness.

The social audit resulted in the creation of new knowledge about the College and motivated action to improve the quality of the workplace. It allowed for an examination of the practice of social auditing in a public sector organization.

In previous chapters, I reviewed how policy was developed and implemented at the College, and I knew that some policies were not achieving their purpose. Some of the College's policies were designed to change behaviour and to protect it from legal liabilities. In some cases, change was not occurring and this was obscured, in part because the policy appeared to provide a sense of security. In one case, an employee providing feedback during the questionnaire design phase, wrote:

I noticed some subtle influences at play while I was completing the questionnaire. I found my perspective shifting between my response in the sense of my relationship with the college and colleagues; and my observations of the interaction between the college and my colleagues, or even colleagues with other colleagues (Electronic mail communication, March 4 1999, p. 2).

The employee went on to say:

There is a distinction between theoretical effects in a general sense, and practical effects in a specific sense. In my answers to many questions, the effects coming into play were much more to do with my interactions with people in my work than actual HR policies and practices. For instance, there are NIC policies around discrimination and harassment; I notice the perspective of individuals, which do not necessarily reflect the college position (Electronic mail communication, March 4, 1999, p. 2).

Even during the design phase of the social audit questionnaire, and based only on communication with various employees who agreed to review and comment on the questionnaire, I learned about what might be strengths and weaknesses. One employee who agreed to review the social audit questionnaire when it was in its development stage said, "I

think you will get lots of information. I think, given my sense of the climate – there will be a lot of work to do. Are we ready to deal with this?” (Electronic mail communication, January 26, 1999, p. 1). In an organization where the volume of workloads appears to be problematic, the thought of more work emerging from a social audit caused concern about whether “we” were ready to “deal” with the added workload.

A number of employees stated in their communication that they thought the social audit questionnaire covered “all of the bases” and they wondered if it would bring about institutional change (Electronic mail communication, January 25 and 27, 1999, p. 1). When conducting surveys of this type, there is an implied promise or an expectation on behalf of those who complete the survey that something might change. Alvesson states that a “questionnaire may be appropriate in order to get information about simple and relatively fixed issues, where the meaning can be standardized and quantified” but when it “comes to more complex issues, respondents typically interpret formulations” that are “far beyond the control of the researcher” (undated, p. 4). The comments and the perceptions of the respondents added to a richness of information, and the challenges of a social audit are in the conducting of it, in the interpretation of the results and in the management of expectations when respondents want change.

One employee who reviewed the questionnaire and suggested changes reminded me that the questionnaire appeared to be developed for employees in regular positions and suggested that more attention be paid to the needs of the non-regular, part-time, casual or contract employee.

The employee said:

The whole area of being part-time/casual/contract, I think is missing and for many I believe it to be important. I see this in light of societal trends towards a way of working, which relieves employers of the responsibility, attached to being a full-time employee – i.e. benefits, commitment for future work. Having paid the debts, I will not quickly forget how demoralizing and stressful it can be waiting on the next contract (Memorandum, January 26, 1999, p. 1).

Some social audit questionnaires or surveys provide for the collection of information regarding ethnicity and race, in order to get a sense of the diversity of the organization. The College has not collected information related to the ethnicity or race of its employees, and I was sensitive to the many discussions that have taken place either at the bargaining table or during policy discussions. As this was the first time that I had conducted a social audit, I decided that this was not the time to begin this process. It is suggested that the collection of information related to diversity of employees be part of an overall policy and commitment to fairness and equity.

The development and implementation of a process of social auditing was intensive. The research project was in addition to my regular responsibilities, and resulted in workload pressures that had to be managed. There was slippage. Some tasks were not completed and some deadlines were not met. When an individual assumes responsibilities for a social audit, even a partial social audit, it cannot be done alone and it needs to be appropriately planned with the right resources. The learning was significant, and the results cannot be ignored. The information resulting from the social audit was complex as it was based on the perceptions of many respondents from different stakeholder groups working, living in fifteen different communities, collected at a single point in time.

Early information contributed to changes – the identification that employees did not have easy access to policies resulted in the policies being placed on the college's web site. Second, information about key elements of work life was considered during the strategic planning process and goals and strategies were developed and included in the strategic plan. Third, three employees reviewed the findings of the social audit as they related to their employee group and made independent recommendations to the President. Fourth, an external consultant was asked to review the findings related to faculty workload. Faculty workload is a contentious issue and it

was thought that an independent review might shed light on some of the issues. Fifth, the extent of the information that is available in regard to the improvements that would be required was used to develop a multi-year plan for the human resources department, and finally, the information from the social audit was used to decide priorities for the College's budget for the year 2000.

The following summarizes the independent reports of the representatives of each stakeholder group.

Analysis of the Social Audit by Independent Reviewers

Four people were invited to review the results of the social audit and to write independent reports with recommendations to the President of North Island College. Three were internal to the College: Jeff Brett, a Technician with the Fine-Arts Department and Vice-President of the Canadian Union of Public Employees, Local 3479, represented the support staff; Linda Ruehlen, Associate Dean, Applied Programs, Health and Careers represented the administrators; and Brigid Walters, a faculty member who teaches biology in the Department of Mathematics & Sciences represented faculty. The fourth was external; David Pinel of Pinel & Associates, a consultant and researcher in the area of community research and planning, who provided an independent review of the faculty responses in terms of workload.

Support Staff

Forty-eight support staff (30%) participated in completing the social audit questionnaire. The support staff representative, Jeff Brett, was provided with a one-day per week release from his regular duties for the period September 15 to December 31, 1999. This study had three phases. First, Jeff Brett examined the data collected Social Audit. Second, focus groups were conducted at the campuses, and third, dialogue between support staff and the representative were

carried out by email, telephone, and in individual workgroup meetings. The College set up a web board for the purpose of displaying information and encouraging discussion among support staff throughout the College regions. This was the first time that a web board had been used, but in terms of encouraging dialogue and connecting support staff in fifteen different locations, the web board was not as successful as hoped. The following is a summary of Jeff Brett's report to the President, North Island College (Brett, 2000, pp. 1 – 10).

Initially, the major areas of concern were identified as employee satisfaction; wages and benefits; communications; consultation and decision-making; and workload and stress. In 1996, the union conducted a support-staff workload survey in preparation for bargaining. The information from the social audit enabled the support staff representative to confirm whether issues that might pertain to workload had worsened since 1996.

Brett's report pointed out that in examining the data by location, there was no differentiation made between employees working at the Comox Valley Campus and those working in Komoux Hall at the Comox Valley Campus. Komoux Hall is the College's "administrative headquarters." The focus groups of employees in Komoux Hall revealed differences from employees working in the Comox Valley Campus.

In a review of the social audit statements, an area of concern common to all employees in every location was Statement A7, "I have the resources to do quality work," and A13, "I receive appropriate training enabling me to perform my duties well." Initially, other statements were targeted as possible problem areas but when the findings were examined, the results of the following statements indicated that they were not a cause for concern:

Statement A1: "I have a clear understanding of my position responsibilities."

Statement A6: "I receive feedback that enables me to improve my performance."

Statement A9: "My supervisor has the supervisory skills needed to do his or her job"

Statement A18: "I can speak openly without fear of retribution."

Statement A11: "Morale in my department is generally high."

Considerable time was spent talking in the focus groups about overtime and the amount of voluntary overtime worked by support staff. Union representatives and administrators are working diligently to control voluntary overtime as it masks the ability of management to identify where new resources are needed. In Section C, Communications, Consultation and Decision Making, some issues appeared to be campus based and more problematic in Campbell River, Port Alberni and Port Hardy. Focus groups spent considerable time discussing Section E – Workload and Stress. It appears that respondents reported more stress at the Comox Valley Campus and distinguishing between respondents from the Comox Valley Campus and Komoux Hall might have produced different results. It was noted that at “locations where the manager or administrator is perceived to be effective, support staff exhibit a remarkable resilience.” When support staff work at peak periods, or at times of heavy workload and stress, there is a difference where there is trust between each person in a workgroup (Brett, 2000, p. 9).

Seven focus groups, lasting approximately ninety minutes each, were conducted between November 1, 1999 and November 22, 1999. The major findings were that there was a lack of resources at most locations to perform quality work and a major concern was the perception of inequity in the way resources are allocated at the College. Resources include physical resources such as computers, etc., and human resources and it was noted that support staff resent the resource allocation procedures (Brett, 2000, pp. 3 – 4).

The following seven questions were developed and asked at each focus group and an employee was assigned the task of recording the responses:

1. What works well for you at North Island College?
2. What does not work well for you at the College?
3. What would you like to see changed?

4. What would you recommend to improve working conditions?
5. What would you recommend to reduce stress levels?
6. If you had two minutes to tell the President how to improve work life at the College what would you say?
7. What else should Human Resources know about work life at the College?

Training was identified as inadequate. A new system that integrated information processing in the areas of student and financial services was identified as one of the major causes of increased workload for support staff in the two year period prior to the social audit being conducted. The integrated computer software was described as the topic that dominated most of the discussions in focus groups and appears to have had a profound effect on staff workload. Other colleges in the British Columbia post secondary education system experienced more successful implementation processes because people were seconded from their positions, trained for the new system, and replacements were hired to do their work during the initial implementation stage. Jeff Brett noted that the implementation of any new technology must be supported with appropriate training (2000, p. 9).

Overtime tracking and the right to decline overtime were causes of concern for support staff. Only one campus appears to be tracking overtime correctly. The department of computer services has worked significant amounts of overtime and this is not being tracked adequately (Brett, 2000, p. 5). Support staff told many stories about poor service to the communities where they worked because of lack of resources. The support staff asked the following questions:

1. Does administration realize that members of the support staff who are at the front line are the people who are yelled at?
2. What are the managers being paid for if they are not managing staff workloads and stress?
3. Can the front line be given more priority for resources?

The recommendations flowing from the support staff focus groups and the work of the support staff representative are outlined in Chapter 7.

The Review of the Administrators' Representative

This section concentrates on findings that may improve the working environment for administrators. Administrators reported that they were interested in improvements in professional development opportunities, and a revised performance management program based on a formative and developmental process. In many cases, the concerns expressed by administrators echoed the concerns of all respondents. Administrators expressed their concern about students, about their work in local communities, about the need to take on additional work in the form of contracts and entrepreneurial initiatives, and workloads that appeared to increase the stress in themselves and the employees who reported to them.

Linda Ruehlen conducted two focus groups and administrators were provided with findings identified by the administrator and were asked the following three questions:

1. Which of the statements mattered most to administrators?
2. Which of the issues, if addressed, would result in positive outcomes for administrators?
3. If implemented, how might the improvements be measured?

In the focus groups, administrators reported that they were concerned about managing their workload and producing quality work. They were most concerned about the decision-making processes at the college and the processes of communication that affected quality and particularly efficiency. Administrators were concerned about open and transparent decision making processes. They were more likely to talk about their leadership style and wanted to enhance their leadership so that they could be innovative, creative and recognize new ideas and

the workability of new ideas while managing their administrative routines. They were dissatisfied with the compensation policy for exempt administrators and they compared their own compensation packages to those paid to administrators in similar positions in other public sectors, particularly the K – 12 public school system. They talked about being an administrator in the College and indicated that they perceived a sense of a lack of respect for the role of administrators.

While they have more control over their work than employees do in the other two groups, they were concerned about their workload and the workload of employees who reported to them. Some administrators expressed concerns that reduced rewards; both financial and non-financial recognition has led many administrators to experience less satisfaction with their work. Some administrators work in stressful environments but it was clear that administrators remained committed to their work, to the purpose of the College and to the students. Administrators had an interest in quality improvement processes, improved communications and decision making and the streamlining of systems that were cumbersome and unwieldy.

Faculty

This section presents the findings of Brigid Walters, who represented the faculty in a review of the social audit. The faculty member was provided with release time from one of her teaching sections for the period September to December 1999. The faculty representative had access to the findings of the social audit questionnaire and used the Pinel Report as an additional input. Brigid Walters reviewed the findings of the social audit and met with faculty individually, in groups or through email discussions and teleconferences with faculty in most of the College region.

Overall, faculty generally felt alienated and disconnected and this disconnection was most apparent between senior administration and faculty. There appears to be widespread mistrust and resentment and much of the resentment was caused by the allocation of resources and the perception that one group (employees in Komoux Hall – regarded as the College's headquarters) had more and better quality resources than others (Walters, 1999, p. 1). This was translated as, "the more closely you work with students, the less that you have to work with" (Walters, 1999, p.1).

The issue of allocation of resources was uppermost in the minds of the faculty. It is perceived by some faculty that administrators have no difficulty adding staff continuously, but there never seemed to be funds for additional sections where there are long waitlists of students for core courses such as English, Psychology and Biology (Walters, 1999, p. 2).

There is a sense that faculty work was neither understood, nor appreciated. Pressure was created by the very nature of the work – the need to be 'on,' prepared and ready to perform for up to six hours per day, no matter what was happening. Faculty felt that they should be valued for their role with students, and "if the teaching and instruction is not understood, supported and valued, then the work changes from being a 'raison d'être' to being drudgery – the perception of rounds of teaching and marking that stretch on ahead without end" (Walters, 1999, p. 1).

Some faculty feel that downloading administrative tasks is occurring at an increased pace – many faculty felt that they were now responsible for administrative tasks, and this was "particularly acute in the case of department chairs." Examples of this include budget responsibilities, program publicity, college publicity, dealing with difficult personnel and student issues (Walters, 1999, p. 1).

There is a perception that students experience financial, personal and emotional issues. The College is small and faculty forge close relationships with students. While this is viewed as

one of the strengths of a small college, it is taking a toll on faculty and students (Walters, 1999, pp. 1 - 2).

Some faculty reported that they face an uncertain future. They work in community learning centres or in other areas where there has been a reduction of services. Faculty in the community learning centres have begun to serve students from other locations using a distance delivery model but their roles are diverse and they reported that they cannot always perform the function of maintaining the College's visibility in the community. Increasingly, faculty in certain locations feel marginalized, and there is a sense that there is no clear commitment to maintaining the community learning centres (Walters, 1999, p. 2).

There is a perception that there is a lack of connection between administration, the departments and department members. Administrators need to be more present in all of the instructional areas of the College so that they can be more aware of the rhythms of academic life. Faculty reported that requests for information are sent to faculty at inappropriate times in the year, and meetings are called when people are teaching. Some of these issues are departmental and it was reported that some departments do not ensure that all members feel equally valued and included in departmental matters (Walters, 1999, p. 2).

It was reported that many faculty are approaching retirement age and their focus is beginning to change. This has been described in terms such as a lack of energy, increased cynicism and resistance to change. In the current climate of uncertainty, it was suggested that some form of early retirement incentive might support the retirement plans of faculty and increase the ability to hire new faculty (Walters, 1999, p. 2).

Finally, there appears to be a loss of unity across campuses, there has been difficulty adjusting to a transition that changed the tasks of some administrators from a split educational/operational focus to an operational orientation (Walters, 1999, p. 3). Based on her

work, Brigid Walters made a number of recommendations for improvement and these are reported in Chapter Seven.

External Consultant

Pinel stated that while there were many positive indicators about North Island College as a workplace, his report focused on areas in which faculty indicated a need for improvement. One challenge when interpreting this data and identifying priority action involved the relative weight given to each indicator and Pinel asked if some indicators were more valued as measures of workplace well being, and how this was decided. (Pinel, 1999, p. 1)

Pinel reported that approximately 59% (94 out of 160) responses were from faculty, and that according to these responses the key issue areas in ascending order of critical rating were:

- Resources (A7)
- Open Information (C4)
- Transparent Decision Making (C6)
- Workload Increases (E6)
- Overtime Compensation (B6)

Pinel suggested three questions to stimulate further discussion and decisions:

1. "Which of these indicators matter most to us in the intermediate term (3 – 5 years)?"
2. "Which of these issues, if addressed, will stimulate positive outcomes in other areas?"
3. "How can the College measure improvements?"

The following is a summary of Pinel's report of October, 1999:

Pinel provided an arms-length look at the faculty-only data. Only basic statistical analysis using frequencies, means and graphs (area and skew) were applied. Various cross tabulations were calculated to examine relationships between issues and according to respondent descriptors (appointment status, age, location, etc), but these offered few additional insights

(Pinel, 1999, p. 1). Table 12 indicates that members of the faculty were somewhat more critical when rating the following statements:

Table 12 Selected Statements: Faculty More 'Critical' Than Other Respondent Groups

| # | Statement | Faculty Mean Rating ¹ | Support Staff Mean Rating | Administrators' Mean Rating |
|-----|--|--|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| A7 | I have the resources to do quality work | 2.89 | 3.17 | 3.06 |
| A22 | Morale in my department is generally high. | 3.11 | 3.48 | 3.35 |
| B6 | I am compensated for overtime worked. | 1.7 | 2.85 | 2.29 |
| E4 | Demands of job interfere with my private life. | 3.41 | 2.56 | 3.47 |

¹Where the mean response is calculated on a five-point scale where 1 = most negative and 5 = most positive.

²Where the 5 point scale is reverse relative to other indicators, i.e. 5 = most negative and 1 = most positive. (Pinel, 1999, p. 2).

Pinel referred to five statements in the social audit questionnaire that had an approximately "centered" distribution including: Statement A6 – Feedback, Statement A10 – Consistent Application of Policies, Statement A13 – Training to Perform Well, Statement A22 – Morale in Department is Generally High, and D5 – Ergonomic Features of Workstations Reduce Potential Health Problems. Pinel observed that these seemingly "neutral" or "balanced" indicators may become larger areas of concern but with minor improvements, these areas might become positive elements of the North Island College workplace. He suggested that where there were significant "neither agree nor disagree" frequencies that this could indicate several things: neutrality, ambivalence, lack of knowledge, or efficient non-committal when completing the social audit questionnaire – in other words there might be safety in sitting on the fence. Pinel

thought that these issues should be considered when shaping faculty-related human resource strategies (1999, p. 3).

In addressing the key issue areas, Pinel suggested that Statement A7 – “having the resources to do quality work” – was the only indicator with a mean response below 3.00. Almost half of the respondents were dissatisfied with resource availability and this response was consistent when cross tabulated with “appointment status” and “location” (Pinel, 1999, pp. 4 – 5). It was interesting to note that faculty who had longer service (11 – 15 years or greater than 15 years) or who were the oldest (over 55), were generally more satisfied with the resources available.

Pinel suggested that faculty consider the following questions:

1. Would better resources help to reduce faculty overtime or the sense of workload increase (E6)?
2. How can faculty at community learning centres more readily access resources?
3. Why does there seem to be two extremes, the “haves” and the “have-nots”? How much of this split relates simply to half of the faculty respondents not needing many resources for their teaching, and the other half being more resource dependent by the nature of their program area or teaching style?
4. How are people defining “resources” – teaching equipment, office space, departmental support, money, classroom space, etc?

