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Activity 2

The Role of the *Canada Gazette* in Creating Canadian Laws/ Regulations

To become familiar with the *Canada Gazette*, students will be assigned the task of learning more about its historical background. The online resources listed below outline its history, contents and organization, how to access it, and examples of how the *Canada Gazette* serves Canadians by providing access to the laws and regulations that govern their daily lives.

Provide a copy of the article “The *Canada Gazette*” by Betty Deavy and Norma Gauld (Vol. 17, no. 2, 1994) for each student, for reference. Or place a copy of the article on an overhead projector.

The article is located in the *Canadian Parliamentary Review* at:

<http://www.parl.gc.ca/Infoparl/english/issue.htm?param=149&art=1005>

- 1- Introduce the activity by asking how Canadian historic decisions/laws are recorded for the public and elicit a brief discussion on the importance of providing public access to government decisions and laws. Read aloud the article, “The *Canada Gazette*” (Deavy and Gauld).
- 2- Explain that after a bill has been passed by Parliament, the Minister with the responsibility for the bill, such as the Minister for the Environment, will begin the process of research, consult with the public and experts, draft regulations to clarify the bill (which is done by lawyers within the federal Department of Justice), and then pre-publish the proposed regulations in Part I of the *Canada Gazette*.

This gives the people who were consulted an opportunity to see if their consultation was taken into account. It also gives them one last chance to provide comments on the proposed regulatory text, and the public an opportunity to give feedback. The Department of Justice must deal with every comment and report the results when the regulations are enacted in Part II of the *Canada Gazette*.

At the end of the text, there is a Regulatory Impact Analysis Statement (RIAS) that states all the information about the research, options, consultation, comments, costs and benefits, and clarifies the reasons for the decisions regarding the final regulations.

3- Ask the students:

Why is this process important to the democratic system?

(Answer: It gives the public an opportunity to be involved in the regulations. No laws are made without consultation with citizens.)

4- Ask the students:

What are “informed” citizens? Is there an advantage to society if the citizens are “informed”?

(Answer: If citizens are informed, they are aware of government policy and understand how government organizations work. If citizens are not informed, they weaken their ability to participate in democracy, create a weaker society and let others decide how they will live and what rules will govern their lives.)

5- Ask the students:

How does the *Canada Gazette* affect our ability to be informed citizens?

(Answer: The *Canada Gazette* provides an opportunity to be involved in regulations, to be informed and consulted. It allows us to be aware of past and present decisions and their effects, and to read regulations and important information about our history.)

6- Provide an opportunity for the students to peruse recent issues of the *Canada Gazette*, Part II. Have students read a few of the Regulatory Impact Analysis Statements or provide examples on an overhead to read. Discuss the implications of the