The issue of open information (Statement C4) and transparent decision-making (Statement C6) were also statements with a faculty response mean below 3.00. Pinel stated that two statements “information for making decision flows openly and freely” (Statement C4 - mean rating of 2.85) and “decision making is transparent” (Statement C6 – mean rating of 2.76) are “closely linked and arguably interchangeable, though their response patterns varied slightly (1999, p. 5). Pinel thought, “although respondents would have used different interpretations

about “open” or “free flowing” information, and “transparent” decisions, faculty wanted a clearer understanding about college decision making and offered the following questions and linkages:

1. What are the different decision making areas/levels where the flow of information to/for/from faculty could improve?”
2. Just because many faculty do not agree that information for making decisions flows openly and freely, does that mean that they want it to?
3. Is “transparency” desired before, during, and/or after a decision is made/being made, i.e. “process related” or “outcome related or is it both?”
4. How might information flow and decision transparency improve department morale (A22)?
5. Would access to more decision-making information and expectations add to faculty workloads (E6)? Would the opposite occur (by improving faculty input re: workloads, strategies, or processes)?
6. Would improvements in decision-making transparency improve the perception that policies were consistently applied? (A10) (Pinel, 1999, pp. 7 – 8).

The issue of workload and compensation was reviewed by Pinel who suggested that Statement E6 – “workload increases over the past five years” – and Statement B6 – “compensation for overtime worked” – had the least favourable and most skewed responses (1999, p. 8). Pinel thought that while the “results were clearly negative, the responses should be of little surprise in today’s workplace context.” Using the context of today’s workplace does not justify the situation at North Island College, but it is a reminder to look at general societal trends for possible solutions (1999, p. 8).

In terms of the increased workloads, 40% (38 respondents out of 94) had been with North Island College for less than five years and Pinel wondered if there may be ambiguity as to whether respondents were only using North Island College as their context for responding to this statement (1999, p. 9). Pinel noted that 56.4% of respondents felt that their workload had increased, while only 9.6% disagreed. In a review of cross tabulations, faculty with 6 – 10, 11 – 15, and more than 15 years of service all felt that their workload had increased over the last five years (1999, p. 9).

Finally, having reviewed the aggregated data responding to faculty, Pinel suggested the following questions for further dialogue with faculty in general:

1. As an employer, what workload and overtime compensation standards can NIC set or uphold?
2. What creative options are there for reducing workloads, thereby reducing overtime worked and the need to compensate for overtime?
3. Can NIC generate creative solutions for ensuring that faculty workloads do not increase?
4. What current research is available about workload and trends in stress within post secondary institutions, in British Columbia, and in Canada?
5. Has North Island College tried to define "positive" and "negative" stress related to workplace, health, performance and satisfaction?
6. What portion of "work being stressful" is linked directly to the amount of "workload?" What other factors make work stressful?
7. What would be considered "adequate" overtime compensation?
8. What creative options are there for compensating overtime?
9. What links are there between workload increases and department morale (A22)? (Pinel, 1999, p. 10).

Summary

Many employees participated in the social audit and wondered if it was a worthwhile exercise. Some said it was cathartic and they experienced some release by reflecting on the statements and answering the questions. Some acknowledged that the College was a good place to work and were surprised at the many areas that they judged positively. Others were equally surprised at the areas that needed attention and seemed negative. I conducted the social audit as part of a research project and I hoped that I would be able to improve some policies and practice and publish a social report of the results. The social audit has more than met my expectations of how it might be used to improve human resource policy and practice. The social audit has informed and spearheaded change processes, and contributed to the strategic plan.

Chapter Seven provides a summary of the social audit, reflects on the process and describes the recommendations arising from the social audit and for conducting a social audit in 2002.

CHAPTER SEVEN: SUMMARY, REFLECTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Chapter Seven includes a summary of the work that has been accomplished, reflects on what was learned about the process of SEAAR, and the evolution of social responsibility in public sector organizations. It reviews the adaptation of a process of SEAAR in a community college within a context of public accountability and organizational autonomy; and presents the recommendations and some of the actions that will be taken because of conducting a social audit of the College.

Summary

This research project was completed as part of a course of professional studies towards the degree of Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership and Policy at the University of British Columbia, while working full-time as the Director of Human Resources for North Island College, one of the British Columbia's community colleges. The program engaged me in a process of reflection on my practice in the area of leadership and policy. The research project consisted of conducting a review of the social performance of a community college based on the evolving practice of social and ethical accountability, auditing and reporting (SEAAR) during a time when public policy was centralizing the decision making for human resource and labour relations policy.

When I first considered a review of an organization's social performance using a process of social auditing, I was optimistic that the results of a social audit would add powerfully to the information available for the development of goals and strategies for the College's *Strategic Plan 2000 – 2003*. I have not been disappointed. Developing and conducting the social audit was a powerful experience that produced specific information used to design goals and strategies that would improve the work life of the College. Moreover, the social audit provided an

opportunity to reflect on the implications of and the effect of public policy on human resource and labour relations' policy in the post secondary education sector.

The social audit consisted of designing a social audit questionnaire in collaboration with faculty, staff and administrators during the period November 1998 to February 1999 followed by the distribution of the questionnaire in March, 1999. Completed social audit questionnaires were received, coded, input into a SPSS database and verified. An interim report was developed for the use of the Strategic Planning Committee and was part of the information distributed to ninety-two employees, student and Board members attending a strategic planning session on May 7, 1999. The Social Audit Interim Report supported and enhanced the findings of an environmental assessment conducted as part of a traditional 'SWOT' analysis in a strategic planning process. Members of a number of stakeholder groups – faculty, support staff, administration, students and members of the Board of Governors – used the information provided in the Social Audit Interim Report, to recommend goals and strategies in four major areas of human resource policy: (1) performance evaluation and professional development, (2) workload, (3) recognition and (4) health and wellness. Change in these four key areas might contribute to improved human resources and managerial practices that might support the College's achievement of particular strategies and goals established in its *Strategic Plan 2000 – 2003*.

During September to December 1999, the goals and strategies that described the four major areas continued to evolve, and during that same period, three employees representing faculty, support staff and administration undertook to review the results of the social audit pertaining to each group. Each representative was provided with the social audit results for their group and upon request, was provided with access to the findings of the other two groups. The faculty and support staff representatives were provided with release time from their normal

duties in order to study the results of the social audit, meet with members of their group, and formulate their recommendations. No release time was contemplated for the administrator because of the difficulty in replacing an administrator for a short period; instead, it was acknowledged that the sample size of the administrative group was smaller and thus more manageable (17 respondents or 10.6% of the total). The administrator was able to accomplish an independent review in conjunction with her other duties. The representatives made recommendations on behalf of their stakeholder group to the President of North Island College.

Faculty represents the largest group of employees at North Island College and was the largest stakeholder group who participated in the social audit (94 or 58.5% of the total). Due to the volume of the results emerging in regard to faculty workload, an external consultant was appointed to prepare an independent report on issues related to faculty workload. This was presented to the President and myself, and a copy was provided to the faculty representative who reviewed the external consultant's report in addition to the results of the social audit.

The design of the social audit questionnaire was collaborative and inclusive; almost fifty employees reviewed, added to, suggested changes and edited the questionnaire during the period November, 1998 to February, 1999. This had the effect of moving the concept of a social audit into the college environment, reduced the potential for bias in the design of the questionnaire statements, and ensured that significant issues were included and that equally significant issues were not purposefully excluded. The result was a questionnaire with sixty-seven statements. There was no judgment as to whether one statement was more important than another was and respondents were invited to indicate their agreement as to whether the College met its commitments concerning particular policies and practices. There was space for comments on the questionnaire.

Disclosure included the distribution of a Social Audit Interim Report to ninety-two representatives of the college community – students, faculty, support staff, administrators and members of the board of governors – during a college-wide strategic planning process held on May 7, 1999. Full disclosure of all of the information was made to three representatives of the employee groups and to a consultant appointed to independently review the findings of the social audit questionnaire, thus meeting some of the tests of openness, transparency and disclosure required of a process of SEAAR. The overall results of this work will be published in the fall of 2000 in the document Social Report 2000. I hope that the full disclosure will encourage more employees to participate in the second Social Audit to be conducted at the College in 2002.

Verification is an integral and critical component of SEAAR, but due to funding limitations; there was no external verification of my work. I was diligent and aware of my own biases during the collaborative process that designed the social audit questionnaire. I consulted with others to ensure that my biases did not interfere with the establishment of the social performance statements in the questionnaire and this resulted in a more open process that led to the development of sixty-seven statements regarding management and human resource policy and practices. Where my personal biases about human resource policy, the College or the system have found their way into my writing, I have reflected on this, and owned my bias.

The social audit conducted at North Island College was adapted, with permission, from the work of the New Economics Foundation and the Institute of Social and Ethical Accountability in London, England. Organizations such as Vancouver City Savings in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada and, The Body Shop, United Kingdom shared information and provided assistance with my research.

When the opportunity has arisen, I have presented my work and shared the methodology and social audit questionnaire with a number of other post secondary institutions. As this is the

first social audit in the British Columbia post secondary education system, I am confident that if other colleges and institutes or other public sector organizations embarked on a process of social auditing, they would benefit.

Following the design of the social audit questionnaire during the period November, 1998 to February, 1999, a pilot program was conducted and following this, the social audit questionnaire was distributed to all employees. Four hundred and twenty-four social audit questionnaires were mailed to employees in three stakeholder groups – faculty, support staff and administrators – along with an invitation to participate in the College's first social audit. Completion of the social audit was both confidential and voluntary. However, the very nature of conducting a social audit as a research project meant that due to my considerable knowledge of the College and its employees, sometimes it was possible for me to identify the author of a particular questionnaire. The social auditing process embraced principles such as anonymity, confidentiality and inclusiveness and when it was possible to identify a respondent, I noticed that respondents chose to self-identify, and based on their interest and commitment to a process, they requested that their responses be included. In other cases, employees chose not to identify particular locations, position categories, or status in order to maintain anonymity.

Of the four hundred and twenty-four (424) employees who received the social audit, 37.7% of employees (160) returned completed questionnaires. The rate of return might have been higher, but many employees noted that they were being asked to provide input to a number of other surveys related to the College's strategic planning process that was occurring at the same time. Some said that they were too busy to complete the questionnaire, while others encouraged continuation of the work and asked for more time. A few employees refused to participate; as they thought nothing would happen with the results of the social audit. Interest

continued in the process, and as late as September 1999, employees continued to ask for copies of the social audit questionnaire in order to participate in the process.

The rate of response and the quality of the comments indicated that the information contained in the social audit could be viewed with reasonable confidence. A process of social auditing as a method for improvement was introduced into the College and a commitment was made by me to use the information to enhance the quality of work life and improve policy and practice based on the results of the social audit.

The College's first social audit was a combination of the results of the social audit questionnaire and a review of current managerial practices and human resource policies and programs. Both the findings from the social audit questionnaire and a review of the general state of human resource policies established a context for recommending goals and strategies for improvement and a number of recommendations were included in the College's *Strategic Plan 2000 – 2003*.

Reflections

Social auditing is a process that enables an organization to examine its own performance and make improvements. The context was made more complex when public policy designed to achieve effectiveness and efficiency in the area of human resource management centralized some areas of decision making for human resource policy. It may be too early to assess whether centralized public policy has achieved its aims, and a second social audit to be conducted at the College in 2002 may shed more light on these policy initiatives.

This research enabled me to look inward at the College and to look outward at how public policy had first influenced, and later mandated certain human resource policy directions. In a communication from the Public Sector Employers' Council, the Council reported:

Since its inception, PSEC has had much success in working with public sector employers to implement important labour relations strategies and policies. There is enormous opportunity to achieve even greater success in meeting PSEC's full mandate. Some of the key opportunities are: achieving efficiencies in benefit administration, establishing better data and information systems and reducing absenteeism by creating workplaces where employees want to come to work. We also identified priorities around building trustful relations with unions, reducing reliance on third parties to resolve grievances and arbitrations and developing leading-edge human resource practices (Adams, 1999, p. 1)

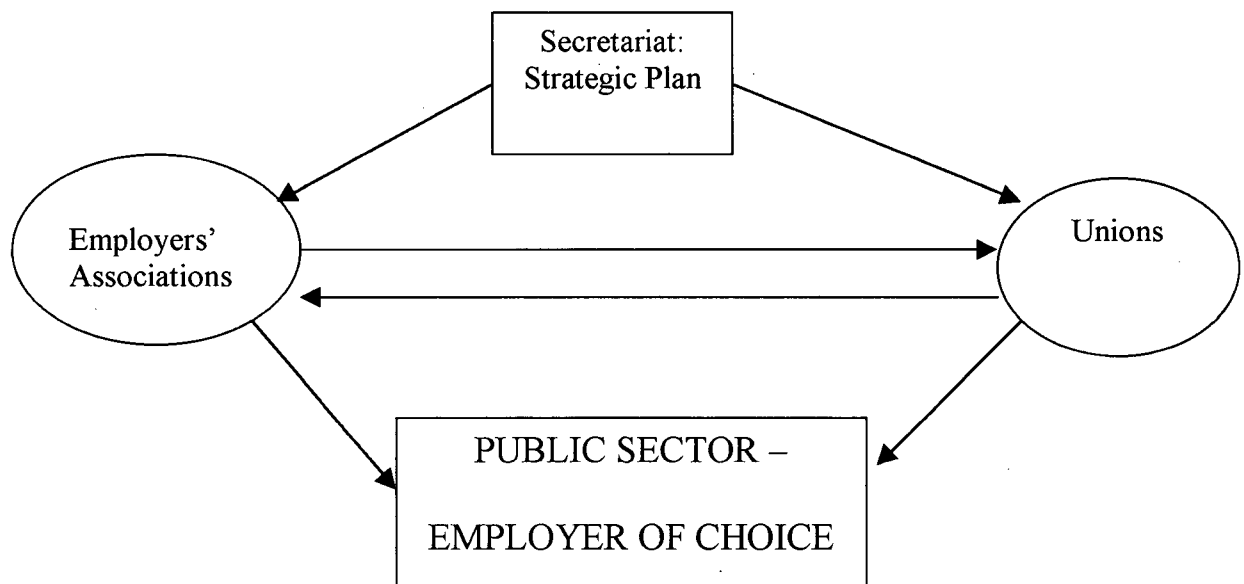
The Public Sector Employers' Council mandate is as follows:

- To set and coordinate strategic directions in human resource management and labour relations.
- To advise the government on human resource issues with respect to the public sector.
- To provide a forum to enable public sector employers to plan solutions for human resource issues.
- To enable unions to consult with employers on issues that directly affects employees (Adams, 1999, p. 1).

The Public Sector Employers' Council has a mandate to advise the government on human resource issues; to engage in a dialogue with stakeholders through annual stakeholder meetings, search conferences, and communications with other jurisdictions, including conducting labour relations; and to conduct and communicate the results of human resource environmental scans. Their aim is to engage in dialogue that allows employers' associations and stakeholders to identify and plan solutions that address human resource issues (1999, p. 9). Adams noted that they will need a greater capacity to gather and share information to cost collective agreements; to forecast future compensation cost pressures; to track and analyze various costs, including the cost of absenteeism, and to generally ensure that the right human resource decisions are made (1999, p. 10).

The vision of the Public Sector Employers' Council is to develop relationships with unions and employers, to work on common challenges and problems and to find innovative ways of working together. Adams states that the "relationship challenge is at the heart of most of their human resource issues" (1999, p. 11). Social auditing might be a process that enables them to commence a dialogue with unions and employers that is based on information that is from the heart of the public sector – its employees. Figure 16 presents the vision of the Public Sector Employers' Council.

Figure 16 Public Sector Employers' Council – Vision for Developing Relationships



Source: Public Sector Employers' Council, 1999, p. 11.

The Public Sector Employers Council stated:

The vision is to move from "wage cops" to one where PSEC can facilitate a number of goals that address human resource challenges in the public sector and that their issues are better governance and management; workforce planning; diversity; organizational development; improved workplace relations; innovative union-management relationships; and the management of the next round of public sector collective bargaining that begins in 2001 (1999, p. 13).

I suggest that a process of social auditing in the public sector might lead to information that enables faster goal attainment. Social auditing is a stakeholder process that enhances dialogue. One stakeholder group is employees, and their information would be available along with that of the unions, the employers, the associations of the public sector, the Government of British Columbia and other stakeholders. The Public Sector Employers' Council noted that "happier employees" may help to achieve outcomes that include improved employee morale, reduced absenteeism, reduced arbitration costs, new opportunities for cost efficiencies in benefits administration, improved union-management relations, and enhanced accountability and fiscal responsibility (1999, p. 14). I am not sure that organizations generally contribute to the happiness of employees, but I do know that a social audit, and other climate surveys, might measure the degree of satisfaction that employees experience when working for a particular employer. At best, we might strive for employees who are satisfied with their work. If the social audit of a particular college is any indication, then there is much work to do at all levels of the public sector to improve the working conditions of public sector employees. In this regard, one outcome is to ensure that British Columbia's public sector continues to attract and retain qualified employees.

When the President of North Island College supported my proposal to conduct a social audit that might contribute to the establishment of a social "bottom line," I acted on the assumption that I was responsible for the direction of all human resource policies and programs. This research has deepened my understanding of the effect of public policy at the local level and at the sectoral level; the two are not separate - they are inextricably connected. A centralized public policy aimed at efficiency and effectiveness does not always guarantee that either will be achieved, or that employees will be more satisfied or "happy."

The social audit had its genesis in my search for a way to ensure fairness in the workplace. Initially, I considered whether organizational justice could be achieved by balancing distributive and procedural processes, culminating in fair decision-making. Change was significant for human resource practitioners during the 1990s. Public policy aimed at increased efficiency and effectiveness in human resource management policy was partly responsible, and policy translation and implementation at the sectoral level resulted in increased workload for human resource practitioners who now function at both a local and sectoral level. Time that human resource practitioners might have used to improve processes at the local level are often fragmented, because of the need to consult and meet at both the local and sectoral level. It is not clear whether the new policy processes have produced efficiency and effectiveness, but it has produced more work and more need for coordination, dialogue and understanding. Early progress may have been lost as each organization struggled to preserve its unique culture and maintain autonomy. New leadership skills of influence and negotiation are needed as organizations coordinate and negotiate policy strategies. Human resource practitioners have learned to collaborate without abdicating responsibility and without blaming others when results occurred that did not fit their vision.

Future questions for the system and the Government of British Columbia might be directed towards examining whether the implementation of the recommendations of the *Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Public Service and Public Sector* resulted in a more efficient and more effective public sector, and at what cost? Could the new social contract have been implemented by providing guidelines, funds and accountability frameworks to each sector and each organization within the sector? What is needed to create healthy work environments where employees are satisfied with their work?

Framed within the overall context of post secondary education in British Columbia, this research project arose from the need to make sense of the increased complexity and uncertainty arising from changes in public policy after 1993. As public policy centralized decision making for human resource policy at the provincial and sectoral level, the strategic role of the human resource practitioner appeared to be diminished at the local level, but enhanced at the sectoral level. For example, in collective bargaining the number of issues negotiated at the local level (organizational) decreased, while the number of issues negotiated at the provincial table increased. Depending on the circumstances, a human resource practitioner might receive a mandate to negotiate certain changes identified by the organization but be unable to negotiate the changes, as there were no funds to negotiate at the local table. The same human resource practitioner could be at the sectoral table representing all of the colleges and be in a strategic position to influence and shape collective bargaining outcomes for a number of post secondary education institutions. Human resource practitioners found themselves implementing language negotiated at the sectoral or provincial level that did not always fit their local institutions.

The need to demonstrate leadership, influence strategy and understand policy is required at the local, sectoral and provincial level. Policy decision making and implementation requires an ability to understand and make sense of issues at all levels, to interpret culture and apply the interpretation of policy to organizational, sectoral and provincial viewpoints. When the policy is framed at the sectoral and provincial level, there is a need to translate that back to the local level. The role of the human resource practitioner has changed and increased accountability requires that the human resource practitioner influence policy and decision making at the local, sectoral and, if necessary, the provincial level.

Complexity and uncertainty has often left me without answers to questions. I seized the opportunity to learn, to reflect, to align theory with research and practice: a social audit was

conducted at the College, and I was involved in a profound learning experience. Intuitively, I knew that some of the human resource policies and programs were not meeting their stated aims or objectives. The results of the social audit provided me with quantitative and qualitative data that justified improvements to policies and programs. To “fix” the policies and programs using the same level of knowledge with which they had been designed would have been a temporary measure at best, and worse, it may have led to further problems in the future. Organizational policy design in the past provided a sense that something had been accomplished; that the issue was now in hand. Policy on its own does not change attitude or behaviour and change takes time.

I thought back to my early days of learning about social auditing and recalled that some organizations choose to work on correcting an organization’s weaker areas of performance and then disclose the results after a second social audit. Initially, I thought that I would conduct the audit, review the results and begin a process of improving various areas of policy. Instead, the results were disclosed openly and a broader dialogue for establishing improvement took place at the College.

There was a negative side to conducting a social audit as part of a research project while maintaining a full-time position as Director, Human Resources, my abilities were stretched to capacity more than at any other time in my career. The ability to examine theory and practice linked harmoniously, but the time and the resources to do full justice to both were compromised. The applied nature of the research meant that I had access to my workplace as a research site and this added to the requirement that my research was conducted with integrity and respect for the employees who participated in the social audit questionnaire. At the time of starting the process, I was not trained as a social auditor and I was learning how to conduct a social audit by reading and talking to others. In this respect, the work was completed to the best of my ability. In a full

social and ethical audit, I would ensure that an audit of the financial and business aspects of the organization as well as the environmental aspects was included, and I would hire someone to perform an external verification of the work. The College's financial performance was not addressed and I assumed that as we had balanced our budgets consistently since the College opened for business in 1975, that I could trust the audited financial statements.

If an organization establishes its social, ethical and environmental performance in conjunction with sound financial performance evidenced by a balanced "bottom line," then it begins to build a broad base of information for decision making that can be aligned with its stated values. Stakeholder dialogue is critical to the establishment of performance criteria.

In conjunction with a review of its social performance, an organization might consider the establishment of a code of conduct for its employees and stakeholders. Recently, I met with the presidents of the two local unions of the College and invited them to consider drafting a code of conduct for the College. This is now in process and is one of the recommendations arising out of this research.

The College's first social audit provided information that would improve the quality of work life and informed, somewhat, the degree to which the College lives its values, and provides an informed context for leadership. A process of social and ethical auditing aligned with the values of the College might narrow the gaps between policy and practice. The introduction of a code of conduct may contribute to enhanced understanding of what it means to work in an ethical workplace.

Organizations that are financially accountable but socially bankrupt and environmentally unethical may be sustainable over time but the pain and suffering that occurs in an organization is a cost that eventually the organization and society pays. Time will tell if organizations can ensure their sustainability by balancing their social, ethical and environmental performance.

Perhaps Wheatley says it best, "the layers of complexity, the sense of things beyond our control and out of control are but signals of our failure to understand a deeper reality of organizational life, and of life in general; in many disciplines, we live today with questions for which our expertise provides no answers" (1992, p. 3). On many occasions, I have not had the answers for a particular complex problem, however the results of a social audit provided information that enabled me to understand more deeply the needs of the employees of one particular college and to say what was needed to improve human resource practices.

A strategic planning process had already commenced when I introduced the notion of conducting a social audit at the College. Many of these recommendations might have surfaced through the strategic planning process, however the information from the social audit acted as a catalyst for the thinking that developed many of the recommendations that follow:

Recommendations

Four sets of recommendations are presented. The first recommendations are from the findings of the social audit questionnaire that contributed directly to the development and establishment of goals and strategies in the College's *Strategic Plan 2000 – 2003*. These recommendations show how a social audit might strengthen and contribute to a strategic planning process. A second set of recommendations is based on a review of policies and practices that were already in place. A third set of recommendations arises from the independent reports of employee representatives made to the President. Finally, a fourth set of recommendations establishes a process so that North Island College continues to conduct a social audit as part of its strategic planning process. A number of recommendations have goals and strategies that have been articulated already. Some are straightforward, while others concerned with streamlining and simplifying workloads and reducing stress are going to require careful

consideration. Although the recommendations flow from four different sources, they will be numbered chronologically for ease of reference.

Recommendations: Social Audit's Contribution to the Strategic Plan 2000 – 2003.

The Board of Governors under its Policy Governance model is responsible for establishing the Ends Statements and it is the responsibility of the President and staff to establish the Means to achieve these Ends.

The goals and strategies for Ends Statement #7 were developed in conjunction with the Board of Governors, the Strategic Planning Committee, and the members of stakeholder groups – faculty, staff, administrators, board members, students, and representatives of the communities on May 7, 1999.

Ends Statement #7: Goal 1 – Professional Development and Performance Evaluation

The intention of the goal is to “foster employee satisfaction” and a College that is “accountable, efficient and productive” through the regular evaluation of employee performance combined with the establishment of professional development plans for employees (2000, p. 16). The following recommendations support Goal #1 – *Professional Development and Performance Evaluation*:

Recommendation:

- That the College has professional development programs that enhance the quality of instruction and ensures that curriculum development processes are relevant and current.

Action:

A committee of faculty and administrators currently oversees professional development activities for faculty. In the future, the committee might focus professional development that has linkages to the educational goals of enhancing the quality of instruction. This means that

there is an enhanced role for faculty, department chairs, and educational administrators to define what quality of instruction means, and determine how professional development might support instructional quality. Curriculum development that is relevant and current should occur in conjunction with the professional development initiatives.

Recommendation:

- That the faculty, support staff and administration collaboratively review performance evaluation processes and incorporated the principles of continuous learning.

Action:

The performance evaluation processes for faculty and support staff are negotiated processes. To incorporate the principles of continuous learning, separate committees will be established as joint employer and employee committees, set up through the College's Labour Management Committee processes. Each committee will report recommended changes to the Labour Management Committee for inclusion in the collective agreements. A committee of administrators will develop a new performance evaluation process for administrators. The new process will include a 360° process for evaluating performance that includes self-evaluation, as well as peer, supervisor, and subordinate review.

Recommendation:

- That all supervisors responsible for the evaluation of employees receive training in performance evaluation and the new performance review processes.

Action:

The Department of Human Resources will present workshops to supervisors and department chairs on aspects of performance evaluation, including information on the new processes of employee evaluation together with evaluation theory, providing positive and constructive

feedback, coaching, influencing continuous learning, recognizing strengths and weaknesses, and the role of performance evaluation in the development of employees.

Recommendation:

- That all employees be evaluated once during the period 2000 – 2003.

Action:

By November 2001, the Department of Human Resources will establish a system that schedules all employees for evaluation at least once in the three-year period and implement a tracking system for supervisors that remind them when an employee's evaluation is due.

The above recommendations and action plans begin the preparation of integrating the goals and strategies for Ends Statement #7, Goal 1 within the operations of the College.

Ends Statement #7: Goal 2 – Workload

The second goal concerned *workload* and was described, as "North Island College will examine, in collaboration with employee groups, workloads with a view to streamlining and simplifying them". The recommendations and action plans for the goal of *workload* are as follows.

Recommendation:

- That a process for simplifying and streamlining faculty, administrative and support staff workloads be developed and implemented by March 31, 2000.

Action:

An administrative review was undertaken to examine the current administrative structure. Faculty workload will be one of the subjects of collective bargaining at the provincial level in 2001. A number of local workload issues were examined and resolved during the time that the social audit was implemented.

The support staff representative recommended new staffing, particularly in the area of computer services, and these were approved in the Budget 2000.

Recommendation:

- That the College implements processes for improving the quality of work life for employees.

Action:

This recommendation will need to be explored further by the College community; however, the Board of Governors is committed to this and has established a \$100,000 rejuvenation and revitalization fund.

Recommendation:

- That the current concept of the reading break be reviewed and guidelines developed for ensuring that the reading break is preserved for students and that optimum dates for a reading break be established (*Strategic Plan 2000 – 2003*, 2000, p. 17).

Action:

The members of Education Council examined this issue in the winter and spring of 2000 and a decision was made that each educational division was responsible for setting the optimum time for the reading breaks of students. There will be no common reading break at the College.

Ends Statement #7: Goal 3 – Recognition

The third goal, *recognition* described, as “90% of employees will express satisfaction with their jobs.” This goal comes directly from the social audit item A11 - “I am satisfied with the work that I do.” One of the strategic planning groups on May 7, 1999 declared that if just over 81% of respondents reported satisfaction with their work, then a goal of 90% should be set for the next period. This target was accepted for the strategic plan.

The goal of recognition has one recommendation and three strategies:

Recommendation:

- That 90% of employees will express satisfaction with their work in the Social Audit 2002.

Action:

The College reviews and enhances its recognition programs.

The College, in collaboration with its employee groups, develops and implements a program that enhances and recognizes the involvement and participation of employees in key decision-making activities.

The College develops ways of celebrating the contribution of individuals and groups of employees.

The College examines the information in the social audit and alleviates the conditions that lead to dissatisfaction.

Ends Statement #7: Goal 4 - Health and Wellness

Recommendation:

- That North Island College develops and implements a health and wellness program that respects the health and dignity of employees.

Action:

The College develops and implements a wellness program in conjunction with employees.

The College develops and implements a flexible working environment that incorporates peak periods, reading breaks, and vacation utilization; maximizes the working hours of employees; and contributes to employee wellness as well as organizational accountability.

The development of a health and wellness program is congruent with a number of workplace issues. Workload is contributing to stress in the workplace resulting in increased

absenteeism. Employees have multi-dimensional lives – many employees reported being caregivers for their children and for elders, many reported working more hours of overtime and many reported working during their vacation time to ensure that they were prepared for the next term. The social audit results suggested that workload and stress were a significant and increasing problem, and respondents noted that they remained committed to their work and that their students often helped them to maintain a sense of balance and contribution.

Recommendations: Human Resource Policies and Programs

The following recommendations arise out of the social audit and are suggested to improve the quality of work life for employees at North Island College. Based on a review of the literature on social auditing and an acknowledgement of the evolving nature of the process of social auditing, some recommendations have a college-wide application while others apply to employees in certain groups.

Recommendations:

- That the College conducts regular salary surveys of support staff and administrative positions that establish a market for comparison and ensure that salaries do not fall below market.
- That the Administrative Review includes an examination of compensation for administrators.
- That the Board of Governors, the President and the Post Secondary Employers' Association be informed of market data for salaries and problems of recruitment and retention.

There is a growing dissatisfaction with salaries. Just over 46% of employees agreed that they were paid fairly compared with others doing comparable work in other organizations while 55.6% of employees agreed that their pay reflects the responsibilities for their positions. Just over 43% of support staff thought that their pay reflected the responsibilities for their positions. During the 1990s, salaries have either been frozen or have increased slightly. In order to ensure

that employees are paid market wages even when salaries are controlled by strict fiscal framework, the organization is responsible for ensuring that market comparisons are conducted. In this way, the Board of Governors, senior administrators and the Post Secondary Employers' Association can be advised of market shifts in compensation for particular jobs.

A number of respondents in the social audit asked for a description of how salaries are determined and for up-to-date job descriptions.

Recommendations:

- That the Joint Union/Management Job Evaluation Committee for support staff develop a set of procedures and communicates these procedures to support staff and supervisors.
- That an employee be assigned to complete this task in consultation with the union, managers and supervisors of the College, and that by spring 2001, all position descriptions will be updated.
- That position descriptions be developed so that their design can be used with the new performance management system.
- That the College establish a process for regular policy review and develop the following policies:
- That a Code of Conduct policy be developed as an overarching policy based on the values of the organization contained in the *Strategic Plan 2000 – 2003*. The code of conduct will provide guidance in the area of human rights, progressive discipline, health and safety, breach of trust, conflict of interest and harassment.
- That the College review the Human Rights Policy, update where necessary and provide training on the policy following approval. Expected completion date – March, 2001.

- That the College develops an orientation program that is based on the College's values and is web-based to take into account the College's fifteen locations. Expected completion date – August, 2000.

Recommendations: Support Staff

Jeff Brett, the support staff representative, made the following recommendations in response to his review of the social audit findings and discussions with employees.

Recommendations:

- That the College hires a Training Officer responsible for a wide range of training initiatives including technology training and business process practices.
- That the College hires a Software Application Support to working closely with the Training Officer to prepare programs and materials that will enhance the ability of staff to use a variety of software applications.
- That the College hires the equivalent of 2 full-time support staff in the Department of Computer Services, hours of work to be based on need and allocated to computer services support at the campuses and centres.
- That the College hire additional support staff positions in the area of Curriculum and Program Support, Registration and Campus Operations in the Comox Valley Campus.
- That the College assesses the work and responsibilities of the staff working in Advising and Admissions in Campbell River.
- That the College develops policy and procedures related to resource allocation and allocate resources based on the relationship of service to students.
- That the College allocates increases in budget to each department for the purpose of career development for staff.

- That managers and administrators be held accountable for effective leadership that enables support staff employees to become more effective in their work.
- That the input and suggestions of support staff be taken seriously and given due consideration.
- That work schedules have built-in “downtime” so that employees can attend to routine work.
- That an analysis of the hours of operations be conducted.
- That the off-loading of work from one group to another be examined and prevented where possible.
- That when an employee’s job is changed the changes be achieved in consultation with employees.
- That a study be conducted that examines the workflows of support staff positions, particular where such workflows affect the working relationships of employees. The aim is to streamline and improve the efficiency of work processes (Brett, 2000, p. 9 - 10).

Jeff Brett concluded his report by acknowledging that some of the recommendations may be difficult to implement during a period of restraint, but that this should not stop administration from working with the support staff, hearing their concerns and providing them with guidance. He concluded by saying that all support staff need to take an active role in working together effectively with their co-workers, supervisors, faculty and administrators, and that this would enable the College to serve students more confidently, efficiently and effectively (Brett, 2000, p. 10).

Recommendations: Administrators' Representative

Recommendations:

- That administrative workloads be reviewed in light of many administrators working between fifty and sixty hours per week on a continual basis.
- That administrators create flexible work processes that enable them to work on long-term strategies instead of being reactive to only short-term issues.
- That a decision making process be developed based on openness, transparency and values.

For consideration: The following questions arose during the focus groups on the issue of openness and transparency:

- (a) What are the different decision-making levels where the flow of information to/for/or from Administration could improve?
- (b) What kinds of information should flow openly and freely?
- (c) What can administrators do to improve transparency?
- (d) What is the understanding and definition of "transparency?"
- That advanced training be available for administrators on the subjects of time, project and stress management.
- That consideration be given to offering administrators values-based management and leadership training.
- That a review of the Administrators' Salary Structure be undertaken as salaries are below market when compared to other similar organizations.
- That the College considers training administrators and employees in processes that simplify and streamline work methods in order to achieve increased effectiveness and efficiency.

When all of the recommendations are reviewed, it appears that there are many similarities. Many of the recommendations are achievable and while the list, at times, looks daunting; a number of people are already working on activities associated with achieving the recommendations.

In June, 2000, the Board of Governors authorized the establishment of a fund to address the goals and strategies of the *Strategic Plan 2000 – 2003*.

Recommendations: Faculty

Recommendations:

- That a policy and procedure regarding resource allocation be developed so that resources are first allocated to areas directly connected to instruction.
- That the College value instructors by finding out what faculty need in order to perform their work and that an inventory and a process for allocating the resources over time be established in conjunction with a communication process that informs faculty when they might receive needed resources.
- That faculty be rewarded and recognized by finding out how faculty want to be recognized and then developing and implementing a recognition program.
- That consideration be given to the effect of downloading duties from administrators to department chairs and that department chairs be provided with the resources or the release time to manage their workload.
- That the College acknowledges that students are at risk and increased resources are needed to help students, at all College locations.
- That the College establishes a process for budgeting that is based on the evaluation of programs and services rather than equal reductions across the board.

- That the College recognizes the changing nature of its communities and develops programs that take advantage of such changes. For example: Clayoquot Sound has been made a World Heritage Site by the United Nations – campuses and centres at Port Alberni, Ucluelet and Tofino should match their programming to take advantage of this.
- That the College considers hiring an environmental consultant to look at what new programs might be designed that fit with each region's unique environment.

Questions for consideration: Is the College taking advantage of the regions where the College is located? Is there a new vision of what is possible in this College region?

- That senior administrators be more visible and make regular visits to all campuses.
- That the College, faculty and department chairs make faculty professional development a priority.
- That the College develops and implements an early retirement policy.
- That the current Administrative Review includes an examination of the position description of campus directors so that they have educational management responsibility.

Sustaining the Process of Social Auditing

The following recommendations relate to sustaining the process of social auditing at North Island College:

1. That a Social Report 2000 be prepared and published in the fall of 2000 to meet the requirement of disclosing the work of the Social Audit to the College community.
2. That information sessions be held for employees who are interested in the overall results of the social audit.
3. That the Social Report 2000 be placed on the Human Resources web site.

4. That a Social Audit Committee be established in the fall of 2001 to prepare for the next audit in 2002.
5. That the committee consist of two faculty, two support staff and two administrators and that a budget be established for conducting the social audit in the year 2002.
6. That an evaluation be conducted to determine the degree to which recommendations that arose from the social audit were implemented and to assess the results of the social audit two years after its completion.
7. That focus groups be conducted in the spring of 2002 to determine the major areas of concern for employees and to develop new statements if required, as well as maintaining the statements from the 1999 social audit questionnaire.
8. That the 2002 Social Audit be conducted between October 1 and December 15, 2002 and the resulting information aligned with the environmental analysis (SWOT) that is usually conducted by the College prior to developing a strategic planning for 2003 and beyond.
9. That the College considers a method of measurement called the Balanced Scorecard.

The balanced scorecard aims at achieving a more efficient and measured response to all operations and the process of the balanced scorecard designed by Kaplan and Norton has been adapted successfully for use in the public sector by a number of crown corporations in British Columbia and Saskatchewan. The Balanced Scorecard process measures the degree to which the organization performs based on perspectives that include: public policy, financial, customer, innovation and growth perspective, and the process has an effect on decision making and holds the managers of an organization accountable for performance results. This process is able to embrace social auditing and measure improvements over time (Kaplan & Norton, 1996, pp. 4 – 9; Hoffman & Yeats, 2000, pp. 15 – 18).

Conducting a social audit of a community college has been an intensive learning experience. Employees at North Island College were extremely patient with me as I conducted this research. I attempted to keep all of my commitments and maintain the responsibilities of my position. I remember some of the respondents encouraging me by saying that even if nothing happened with the information, they were glad that someone finally asked them what it was like to work at the College. Those who were willing to risk and share information already know that their contributions made a difference. The results of the Social Audit will be used to improve the human resource practices at North Island College.

The social audit concentrated on measuring the effectiveness of human resource policies and managerial practices of the College; the task and the responsibility for implementing new policies and practices that improve the work life of employees, rests with everyone.

In applying this particular model of social auditing to the College, I learned that when a social audit is conducted there may resistance to some aspects of a new way of measuring performance from a social point of view. For example, I thought that I had the good of the College in mind and that my research would be conducted in a relatively low-key manner. This was not to be and in the distribution of a social audit questionnaire to all employees, I learned that there were varying levels of acceptance and resistance to the idea. While there was much support, there were the detractors. Therefore, communications are critical. I learned that I should have prepared the College differently and while initially fifty college employees were involved in the collaborative development of the social audit questionnaire, many others were unaware of my plans. Maintain communications with those who might be resistant, critical or cynical – they have insights and stories to tell.

Social auditing takes time and requires resources. Consider requesting a small cadre of employees as a team. As learning occurs, the learning is shared. Training in social auditing

processes is critical. I learned that the external verification process is critical and I would recommend that all organizations consider the appointment of a social auditor to perform the external verification process. The external verification process enhances the confidence of employees and assurances that no one from inside the organization will see their information. Hire an external agency to receive and compile the social audit information. Finally, practice patience with improvement processes. Change takes time and does not occur immediately. If two years are planned between the end of one process and the beginning of another process, take these years to plan, and evaluate what has been achieved. Use the achievements as the stepping-off point for the next audit. As with most new processes, mistakes may happen, deadlines may be missed. Keep going – the results are important and the incremental improvements are valuable.

POSTSCRIPT: APPLYING A MODEL OF SUSTAINABILITY

Social auditing is about sustainability – the idea that when an organization balances its financial, social and environmental “bottom” lines, it assures itself of sustainability. On reflection, sustainability and a process that balances social, financial and environmental factors can be applied to all levels of society – the individual, the family, communities, organizations, local, provincial and federal governments, countries, and finally, global sustainability.

In Canada, corporate social responsibility has been defined as “the overall relationship of the corporation with all of its stakeholders” (Rostami, Conference Board of Canada, 1998, p. 1). Rostami says, “corporate social responsibility has the power to improve not only the performance of the company, but also the performance of the country” (1998, p. 4).

On reflection, I would be remiss if I did not see a personal connection between my work at the organizational level, my research and the importance of providing balance in my life. Individual social responsibility might be defined as the overall relationship that an individual has with all of the parties it interacts with. What if I applied the concept of a “triple bottom line” to my life? Is this a way of viewing the balance that I have been seeking? I have ended my search for understanding issues concerning organizational sustainability and realized that ultimately it included a search for self-understanding of what it means to live a balanced life. How can I expect my organization to be balanced, if I am not?

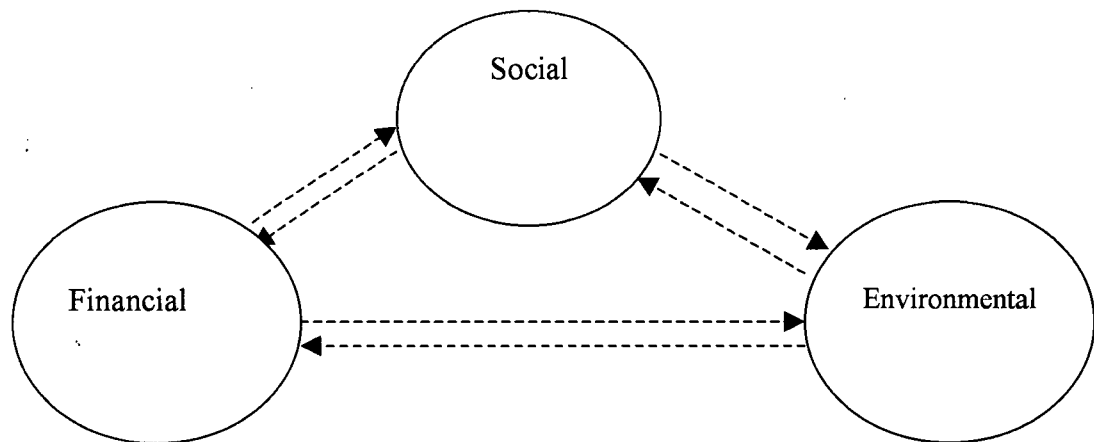
When an organization is sustainable, defined as balanced – financially, socially and environmentally – the notion of a balanced “triple bottom line” – everyone gains. When an individual is balanced financially, socially and environmentally – everyone gains.

In the application of sustainability - a “triple bottom line” at the level of self, factors such as employment, opportunity for promotion, learning, growth, fair wages and working conditions

are indicators of financial sustainability. Applied to the social side of self, sustainability includes family, friends, time to play, recreation, leisure time, community, volunteering – it is about belonging. Environmental sustainability of the self is about health and security, living in communities with housing that is affordable, clean air and water, safe streets, good food, access to health care, and assurances of safety. For me, this describes many of the conditions necessary to establish a balanced life – a way to create individual sustainability now and for future generations.

Figure 17 is adapted from a model that the OECD used to examine sustainable development among countries. The model applies equally to sustainability of the self.

Figure 17 Applying a Triple Bottom Line Model for Self – Sustainability



Source: OECD (1998) Sustainable Development Indicators – Proceedings from an OECD Workshop. Chapter 1, p. 19 – Figure 1.1. Key Interactions between the economic, social and environmental dimensions.

The dotted arrows indicate the influence that each area with its own “bottom line” has on the others. All are interconnected. The model can be applied to the individual, the family, the community, organizations, local, provincial and federal governments, countries and finally

global sustainability. In order for sustainability to occur, all three – social, financial and environmental – have to be present, at all levels.

When I started this work, I wanted to understand how I might contribute new thinking to an organization that has exhibited sound financial performance but has stretched its people to capacity, resulting in only a financially balanced “bottom line.” The social audit revealed that amidst this, employees remained committed to their purpose, wanted to contribute, sought recognition, and hoped for stability. Other concerns could be said to be an indication that the College’s social and environmental “bottom lines” needed attention.

Towards the end of completing this research, I was aware that my capacities were stretched and that in order to complete this particular path, I needed to pay attention to the financial, social and environmental aspects of my life. I could not consider myself a role model for my research, but the new knowledge created a different space for self-renewal.

The College has committed to developing and implementing a health and wellness program that respects the health and dignity of employees. Perhaps the program can begin with employees reflecting on what it might mean to balance their lives in all three areas of the sustainability model. Employees who begin a process of reflection on balancing their lives might create a dynamic flow between individual and organizational sustainability. Throughout this thesis, I refer to changes that are required to improve the work lives of employees, and that work has begun. Now, I need to do the same for myself.

*Jennifer Holden, Courtenay, British Columbia
July 16, 2000*

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APPENDIX A: Social Audit Questionnaire (1999)

| |
|------------------|
| SECTION A |
|------------------|

Employee Satisfaction

The following statements ask **YOU** to respond based on **YOUR** position and **YOUR** work at North Island College. Each one of the statements pertains to a particular policy or value and measures the degree to which the College meets its commitments.

Please circle the **ONE** best response that represents **YOUR** reaction to each of the following:

| | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|--|------------------------------|-----------------|---|--------------|---------------------------|
| 1. I have a clear understanding of my position responsibilities. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. North Island College is committed to continuous improvement. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. Employees are committed to serving students well. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. North Island College's goals are clearly defined. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. Employees have a commitment to performing well. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. I receive feedback that enables me to improve my performance. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. I have the resources to do quality work. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. North Island College delivers the right mix of educational courses. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. My supervisor has the supervisory skills needed to do his or her job. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. Policies are consistently applied. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11. I am satisfied with the work that I do. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12. I am recognized for my contribution to North Island College. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Comments:

SECTION A**Employee Satisfaction (continued)**

The following statements ask **YOU** to respond based on **YOUR** position and **YOUR** work at North Island College. Each one of the statements pertains to a particular policy or value and measures the degree to which the College meets its commitments.

Please circle the **ONE** best response that represents **YOUR** reaction to each of the following:

| | | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neither Agree Nor Disagree | Agree | Strongl Agree |
|-----|---|----------------------|----------|-------------------------------------|-------|------------------|
| 13. | I receive appropriate training enabling me to perform my duties well. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 14. | Employees care and support each other. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 15. | I am encouraged to learn new skills. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 16. | I am encouraged to develop creative ideas. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 17. | I am secure in my current position. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 18. | I can speak openly without fear of retribution. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 19. | Teamwork is encouraged and supported. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 20. | I am given the responsibility and the authority to make decisions in my position. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 21. | North Island College provides employees with opportunities for promotion. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 22. | Morale in my department is generally high. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 23. | Employees treat each other with respect. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 24. | I am encouraged to be innovative in the way I do my work. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 25. | A difficult or tragic event in an employee's life is acknowledged and met with appropriate support. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

SECTION B**Wages and Benefits**

This section asks you to indicate your level of agreement in regard to statements about wages and benefits.

Please circle the **ONE** best response that represents **YOUR** reaction to each of the following.

Where statements are not applicable to your position, please respond by circling NOT APPLICABLE.

| | Not Applicable | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neither Agree, nor Disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|---|-------------------|----------------------|----------|--------------------------------------|-------|-------------------|
| 1. I am paid fairly compared with others at North Island College who hold similar jobs. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. I am paid fairly compared with employees doing comparable work in other organizations. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. The health benefits at North Island College meet my needs. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. I have a clear understanding of how my pay has been determined. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. My pay reflects the responsibilities for my position. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. I am compensated for the overtime that I work. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Comments:

SECTION C**Communications, Consultation and Decision Making**

This section asks you to rate aspects of College processes related to communications, consultation and decision making at North Island College.

Please circle the **ONE** best response that represents **YOUR** reaction to each of the following:

| | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|--|------------------------------|-----------------|---|--------------|---------------------------|
| 1. There are clear communications about the future direction for North Island College. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. I can influence decisions regarding my work. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. I am consulted about issues that might affect my position at North Island College. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. Information for making decisions flows openly and freely. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. The information communicated at North Island College is accurate and reliable. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. Decision-making is transparent at North Island College. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. I trust that North Island College will take the results of this survey seriously and respond accordingly. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Comments:

SECTION D**Health, Safety and Physical Environment**

The following questions ask **YOU** to rate issues pertaining to health, safety and the physical environment in which you work.

Please circle the **ONE** best response that represents **YOUR** reaction to each of the following:

| | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------|---|--------------|---------------------------|
| 1. North Island College provides me with a physical-working environment that is safe. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. My health and well being at work are taken seriously. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. I am familiar with policies about preventing workplace violence. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. I know what to do when dealing with a difficult or hostile person. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. The ergonomic features of my workstation reduce potential health problems. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. I have control over the aspects of my work that affect my safety. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. I work in a comfortable physical environment. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. North Island College takes steps to change unsafe conditions in my workplace. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. Employees are able to hold meetings in comfortable locations. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Comments:

SECTION E**Workload and Stress**

This section contains questions about workload and stress.

Please circle the **ONE** best response that represents **YOUR** reaction to each of the following:

| | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neither Agree, nor Disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|---|----------------------|----------|--------------------------------------|-------|-------------------|
| 1. The amount of work I am expected to do is reasonable. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. The pace I am expected to work at is reasonable. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. The pace of change is too fast. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. The demands of my job interfere with my private life. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. I am under too much work pressure at North Island College. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. Compared to five years ago, my workload has increased. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. I am able to take scheduled breaks during my workday. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

The remainder of Section E asks specific questions about your work and asks you to provide particular information about circumstances relating to your workload.

8. What is your contractual workload? a) _____ hours per week **OR** b) _____ % contract

9. In a typical workweek, do you work over and above your contractual hours?

Yes ☐ No ☐

10. If you answered **yes**, how many hours do you work over and above your contractual hours?

- (a) at the workplace? _____ hours per week
- (b) travelling on business? _____ hours per week
- (c) working at home? _____ hours per week

11. How often does your position require you to be away from home overnight on college business?

Never ☐

Occasionally ☐
(1– 6 times/year)

Frequently ☐
(More than 6 times per year)

12. Describe how you feel about your workload.

13. If you have a high workload level, what circumstances contribute to it?

14. What **could you do** to ease your workload?

15. What **do you do** to ease your workload?

16. What could your supervisor do to ease your workload?
17. What else could North Island College do to ease your workload?
18. Is your work at North Island College stressful?
- Yes ☐ No ☐
19. If yes, what factors contribute to the stress in your work?

Comments:

SECTION F**Diversity, and Equality of Opportunity**

This section asks you to rate whether North Island College manages issues related to diversity, and equality of opportunity.

Please circle the **ONE** best response that represents **YOUR** reaction to each of the following:

| | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neither Agree, nor Disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|--|------------------------------|-----------------|--|--------------|---------------------------|
| 1. North Island College raises awareness on the issue of diversity. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. North Island College's work environment is free from discrimination. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. North Island College's work environment is free from sexual harassment. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. North Island College's work environment is free from personal harassment. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. North Island College provides an environment that enables me to report inappropriate behaviour by others. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. North Island College provides adequate training on the prevention of workplace harassment. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. North Island College is committed to equitable treatment for all employees. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Comments:

SECTION G**Values and Mission Statement**

Statements 1 to 4 are contained in North Island College's draft Mission Statement and Statements 5 and 6 are distinct values contained in the draft Values Statement. Please indicate your level of agreement with each of these statements.

Please circle the **ONE** best response that represents **YOUR** reaction to each of the following:

| | Can't Answer | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neither Agree, nor Disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|--|-----------------|----------------------|----------|--------------------------------------|-------|-------------------|
| 1. North Island College's purpose is to ensure relevant learning through accessible, high-quality education. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. North Island College is dedicated to supporting the economic, social, cultural and environmental sustainability of the college region. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. North Island College is committed to enhancing the quality of life, citizenship, community participation, and employment opportunities of the residents of its region. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. North Island College responds to the learners in its region first, but may operate provincially, nationally and internationally. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. North Island College's programs and working environment are committed to sustaining the environmental richness and biological diversity of our College region as part of the global strategy. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. North Island College provides learning opportunities to support diverse social and cultural values and learning styles. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Comments

SECTION H**Background Information**

In order to help me understand the views of employees, please tell me something about your background.

1. At which location do you spend **the most time** working? (Check one -- ☐)
 - (a) Port Hardy ☐
 - (b) Campbell River ☐
 - (c) Comox Valley ☐
 - (d) Port Alberni ☐
 - (e) Community Learning Centre/
Small Centres ☐

2. Check the category that describes your **position**. If you work in more than one position, check the category where you spend **the most time**).
 - (a) Support Staff ☐
 - (b) Faculty ☐
 - (c) Administration ☐

3. Check all of the following categories that describe your current appointment.
 - (a) Regular ☐
 - (b) Sessional ☐
 - (c) Temporary ☐
 - (d) Casual ☐
 - (e) Probationary ☐
 - (f) Substitute ☐
 - (g) Contract ☐
 - (h) Department Chair ☐

4. Check the category that applies to your position.
 - (a) Full-time ☐
 - (b) Part-time ☐

5. Are you:
 - (a) Male ☐
 - (b) Female ☐

6. Age:

- (a) Less than 26 ☐
- (b) 27 – 35 ☐
- (c) 36 – 45 ☐
- (d) 46 – 55 ☐
- (e) Over 56 ☐

7. Check the box that indicates your years of service at North Island College?

- (a) Less than one year ☐
- (b) One year to five years ☐
- (c) Six to ten years ☐
- (d) Eleven to fifteen ☐
- (e) More than fifteen ☐

8. Check the box that indicates your **highest** level of educational/academic qualification?

- (a) Grade 12 ☐
- (b) One year Certificate ☐
- (c) Two year Diploma ☐
- (d) Trades training ☐
- (e) Bachelor's Degree ☐
- (f) Master's Degree ☐
- (g) Doctorate ☐
- (h) Other ☐ Please specify: _____

9. (a) Are you currently pursuing further education or training? (Check one)

☐ Yes ☐ No

(b) If yes, please indicate the type of education or training:

10. (a) Do you plan to pursue the attainment of further education or training in the future?

☐ Yes ☐ No

(b) Please indicate the type of education or training.

Other information – OPTIONAL

Note: The following questions (numbers 10 to 13 inclusive) are optional. Social auditing measures the degree to which an organization acknowledges the person as a whole. Some organizations are developing policy and practices that take into account an employee's overall responsibilities in life. Social auditing measures such issues as family responsibilities and community participation.

11. Do you have child caring responsibilities?

☐ Yes ☐ No

12. Do you have care responsibilities for an elderly relative or other adult?

☐ Yes ☐ No

13. Do you spend time volunteering for community projects?

☐ Yes ☐ No

14. In the last six (6) months, how many hours in total would you estimate that you have spent on community involvement or volunteering?

_____ Hours

SECTION I**A final opportunity to tell me more.**

Please use the space below for any final comments that you wish to make about your own views or situation. Please tell me what kind of programs or policies you would like to see developed at North Island College. Your views will be treated in confidence and where possible they will be used to improve human resource policy and practice or to identify new programs and policies that are needed.

Thank you for your thoughtful cooperation and participation in this social audit.

**Please return the completed social audit in the enclosed
brown envelope
to
Jennifer Holden
by
April 9, 1999**

INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN AN INTERVIEW OR FOCUS GROUP

Social Auditing requires the researcher to conduct interviews and focus groups with individuals in a number of stakeholder groups. During the course of my research, I will be conduct individual interviews and focus groups using a stakeholder approach. The interview is expected to take approximately 30 minutes, and the focus group may take about an hour. If you are willing to participate in an interview or focus group, please complete the following information, detach along the dotted line, and return the slip in the enclosed **white** envelope. This will ensure that your completed survey is returned anonymously. Your support is greatly appreciated. Thank you.

I am willing to participate in the following:

Interview: ☐

Focus Group: ☐

Name: _____

Location: _____

Phone No.: _____

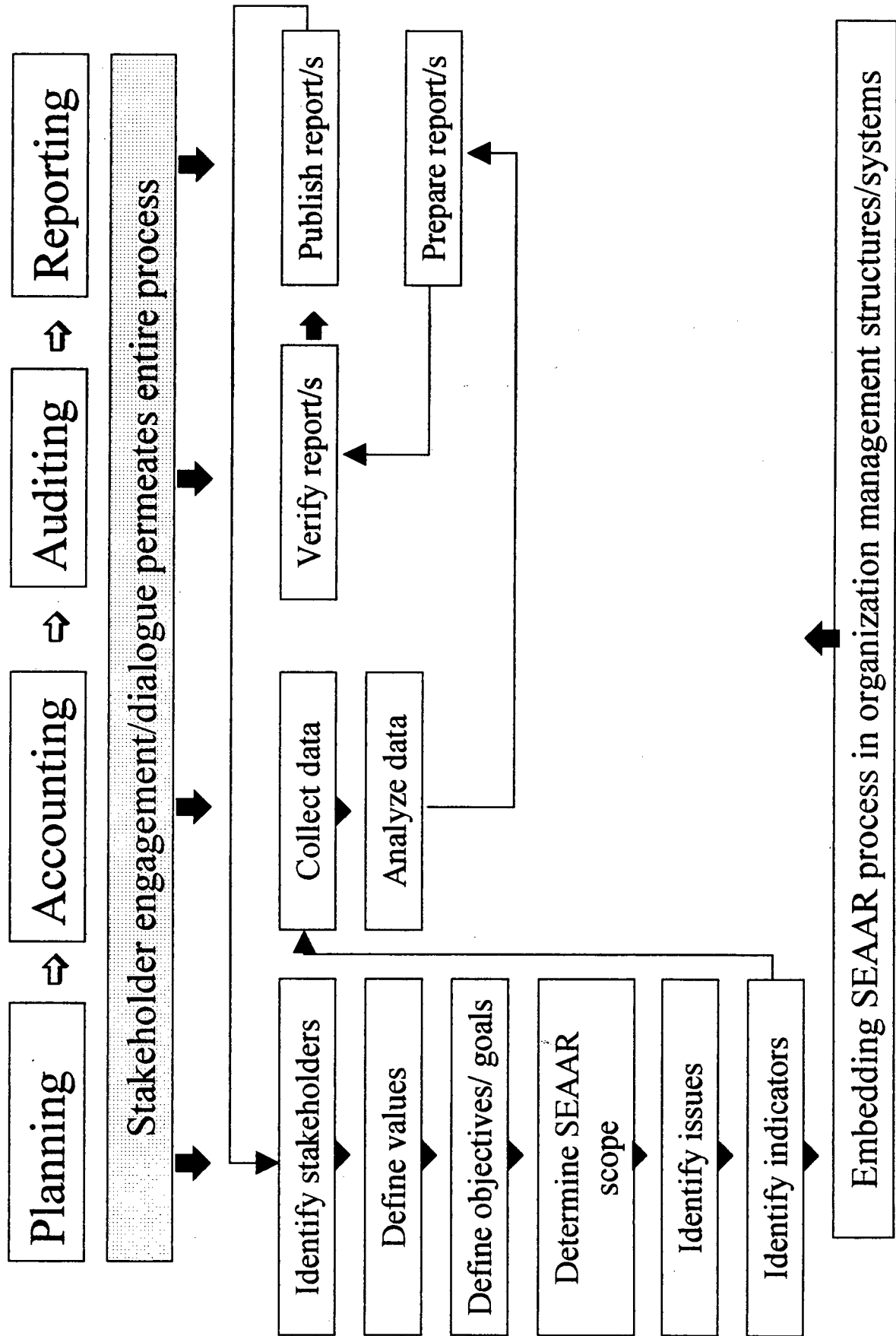
Email: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX B: The Accountability 1000 Model

THE ACCOUNTABILITY 1000 MODEL



**APPENDIX C: Certificate of Approval, Human Research Ethics Committee,
University of British Columbia**

APPENDIX D: Letter of Approval from President, North Island College

APPENDIX E: Letter to Employees

APPENDIX F: Interim Report – Social Audit, April 26, 1999

Social Audit Interim Report – April 1999 North Island College

April 26, 1999

Social Auditing is a process by which an organization can **account** for its social performance, **report** on and **improve** that performance. It assesses the social impact and ethical behaviour of an organization in relation to the aims of the organization and its stakeholders. The term 'audit' is no longer the dry reserve of the financial and accounting world. New types of audit are emerging including social, environmental, quality, safety and ethical. Social Audits are about **Accountability**.

The College's first social audit established a broad category of issues related to values, policies and practices. Participants were asked to rate their agreement on a wide variety of issues related to employee satisfaction, pay and benefits, communications, consultation, decision-making, health and safety, diversity, equal opportunity, and one section explored issues related to workload and stress.

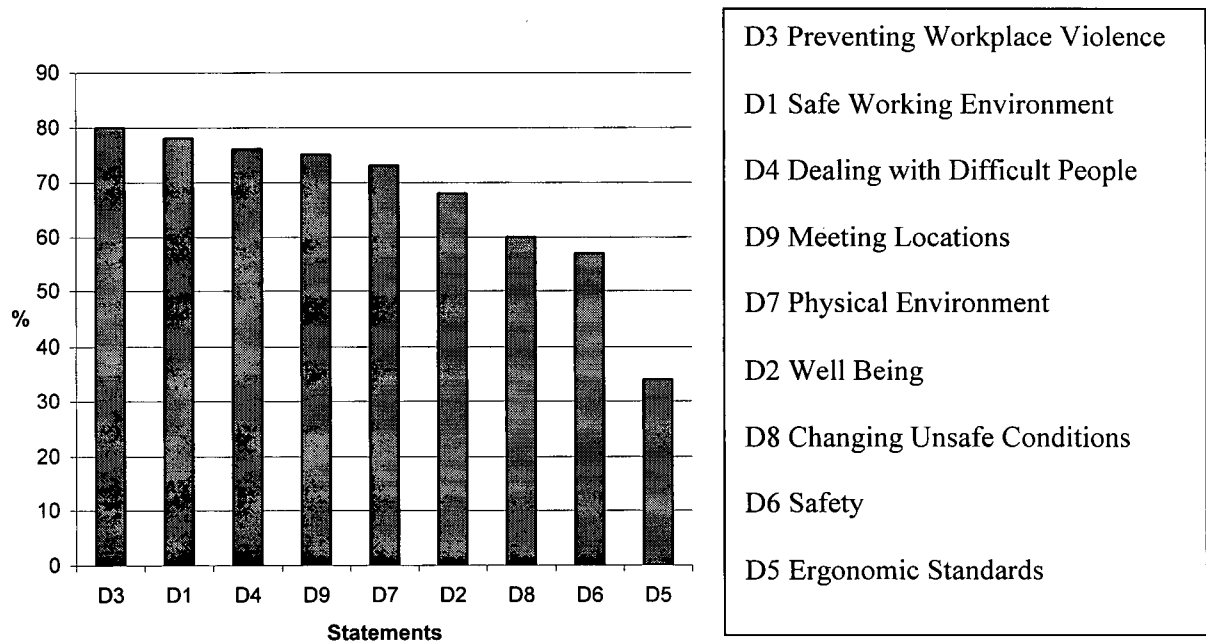
Who participated? One of the principles of Social Auditing is inclusion. Therefore, the Social Audit was distributed to all employees on the payroll in February 1999 except for community education instructors. As a result, the Social Audit was distributed to 424 employees. Of these, a total of 151 employees (36%) participated. 120 (48.4%) of the 248 regular employees participated. 31 or (17.6%) of the 176 non-regular employees participated. 108 participants (71.5%) were female and 41 participants (27.2%) were male. Of the 151 participants, 87 (57.6%) were Faculty, 47 (31.1%) were Support Staff and 16 (10.6%) were Administrators. 19 participants (12.6%) were from Port Hardy and the Community Learning Centres, 27 participants (17.9%) were from the Port Alberni Region. 41 participants (27.2%) were from the Campbell River Region, and 62 participants (41.1%) were from the Comox Valley Region. (Percentages that total less than 100 are due to employees choosing not to respond in certain categories.) **Thank you to all of you who took the time to participate.**

Highlights of major strengths

- 91.4% of participants supported NIC's commitment to serving students
- 90.7% supported the Mission - relevant learning through accessible, quality education
 - 89.4% of the participants reported that they were committed to performing well
- 81.4% reported that they were satisfied with their jobs and their work environment at NIC
 - Over 80% reported high satisfaction with NIC's health benefits & commitment to safety
- 77.5% and 76.9% agreed that NIC's employees were caring and respectful of each other.

Highlights of what we need to do better

- 78.8% of the participants reported that they experience stress in their jobs
- 83.4% reported working many more hours than contracted and that overtime was a problem
- Only 33% of the participants thought there was appropriate response to ergonomic issues
 - Transparency, accuracy and reliable information for decision making were problematic
 - Participants asked for improved access to training and promotional opportunities
 - Participants reported that our recycling processes were inadequate



Interim Summary:

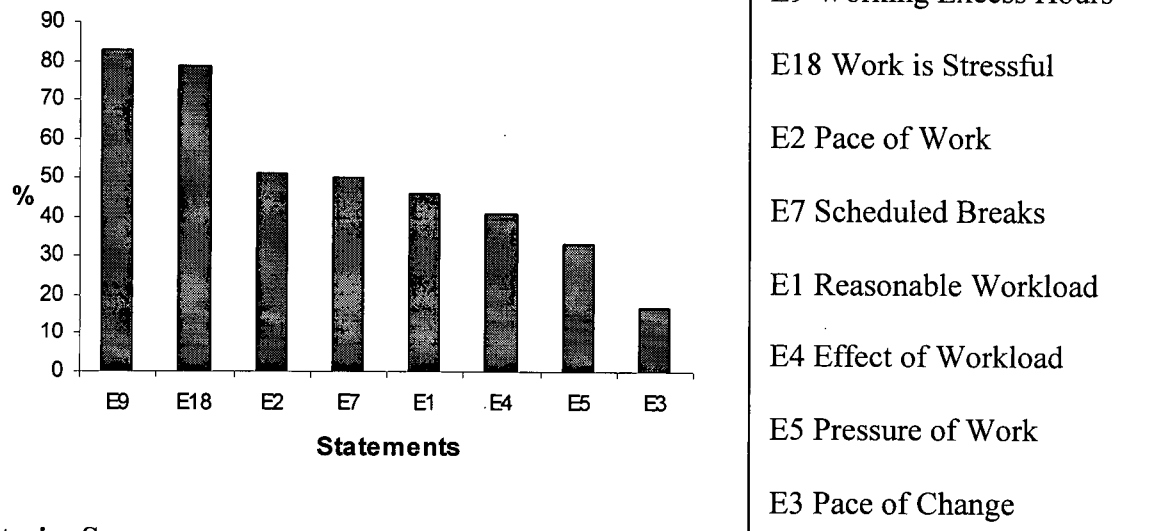
Respondents expressed appreciation for the Occupational Health and Safety Program including Preventing Workplace Violence. Respondents said that the College does not respond fast enough to ergonomic issues and that the use of computers is resulting in repetitive strain injuries. Respondents noted that our policy manuals are not easily attainable and more manuals should be made available.

Respondents said:

Faculty: "Parking lots need to be consistently salted in winter conditions." "I take responsibility for my own safety." "This is a recognized and positive area of job satisfaction." "I have clientele who are potentially violent and I'm not advised." "Local Health and Safety Committee does a really good job." "The training program 'Dealing with Hostile People' has been held at times when I am teaching; the scheduling needs to take that into account." "My environment is sometimes cold and smoke comes in from outside." "Increased stress is a health issue."

Administration: "This is an area that seems to be a strength at the College." "Long driving hours, over some isolated and difficult terrain."

Support Staff: "I agree with this section on health, safety and physical working environment because my supervisor supports me." "My workstation is poorly designed, I'm trying to fix it myself." "There is no privacy in my work place." "I need access to policies." "I'm concerned about my physical ability to maintain production as a result of repetitive strain injuries." "Our work area has a ventilation problem and complaints have not been dealt with."



Interim Summary:

Respondents commented on the increases in workloads and stress. Some respondents reported reasonable workloads and minimal stress levels; 83% of employees reported that they worked in excess of their contractual workloads. A total of 79% of employees reported that they found that their work was stressful; 65% reported stress most of the time and 14% reported stressful working conditions some of the time.

This is what respondents said:

Faculty Comments:

"Workload is reasonable but marking load is heavy." "The pace of change is too fast and is mainly driven by changes in technology." "In the fall semester, my workload is basically unmanageable and at times unsafe." "Workload is too high for my % contract." Workload is excessive and impacts negatively on my family." "I feel my workload is reasonable." "I'm overwhelmed." "I set high standards and I desire quality in my teaching."

Support Staff:

"Workload is usually manageable but I need extra help at peak times." "I'm overwhelmed." "Sometimes, I feel that my workload is out of control." "My work ethic makes me want to complete everything." "Seldom are there slow days or catch-up days." "I love the challenge, but I'm concerned about my capacity to continue to meet the workload demand and best serve the students."

Administration:

"Too many responsibilities to track." "Too few people to handle work." "Too much work variety tends to fragment one's attention." "Processes are inefficient, cumbersome, poorly considered and poorly communicated." "I could say 'no' more often, but I don't do it." "I could refuse to sit on committees or take on new projects, but then I wouldn't fairly and responsibly represent my programs and divisions."

**NORTH ISLAND COLLEGE
HIGHLIGHTS OF RESULTS OF SOCIAL AUDIT
STRENGTHS AND AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT CONSIDERED IN TERMS OF
NORTH ISLAND COLLEGE'S VALUES
INTERIM REPORT – April, 1999**

AREAS OF STRENGTHS

| Survey # | DESCRIPTION | VALUE |
|-----------------|---|--|
| A2 | Continuous Improvement (67.5%) | Value – Quality |
| A3 | Commitment to Student Services (91.4%) | Value – Student Success |
| A5 | Commitment to Performing Well (89.4%) | Value – Quality |
| A11 | Job Satisfaction (81.4%) | Value – Positive Environment |
| A14 | Employees care and support each other (76.9%) | Value – Positive Environment |
| A23 | Employees treat each other with respect (77.5%) | Value – Positive Environment |
| B3 | Health Benefits meet employees' needs (84.7%) | Value – Positive Environment |
| D1 | Safe Physical Work Environment (78.1%) | Value – Accountability & Positive Environment |
| D3 | Preventing Workplace Violence (74.9%) | Value – Positive Environment |
| F3 | Environment free from Sexual Harassment (72.9%) | Value – Positive Environment |
| G1 | Commitment to relevant learning through access and quality education (90.7%) | Mission Statement |

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

| Survey # | Description | College Value |
|-----------------|--|---|
| A4 | Goal Clarity (54.3%) | Value – Leadership |
| A6 | Performance Feedback (42.4%) | Value – Quality |
| A7 | Resources to do quality work (44.4%) | Value – Quality |
| A10 | Policies are consistently applied (32.5%) | Value – Ethical Practice |
| A16 | Encouragement to develop creative ideas (56.3%) | Value – Responsiveness |
| B6 | Compensation for Overtime (22.5%) | Value – Positive Environment |
| C4 | Information for decision making (25.1%) | Value – Accountability/Ethical Practice |
| C5 | Accuracy and Reliability of Information (35.8%) | Value – Accountability/Ethical Practice |
| C6 | Transparent Decision Making (11.9%) | Value – Accountability/Ethical Practice |
| D5 | Ergonomics (33.1%) | Value – Positive Environment |
| E9 | Working Hours in Excess of Contract (83.4%) | Value – Positive Environment |
| E18 | Workplace Stress (78.8%) | Value – Positive Environment |
| F6 | Training re: Workplace Harassment (40.4%) | Value – Accountability/Ethical Practice |
| G5 | Commitment to sustaining the environmental richness and biological diversity of the College Region (36.4%) | Value – Ecological Sustainability |

VOLUNTEERING AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

- In the past six months, participants reported over 5000 hours of volunteering in their communities.

**APPENDIX G: Social Audit Questionnaire Responses: Section A to Section G –
Responses presented as “Agree” or “Disagree”**

Table 13 Distribution of Responses: Section A 1 – 12 – Employee Satisfaction

| Statement Item | Mean Rating | Distribution of Responses ² All Respondents ¹ | | | Level of Agreement by Employee Group ³ | | |
|--|-------------|--|----------|----------------------------|---|---------|---------------|
| | | Agree | Disagree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Admin. | Faculty | Support Staff |
| | | (n = 17) | (n = 94) | (n = 48) | | | |
| | | % | % | % | % | % | % |
| A1 I have a clear understanding of my position responsibility | 4.06 | 80.0 | 10.0 | 9.4 | 82.4 | 80.8 | 79.2 |
| A2 North Island College is committed to continuous improvement | 3.79 | 65.6 | 8.8 | 23.8 | 64.7 | 62.8 | 70.9 |
| A3 Employees are committed to serving students well. | 4.43 | 91.9 | 1.9 | 5.0 | 88.2 | 91.4 | 93.8 |
| A4 North Island College's are clearly defined. | 3.46 | 52.5 | 19.4 | 26.9 | 47.1 | 51.1 | 58.4 |
| A5 Employees have a commitment to performing well. | 4.34 | 89.4 | 1.3 | 8.1 | 82.4 | 89.4 | 91.2 |
| A6 I receive feedback that enables me to improve my performance. | 3.29 | 44.4 | 28.1 | 26.3 | 64.7 | 39.3 | 50.1 |
| A7 I have the resources to do quality work. | 2.99 | 42.5 | 41.9 | 15.0 | 47.1 | 38.3 | 50.1 |
| A8 North Island College delivers the right mix of educational courses. | 3.43 | 46.3 | 18.8 | 31.9 | 41.2 | 43.6 | 52.1 |
| A9 My supervisor has the supervisory skills needed to do his or her job. | 3.79 | 61.2 | 13.8 | 20.6 | 76.4 | 55.3 | 68.7 |
| A10 Policies are consistently applied. | 3.22 | 30.6 | 26.9 | 40.0 | 29.4 | 27.7 | 37.5 |
| A11 I am satisfied with the work that I do. | 4.02 | 81.2 | 8.2 | 9.4 | 76.5 | 79.8 | 85.4 |
| A12 I am recognized for my contribution to North Island College. | 3.34 | 45.6 | 23.8 | 28.8 | 47.1 | 44.7 | 45.8 |

Note: ¹One respondent chose not to identify as a member of an employee group – total respondents 160.

Note: ²The scale used consisted of (0) Can't Answer, (1) Strongly Disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Neither Agree nor Disagree, (4) Agree, and (5) Strongly Disagree. For the purpose of this table, the total of "agree" and "strongly" were added to yield "Level of Agreement" and the total of "disagree" and "strongly disagree" were added to yield "Level of Disagreement."

Note: ³Level of agreement by three stakeholder groups.

Table 14 Distribution of Responses: Section A 13 – 15 – Employee Satisfaction

| Statement Item | Mean Rating | Distribution of Responses ² All Respondents ¹ | | | Level of Agreement by Employee Group ³ | | |
|---|-------------|--|---------------|---------------------------------|---|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| | | Agree % | Disagree % | Neither Agree nor Disagree % | Admin. (n = 17) % | Faculty (n = 94) % | Support Staff (n = 48) % |
| A13 I receive appropriate training enabling me to perform my duties well. | 3.15 | 36.3 | 35.1 | 26.9 | 47.1 | 35.1 | 35.4 |
| A14 Employees care and support each other. | 3.99 | 75.7 | 10.0 | 13.1 | 64.7 | 71.3 | 87.6 |
| A15 I am encouraged to learn new skills. | 3.71 | 60.7 | 12.5 | 25.0 | 53.0 | 53.2 | 79.2 |
| A16 I am encouraged to develop creative ideas. | 3.68 | 56.3 | 11.3 | 30.6 | 64.7 | 52.1 | 62.5 |
| A17 I am secure in my current position. | 3.32 | 53.2 | 26.3 | 19.4 | 41.2 | 52.1 | 58.3 |
| A18 I can speak openly without fear of retribution. | 3.49 | 55.0 | 24.4 | 18.8 | 52.9 | 51.1 | 62.5 |
| A19 Teamwork is encouraged and supported. | 3.69 | 59.4 | 15.6 | 22.5 | 53.0 | 57.5 | 64.6 |
| A20 I am given the responsibility and the authority to make decision in my position. | 3.82 | 66.9 | 12.5 | 19.4 | 58.8 | 68.0 | 68.7 |
| A21 North Island College provides employees with opportunities for promotion to other positions. | 3.11 | 29.4 | 26.9 | 41.9 | 41.2 | 19.2 | 43.8 |
| A22 Morale in my department is generally high. | 3.25 | 50.1 | 28.2 | 21.3 | 64.7 | 41.4 | 60.4 |
| A23 Employees treat each other with respect. | 4.06 | 78.1 | 8.2 | 11.3 | 64.7 | 73.4 | 91.7 |
| A24 I am encouraged to be innovated in the way I do my work. | 3.81 | 61.9 | 10.0 | 25.6 | 58.8 | 59.6 | 68.8 |
| A25 A difficult or tragic event in an employee's life is acknowledged and met with appropriate support. | 4.10 | 67.5 | 8.8 | 18.1 | 82.3 | 59.6 | 77.1 |

Note: ¹One respondent chose not to identify as a member of an employee group – total respondents 160.

Note: ²The scale used consisted of (0) Can't Answer, (1) Strongly Disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Neither Agree nor Disagree, (4) Agree, and (5) Strongly Agree. For the purpose of this table, the total of "agree" and "strongly" were added to yield "Level of Agreement" and the total of "disagree" and "strongly disagree" were added to yield "Level of Disagreement."

Note: ³Level of agreement by three stakeholder groups.

Table 15 Distribution of Responses: Section B – Wages and Benefits

| Statement Item | Mean Rating | Distribution of Responses ² All Respondents ¹ | | | Level of Agreement by Employee Group ³ | | |
|---|----------------|--|----------|----------------------------------|--|---------------|------------------|
| | | Agree | Disagree | Neither Agree Nor Disagree | Admin. | Faculty | Support Staff |
| | | % ² | % | % | (n = 17) % | (n = 94) % | (n = 48) % |
| B1 I am paid fairly compared with others at North Island College who hold similar jobs. | 3.69 | 66.3 | 18.7 | 14.4 | 76.4 | 70.2 | 54.2 |
| B2 I am paid fairly compared with others doing comparable work in other organizations. | 3.31 | 46.9 | 29.4 | 19.4 | 47.1 | 54.2 | 33.3 |
| B3 The Health Benefits at North Island College meet my needs. | 3.99 | 83.8 | 5.1 | 5.0 | 100.0 | 79.8 | 85.4 |
| B4 I have a clear understanding of how my pay has been determined. | 3.54 | 61.3 | 21.3 | 16.9 | 52.9 | 74.5 | 39.6 |
| B5 My pay reflects the responsibilities for my position. | 3.28 | 55.6 | 30.0 | 12.5 | 53.0 | 61.7 | 43.8 |
| B6 I am compensated for the overtime that I work. | 2.14 | 21.9 | 50.1 | 16.3 | 29.3 | 8.5 | 43.8 |

Note: ¹One respondent chose not to identify as a member of an employee group – total respondents 160.

Note: ²The scale used consisted of (0) Can't Answer, (1) Strongly Disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Neither Agree nor Disagree, (4) Agree, and (5) Strongly Disagree. For the purpose of this table, the total of "agree" and "strongly" were added to yield "Level of Agreement" and the total of "disagree" and "strongly disagree" were added to yield "Level of Disagreement."

Note: ³Level of agreement by three stakeholder groups.

Table 16 **Distribution of Responses: Section C – Communications, Consultation & Decision-Making**

| Statement Item | Mean Rating | Distribution of Responses ² All Respondents ¹ | | | Level of Agreement by Employee Group ³ | | |
|--|-------------|---|----------|---|---|---------------------|---------------------------|
| | | Agree | Disagree | Neither Agree nor Disagree ² | Admin. (n = 17) | Faculty (n = 94) | Support Staff (n = 48) |
| | | % | % | % | % | % | % |
| C1 Clear communications about future direction. | 3.25 | 41.3 | 23.2 | 35.0 | 52.9 | 36.2 | 45.9 |
| C2 Ability to influence decision regard work. | 3.56 | 58.7 | 15.7 | 25.0 | 76.4 | 61.7 | 45.8 |
| C3 Consulted about issues that affect position. | 3.21 | 45.6 | 29.4 | 24.4 | 64.7 | 44.7 | 39.6 |
| C4 Information for making decisions flows freely. | 2.86 | 25.6 | 45.7 | 26.9 | 53.0 | 26.6 | 14.6 |
| C5 Communication information is accurate and reliable. | 3.23 | 35.7 | 21.3 | 40.6 | 70.6 | 33.0 | 29.2 |
| C6 Decision making is transparent. | 2.81 | 11.3 | 41.3 | 43.8 | 23.5 | 10.7 | 8.4 |
| C7 Trust that NIC will take the results of the survey seriously and respond accordingly. | 3.48 | 49.4 | 15.7 | 33.1 | 82.4 | 39.3 | 56.3 |

Note: ¹One respondent chose not to identify as a member of an employee group – total respondents 160.

Note: ²The scale used consisted of (0) Can't Answer, (1) Strongly Disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Neither Agree nor Disagree, (4) Agree, and (5) Strongly Disagree. For the purpose of this table, the total of "agree" and "strongly" were added to yield "Level of Agreement" and the total of "disagree" and "strongly disagree" were added to yield "Level of Disagreement."

Note: ³Level of agreement by three stakeholder groups.

Table 17 Distribution of Responses: Section D – Health, Safety & Physical Environment

| Statement Item | Mean Rating | Distribution of Responses ² All Respondents ¹ | | | Level of Agreement by Employee Group ³ | | |
|--|-------------|--|----------|---|---|---------------|---------------|
| | | Agree | Disagree | Neither Agree nor Disagree ² | Admin. | Faculty | Support Staff |
| | | % | % | % | (n = 17) % | (n = 94) % | (n = 48) % |
| D1 NIC provides a physical - working environment that is safe. | 3.93 | 77.5 | 11.9 | 9.4 | 88.3 | 74.4 | 79.2 |
| D2 My health and well being at work are taken seriously. | 3.79 | 68.2 | 10.7 | 19.4 | 76.4 | 66.0 | 70.8 |
| D3 I am familiar with policies about preventing workplace violence. | 3.74 | 73.2 | 13.8 | 12.5 | 88.3 | 69.1 | 75.0 |
| D4 I know what to do when dealing with a difficult or hostile person. | 3.72 | 73.8 | 14.4 | 11.3 | 88.3 | 65.9 | 83.3 |
| D5 The ergonomic features of my workstation reduce potential health problems. | 3.11 | 33.7 | 30.7 | 38.8 | 82.4 | 25.6 | 33.4 |
| D6 I have control over the aspects of my work that affect my safety. | 3.68 | 57.6 | 14.4 | 25.6 | 70.6 | 55.3 | 56.3 |
| D7 I work in a comfortable physical environment. | 3.73 | 73.1 | 15.1 | 11.3 | 88.2 | 70.2 | 73.0 |
| D8 North Island College takes steps to change unsafe conditions in my workplace. | 3.81 | 60.0 | 9.4 | 27.5 | 82.3 | 54.3 | 64.6 |
| D9 Employees are able to hold meetings in comfortable locations. | 3.94 | 73.2 | 6.9 | 18.1 | 70.6 | 70.2 | 81.2 |

Note: ¹One respondent chose not to identify as a member of an employee group – total respondents 160.

Note: ²The scale used consisted of (0) Can't Answer, (1) Strongly Disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Neither Agree nor Disagree, (4) Agree, and (5) Strongly Agree. For the purpose of this table, the total of "agree" and "strongly" were added to yield "Level of Agreement" and the total of "disagree" and "strongly disagree" were added to yield "Level of Disagreement."

Note: ³Level of agreement by three stakeholder groups.

Table 18 Distribution of Responses: Section E – Workload and Stress

| Statement Item | Mean Rating | Distribution of Responses ² All Respondents ¹ | | | Level of Agreement by Employee Group ³ | | |
|---|-------------|--|----------|----------------------------|---|---------------|---------------|
| | | Agree | Disagree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Admin. | Faculty | Support Staff |
| | | % | % | % | (n = 17) % | (n = 94) % | (n = 48) % |
| E1 The amount of work I am expected to is reasonable. | 3.00 | 44.4 | 40.6 | 14.4 | 29.4 | 46.8 | 45.9 |
| E2 The pace I am expected to work at is reasonable. | 3.20 | 49.4 | 31.9 | 18.1 | 23.5 | 52.1 | 54.2 |
| E3 The pace of change is too fast. | 2.73 | 13.8 | 46.9 | 35.0 | 29.4 | 13.8 | 14.6 |
| E4 The demands of my job interfere with my private life. | 3.17 | 41.9 | 43.2 | 13.1 | 52.9 | 49.0 | 23.0 |
| E5 I am under too much work pressure at North Island College. | 3.14 | 33.2 | 35.7 | 29.4 | 47.1 | 37.3 | 20.9 |
| E6 Compared to five years ago, my workload has increased. | 4.30 | 58.8 | 7.6 | 23.1 | 76.5 | 56.4 | 58.3 |
| E7 I am able to take scheduled breaks during my workday. | 3.21 | 50.0 | 36.3 | 11.9 | 58.9 | 45.8 | 54.2 |

Note: ¹One respondent chose not to identify as a member of an employee group – total respondents 160.

Note: ²The scale used consisted of (0) Can't Answer, (1) Strongly Disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Neither Agree nor Disagree, (4) Agree, and (5) Strongly Disagree. For the purpose of this analysis, in order to calculate "Agree," the results of "agree" and "strongly" were totalled to yield "Level of Agreement" and the results of "disagree" and "strongly disagree" were totalled to yield "Level of Disagreement."

Note: ³Level of agreement by three stakeholder groups.

Table 19 Distribution of Responses: Section F – Diversity & Equality of Opportunity

| Statement Item | Mean Rating | Distribution of Responses ² All Respondents ¹ | | | Level of Agreement by Employee Group ³ | | |
|--|-------------|---|----------|----------------------------|---|---------------|---------------|
| | | Agree | Disagree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Admin. | Faculty | Support Staff |
| | | % | % | % | (n = 17) % | (n = 94) % | (n = 48) % |
| F1 North Island College raises awareness on the issue of diversity. | 3.48 | 46.3 | 12.5 | 39.4 | 64.7 | 46.9 | 37.6 |
| F2 North Island College's work environment is free from discrimination. | 3.59 | 57.6 | 18.8 | 21.9 | 64.7 | 52.2 | 64.6 |
| F3 North Island College's work environment is free from sexual harassment. | 3.93 | 71.9 | 9.4 | 16.3 | 76.5 | 69.2 | 75.1 |
| F4 North Island College's work environment is free from personal harassment | 3.55 | 56.3 | 22.5 | 19.4 | 47.1 | 55.3 | 62.5 |
| F5 North Island College provides an environment that enables me to report inappropriate behaviour by others. | 3.82 | 70.0 | 8.1 | 20.6 | 88.2 | 67.1 | 70.8 |
| F6 North Island College provides adequate training on the prevention of workplace harassment. | 3.27 | 39.4 | 23.2 | 36.3 | 47.0 | 34.1 | 45.9 |
| F7 North Island College is committed to equitable treatment for all employees. | 3.62 | 58.8 | 12.5 | 12.5 | 82.3 | 53.2 | 60.4 |

Note: ¹One respondent chose not to identify as a member of an employee group – total respondents 160.

Note: ²The scale used consisted of (0) Can't Answer, (1) Strongly Disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Neither Agree nor Disagree, (4) Agree, and (5) Strongly Disagree. For the purpose of this analysis, in order to calculate "Agree," the results of "agree" and "strongly" were totaled to yield "Level of Agreement" and the results of "disagree" and "strongly disagree" were totaled to yield "Level of Disagreement."

Note: ³Level of agreement by three stakeholder groups.

Table 20 Distribution of Responses: Section G – Values and Mission

| Statement Item | Mean Rating | Distribution of Responses ² All Respondents ¹ | | | Level of Agreement by Employee Group ³ | | |
|--|-------------|--|----------|----------------------------|---|---------------|---------------|
| | | Agree | Disagree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Admin. | Faculty | Support Staff |
| | | % | % | % | (n = 17) % | (n = 94) % | (n = 48) % |
| G1 Relevant learning through accessible, quality education. | 4.19 | 88.8 | 3.7 | 5.6 | 100.0 | 84.1 | 93.8 |
| G2 Supports the economic, social, cultural and environmental sustainability of the region. | 3.79 | 66.3 | 6.9 | 22.5 | 70.6 | 63.8 | 68.8 |
| G3 Enhances the quality of life, citizenship, community participation, and employment opportunities of the residents of the College region. | 3.86 | 69.4 | 10.6 | 15.0 | 70.6 | 68.1 | 70.9 |
| G4 Responds to the learners in its region first, but may operate provincially, nationally and internationally. | 3.62 | 69.4 | 3.7 | 16.9 | 82.4 | 64.9 | 72.9 |
| G5 The College's programs and working environment reflect a commitment to sustaining environmental richness and biological diversity of the College region as part of a global strategy. | 2.97 | 35.0 | 14.4 | 35.6 | 47.1 | 34.1 | 31.2 |
| G6 The College provides access to learning opportunities to support diverse social and cultural values and learning styles. | 3.64 | 68.2 | 11.9 | 13.8 | 70.6 | 62.8 | 77.1 |

Note: ¹One respondent chose not to identify as a member of an employee group – total respondents 160.

Note: ²The scale used consisted of (0) Can't Answer, (1) Strongly Disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Neither Agree nor Disagree, (4) Agree, and (5) Strongly Disagree. For the purpose of this analysis, in order to calculate "Agree," the results of "agree" and "strongly" were totalled to yield "Level of Agreement" and the results of "disagree" and "strongly disagree" were totalled to yield "Level of Disagreement."

Note: ³Level of agreement by three stakeholder groups.

APPENDIX H: Social Audit Questionnaire - Distribution of all Responses

Table 21 Distribution of Responses - Section A – G, Social Audit Questionnaire

| Statement # and Description | Mean Rating | Strongly Disagree % | Disagree % | Neither Agree Nor Disagree % | Agree % | Strongly Agree % |
|---|----------------|---------------------------|---------------|--|------------|------------------------|
| SECTION A | | | | | | |
| A1 I have a clear understanding of my position responsibility. | 4.06 | 0 | 10 | 9.4 | 47.5 | 32.5 |
| A2 North Island College is committed to continuous improvement. | 3.79 | 2.5 | 6.3 | 23.8 | 52.5 | 13.1 |
| A3 Employees are committed to serving students well. | 4.43 | 0.6 | 1.3 | 5.0 | 46.3 | 45.6 |
| A4 North Island College's goals are clearly defined. | 3.46 | 1.9 | 17.5 | 26.9 | 45.6 | 6.9 |
| A5 Employees have a commitment to performing well. | 4.34 | 1.3 | 8.1 | 51.3 | 38.1 | 1.3 |
| A6 I receive feedback that enables me to improve my performance | 3.29 | 5.6 | 22.5 | 26.3 | 33.8 | 10.6 |
| A7 I have the resources to do quality work. | 2.99 | 10.6 | 31.3 | 15.0 | 36.9 | 5.6 |
| A8 North Island College delivers the right mix of educational courses. | 3.43 | 1.3 | 17.5 | 31.9 | 42.5 | 3/8 |
| A9 My supervisor has the supervisory skills need to do his or her job. | 3.79 | 4.4 | 9.4 | 20.6 | 40.6 | 20.6 |
| A10 Policies are consistently applied. | 3.22 | 2.5 | 24.4 | 40.0 | 25.0 | 5.6 |
| A11 I am satisfied with the work that I do. | 4.02 | 1.9 | 6.3 | 9.4 | 58.1 | 23.1 |
| A12 I am recognized for my contribution to North Island College. | 3.34 | 3.8 | 20.0 | 28.8 | 40.6 | 5.0 |
| A13 I receive appropriate training enabling me to perform my duties well. | 3.15 | 3.8 | 10 | 9.4 | 47.5 | 32.5 |

| Statement # and Description | Mean Rating | Strongly Disagree % | Disagree % | Neither Agree Nor Disagree % | Agree % | Strongly Agree % |
|---|----------------|---------------------------|---------------|--|------------|------------------------|
| A14 Employees care and support each other. | 3.99 | 0.6 | 9.4 | 13.1 | 49.4 | 6.3 |
| A15 I am encouraged to learn new skills. | 3.71 | 0 | 12.5 | 25.0 | 49.4 | 11.3 |
| A16 I am encouraged to develop creative ideas. | 3.68 | 0 | 11.3 | 30.6 | 45.0 | 11.3 |
| A17 I am secure in my current position. | 3.32 | 9.4 | 16.9 | 19.4 | 46.3 | 6.9 |
| A18 I can speak openly without fear of retribution. | 3.49 | 3.8 | 20.6 | 18.8 | 44.4 | 10.6 |
| A19 Teamwork is encouraged and supported. | 3.69 | 3.1 | 12.5 | 22.5 | 45.6 | 13.8 |
| A20 I am given the responsibility and the authority to make decision in my position. | 3.82 | 0 | 12.5 | 19.4 | 46.9 | 20.0 |
| A21 North Island College provides employees with opportunities for promotion to other positions. | 3.11 | 5.6 | 21.3 | 41.9 | 26.3 | 3.1 |
| A22 Morale in my department is generally high. | 3.25 | 9.4 | 18.8 | 21.3 | 41.3 | 8.8 |
| A23 Employees treat each other with respect. | 4.06 | 1.9 | 6.3 | 11.3 | 55.0 | 23.1 |
| A24 I am encouraged to be innovative in the way I do my work. | 3.81 | 1.9 | 8.1 | 25.6 | 45.6 | 16.3 |
| A25 A difficult or tragic event in an employee's life is acknowledged and met with appropriate support. | 4.10 | 4.4 | 4.4 | 18.1 | 40.0 | 27.5 |

Table 21 Distribution of Responses - Section A – G, Social Audit Questionnaire

| Statement # and Description | Mean Rating | No Response Not Applicable | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neither Agree Nor Disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|---|----------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------|----------|-------------------------------------|-------|-------------------|
| SECTION B | | | | | | | |
| B1 I am paid fairly compared with others at North Island College who hold similar jobs. | 3.69 | 0.6 | 3.11 | 15.6 | 14.4 | 45.0 | 21.3 |
| B2 I am paid fairly compared with others doing comparable work in other organizations. | 3.31 | 4.4 | 8.8 | 20.6 | 19.4 | 34.4 | 12.5 |
| B3 The health benefits at North Island College meet my needs. | 3.99 | 6.2 | 3.8 | 1.3 | 5.0 | 46.9 | 36.9 |
| B4 I have a clear understanding of how my pay has been determined. | 3.54 | 0.6 | 6.3 | 15.0 | 16.9 | 44.4 | 16.9 |
| B5 My pay reflects the responsibilities for my position. | 3.28 | 1.9 | 10.0 | 20.0 | 12.5 | 43.1 | 12.5 |
| B6 I am compensated for the overtime that I work. | 2.14 | 11.9 | 26.3 | 23.8 | 16.3 | 18.1 | 3.8 |

Table 21 Distribution of Responses - Section A – G, Social Audit Questionnaire

| Statement # and Description | Mean Rating | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neither Agree, Nor Disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|---|----------------|----------------------|----------|--------------------------------------|-------|-------------------|
| SECTION C | | | | | | |
| C1 There are clear communications about the future direction for North Island College. | 3.25 | 4.4 | 18.8 | 35.0 | 33.8 | 7.5 |
| C2 I can influence decision regarding my work. | 3.56 | 1.9 | 13.8 | 25.0 | 48.1 | 10.6 |
| C3 I am consulted about issues that might affect my position at North Island College. | 3.21 | 7.5 | 21.9 | 24.4 | 37.5 | 8.1 |
| C4 Information for making decisions flows openly and freely. | 2.86 | 8.8 | 36.9 | 26.9 | 22.5 | 3.1 |
| C5 The information communication at North Island College is accurate and reliable. | 3.23 | 2.5 | 18.8 | 40.6 | 33.8 | 1.9 |
| C6 Decision making is transparent at North Island College. | 2.81 | 7.5 | 33.8 | 43.8 | 9.4 | 1.9 |
| C7 I trust that NIC will take the results of this survey seriously and respond accordingly. | 3.48 | 4.4 | 11.3 | 33.1 | 36.3 | 13.1 |

Table 21 Distribution of Responses - Section A – G, Social Audit Questionnaire

| Statement # and Description | Mean Rating | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neither Agree, Nor Disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|---|-------------|-------------------|----------|-----------------------------|-------|----------------|
| SECTION D | | | | | | |
| D1 North Island College provides me with a physical-working environment that is safe. | 3.93 | 0.6 | 11.3 | 9.4 | 56.9 | 20.6 |
| D2 My health and well being at work are taken seriously. | 3.79 | 1.3 | 9.4 | 19.4 | 56.9 | 11.3 |
| D3 I am familiar with policies about preventing workplace violence. | 3.74 | 1.9 | 11.9 | 12.5 | 60.6 | 12.5 |
| D4 I know what to do when dealing with a difficult or hostile person. | 3.72 | 0.6 | 13.8 | 11.3 | 64.4 | 9.4 |
| D5 The ergonomic features of my workstation reduce potential health problems. | 3.11 | 6.3 | 24.4 | 38.8 | 30.6 | 3.1 |
| D6 I have control over the aspects of my work that affect my safety. | 3.68 | 1.9 | 12.5 | 25.6 | 46.3 | 11.3 |
| D7 I work in a comfortable physical environment. | 3.73 | 3.8 | 11.3 | 11.3 | 58.1 | 15.0 |
| D8 North Island College takes steps to change unsafe conditions in my workplace. | 3.81 | 1.9 | 7.5 | 27.5 | 46.9 | 13.1 |
| D9 Employees are able to hold meetings in comfortable locations. | 3.94 | 3.1 | 3.8 | 18.1 | 53.8 | 19.4 |

Table 21 Distribution of Responses - Section A – G, Social Audit Questionnaire

| Statement # and Description | Mean Rating | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neither Agree, Nor Disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|---|----------------|----------------------|----------|--------------------------------------|-------|-------------------|
| SECTION E | | | | | | |
| E1 The amount of work I am expected to is reasonable. | 3.00 | 13.1 | 27.5 | 14.4 | 38.8 | 5.6 |
| E2 The pace I am expected to work at is reasonable. | 3.20 | 7.5 | 24.4 | 18.1 | 43.1 | 6.3 |
| E3 The pace of change is too fast. | 2.73 | 6.3 | 40.6 | 35.0 | 12.5 | 1.3 |
| E4 The demands of my job interfere with my private life. | 3.17 | 6.3 | 36.9 | 13.1 | 28.8 | 13.1 |
| E5 I am under too much work pressure at North Island College. | 3.14 | 3.8 | 31.9 | 29.4 | 24.4 | 8.8 |
| E6 Compared to five years ago, my workload has increased. | 4.30 | 1.3 | 6.3 | 23.1 | 25.0 | 33.8 |
| E7 I am able to take scheduled breaks during my workday. | 3.21 | 11.3 | 25.0 | 11.9 | 43.1 | 6.9 |

Table 21 Distribution of Responses - Section A – G, Social Audit Questionnaire

| Statement # and Description | Mean Rating | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neither Agree Nor Disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|--|----------------|----------------------|----------|-------------------------------------|-------|-------------------|
| SECTION F | | | | | | |
| F1 North Island College raises awareness on the issue of diversity. | 3.48 | 1.9 | 10.6 | 39.4 | 41.3 | 5.0 |
| F2 North Island College's work environment is free from discrimination. | 3.59 | 2.5 | 16.3 | 21.9 | 46.3 | 11.3 |
| F3 North Island College's work environment is free from sexual harassment. | 3.93 | 0.6 | 8.8 | 16.3 | 55.6 | 16.3 |
| F5 North Island College provides an environment that enables me to report inappropriate behaviour by others. | 3.82 | 0.6 | 7.5 | 20.6 | 56.9 | 13.1 |
| F6 North Island College provides adequate training on the prevention of workplace harassment. | 3.27 | 3.8 | 19.4 | 36.3 | 32.5 | 6.9 |
| F7 North Island College is committed to equitable treatment for all employees. | 3.62 | 1.9 | 10.6 | 26.9 | 46.9 | 11.9 |

Table 21 Distribution of Responses - Section A – G, Social Audit Questionnaire

| Statement # and Description | Mean Rating | Can't Answer or No Response | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neither Agree Nor Disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|--|-------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|----------|----------------------------|-------|----------------|
| SECTION G | | | | | | | |
| G1 Relevant learning through accessible, quality education. | 4.19 | 1.9 | 0.6 | 3.1 | 5.6 | 60.0 | 28.8 |
| G2 Supports the economic, social, cultural and environmental sustainability of the region. | 3.79 | 4.4 | 1.3 | 5.6 | 22.5 | 48.8 | 17.5 |
| G3 Enhances the quality of life, citizenship, community participation, and employment opportunities of the residents of the College region. | 3.86 | 5.0 | 0 | 10.6 | 15.0 | 50.0 | 19.4 |
| G4 Responds to the learners in its region first, but may operate provincially, nationally and internationally. | 3.62 | 10.1 | 0.6 | 3.1 | 16.9 | 53.8 | 15.6 |
| G5 The College's programs and working environment reflect a commitment to sustaining environmental richness and biological diversity of the College region as part of a global strategy. | 2.97 | 15.0 | 3.1 | 11.3 | 35.6 | 27.5 | 7.5 |
| G6 The College provides access to learning opportunities to support diverse social and cultural values and learning styles. | 3.64 | 6.3 | 1.9 | 10.0 | 13.8 | 56.3 | 11.9 |

APPENDIX I: Graphs of Results of Social Audit Questionnaire

Figure 18 Graph: Responses to Section A – Employee Satisfaction Related to Job

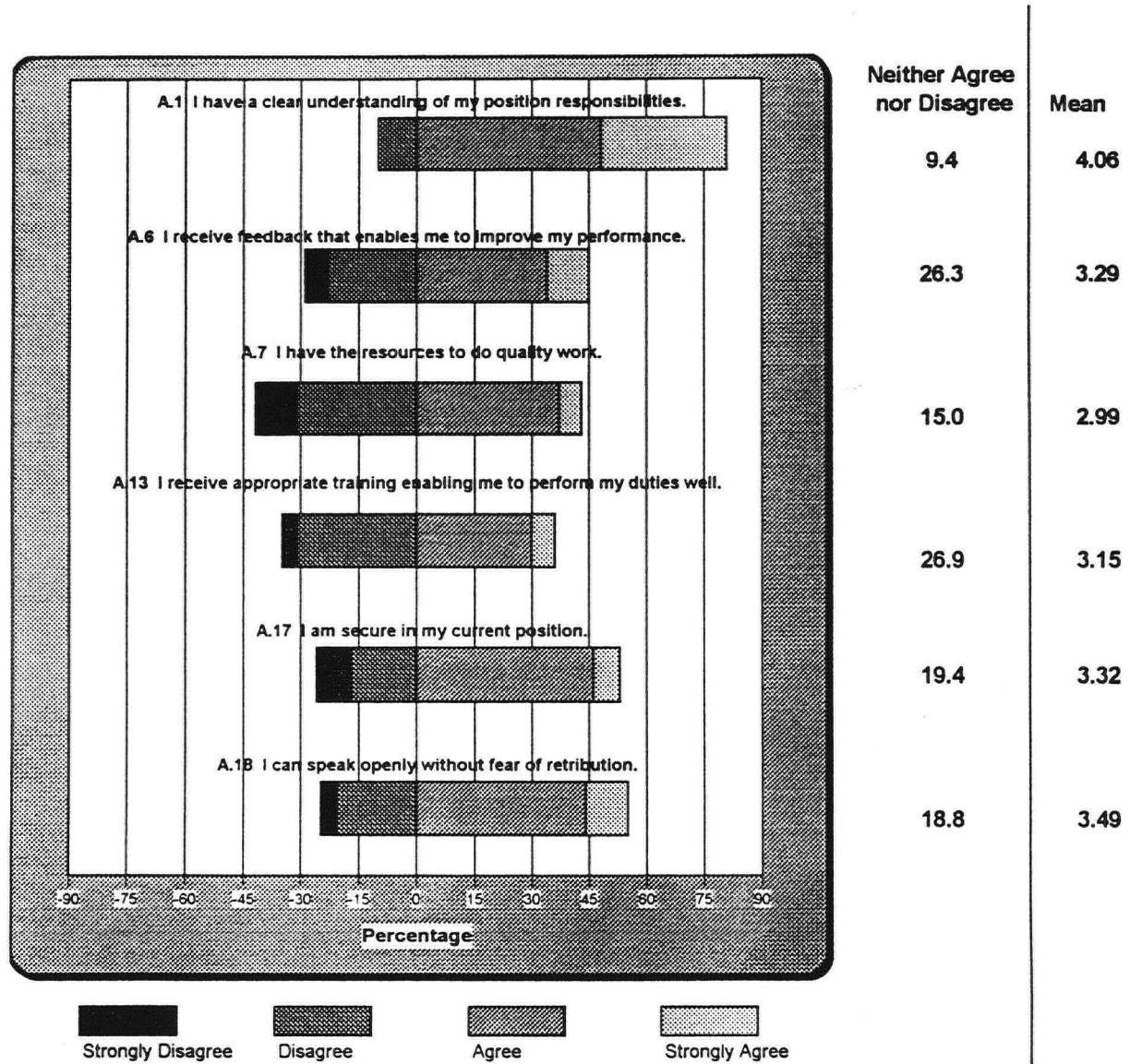


Figure 19 Graph: Responses to Section A – Employee Satisfaction Related to the College

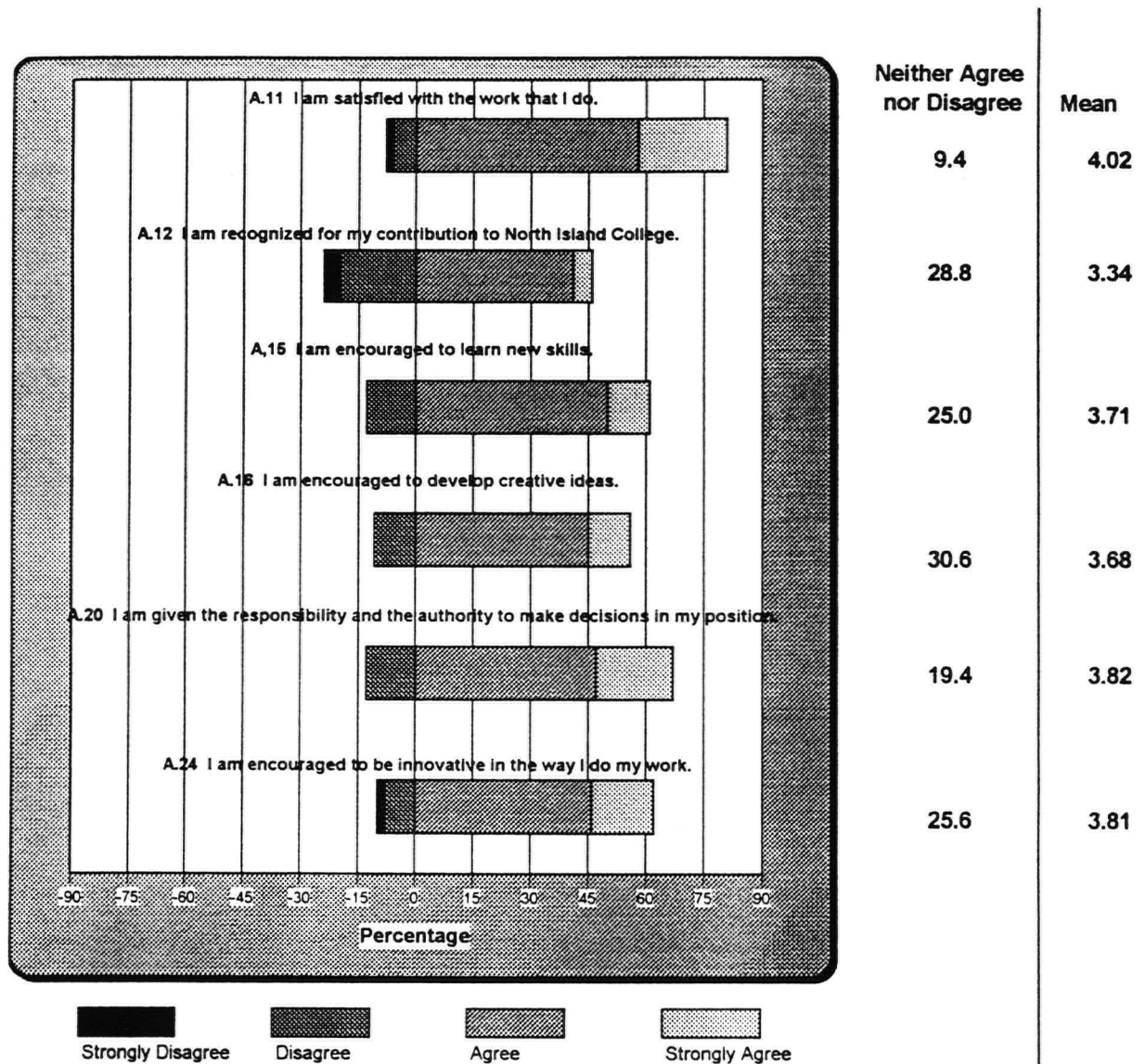


Figure 20 Graph: Responses to Section A – Employee Satisfaction
Commitment to Students, Training, Performance, Morale, Respect & Support

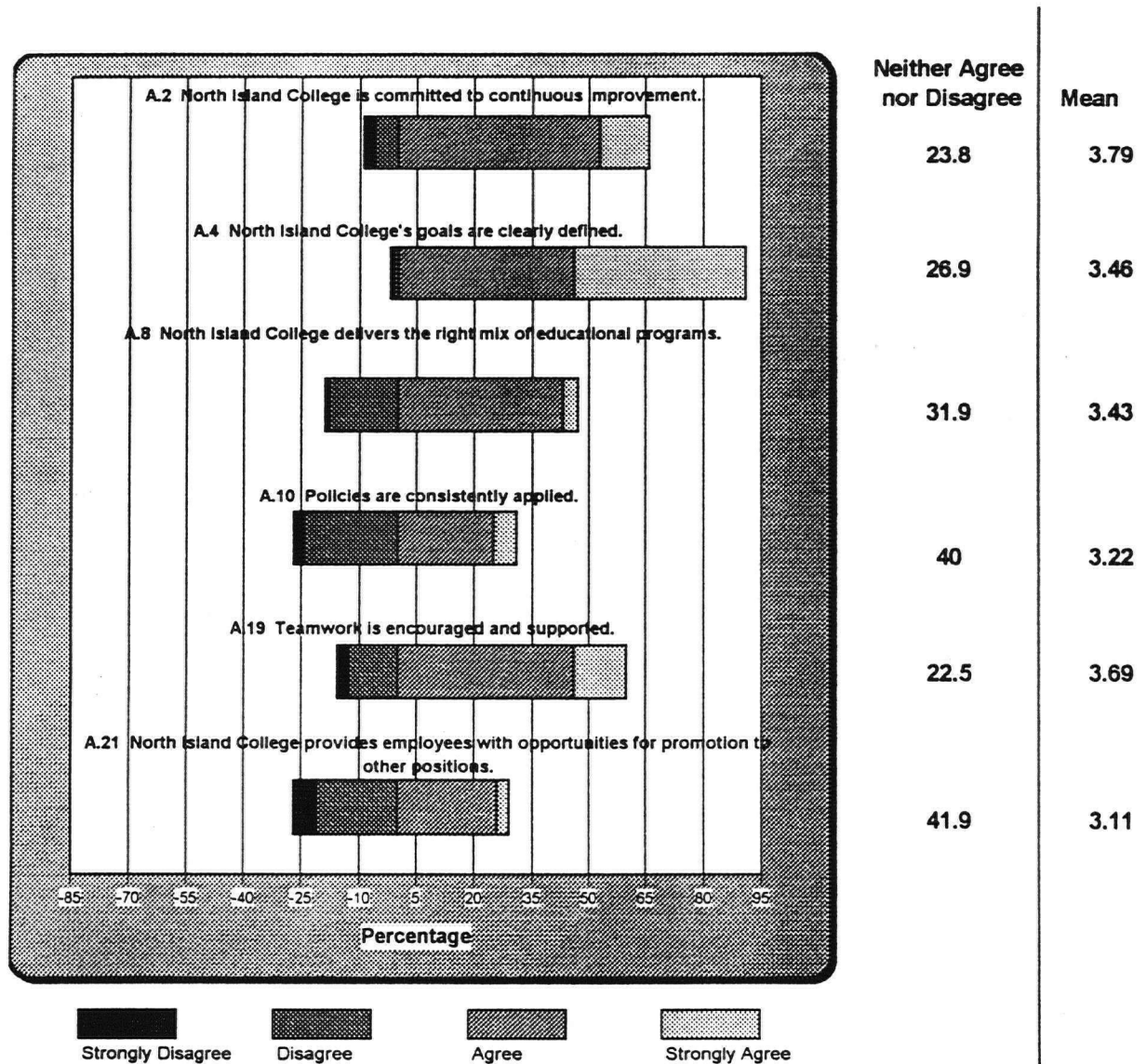


Figure 21 Graph: Responses to Section A – Related to Skills and Self

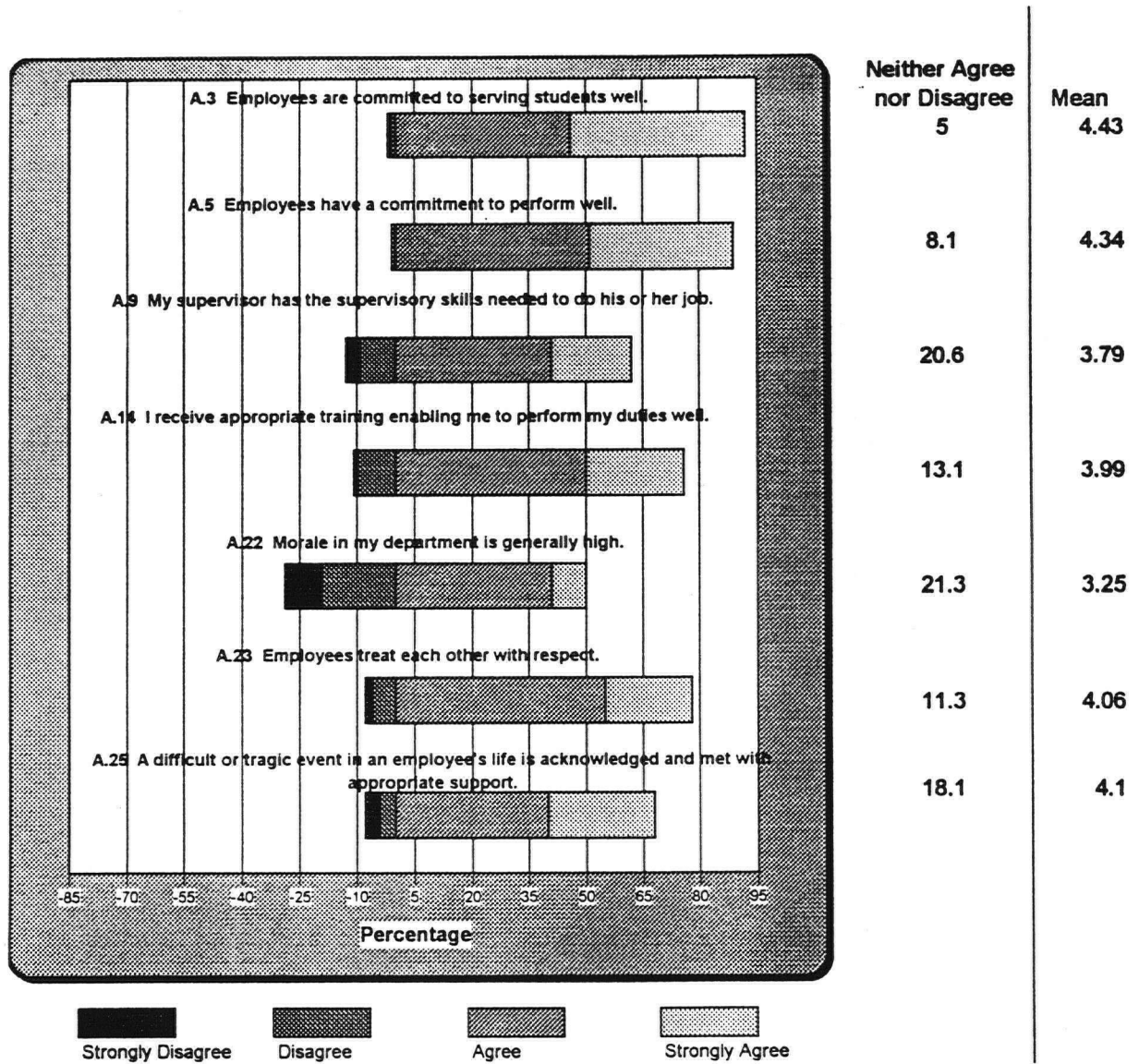


Figure 22 Graph: Responses to Section B – Wages and Benefits

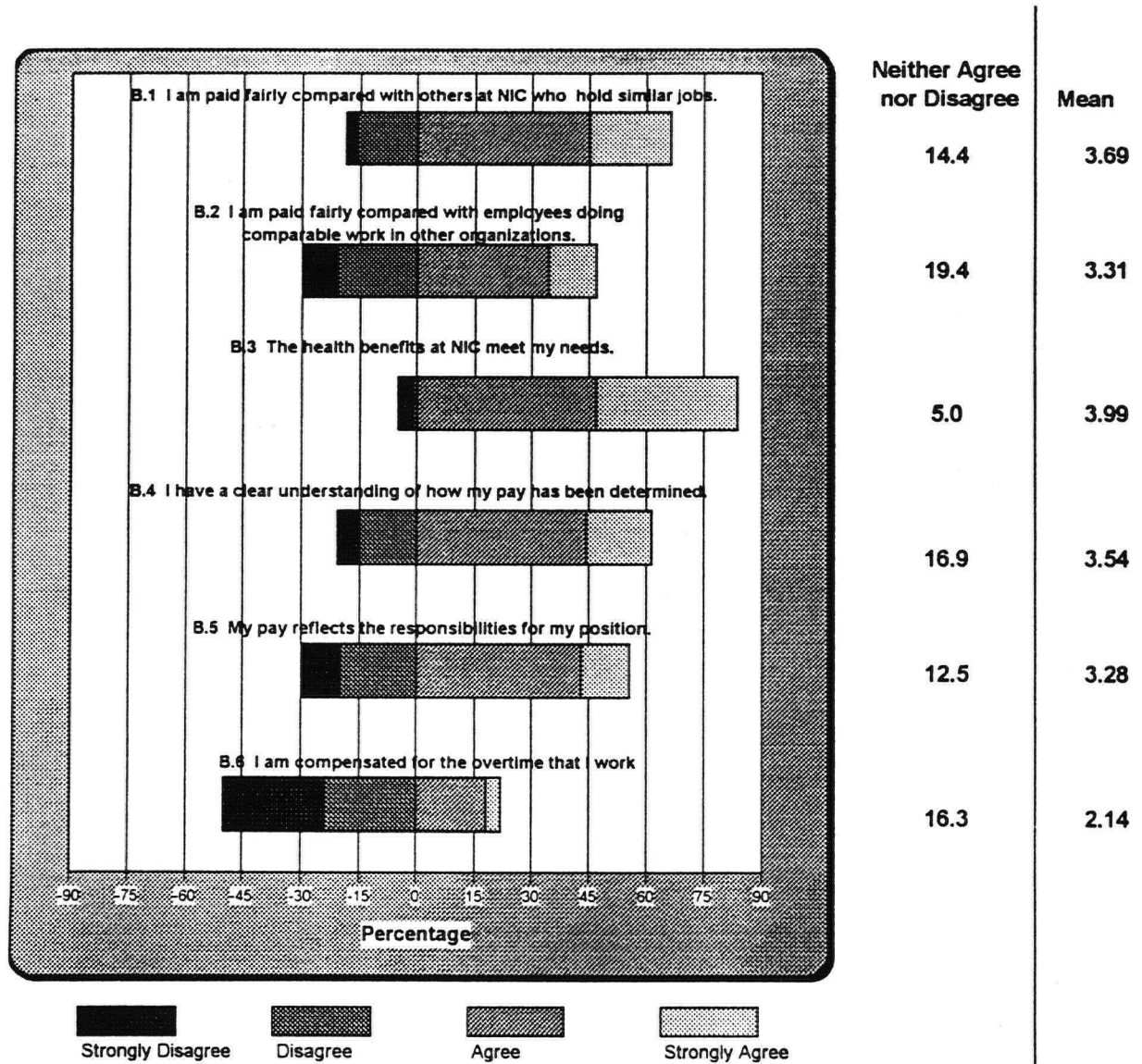


Figure 23 Graph: Responses to Section C – Communications, Consultation and Decision Making

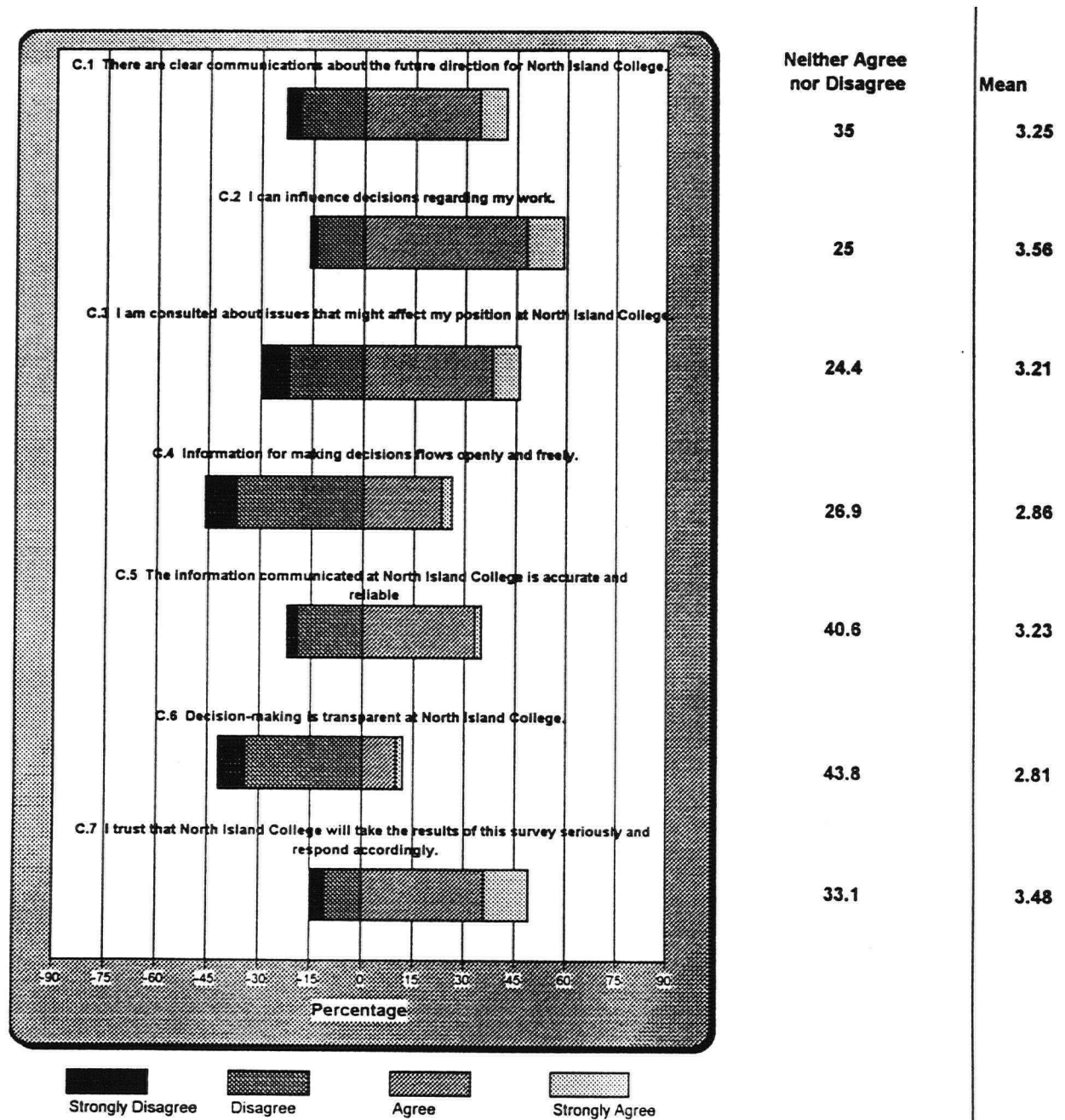


Figure 24 Graph: Responses to Section D – Health, Safety and Physical Environment

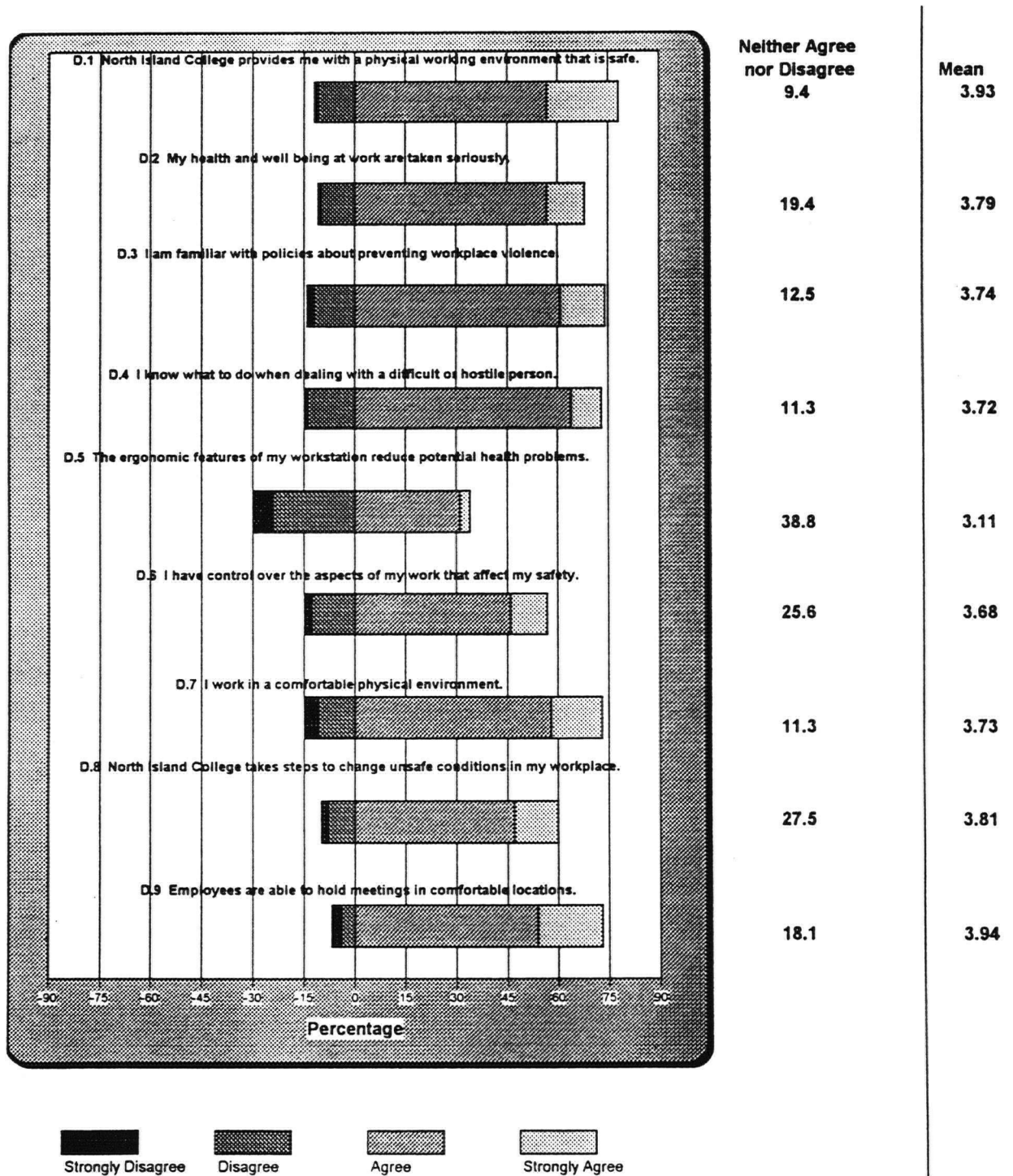


Figure 25 Graph: Responses to Section E – Workload and Stress

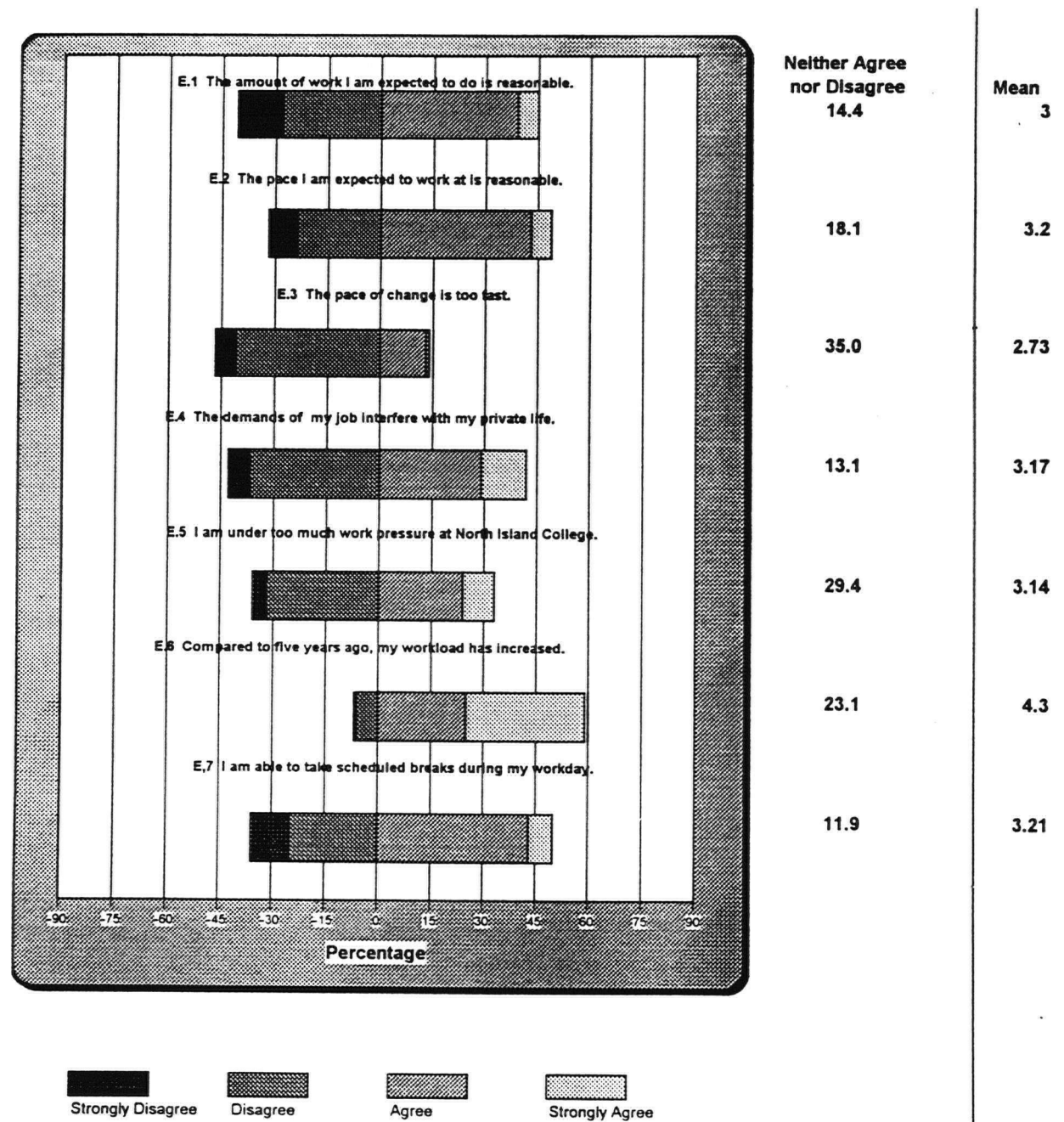


Figure 26 Graph: Responses to Section F – Diversity and Equality of Opportunity

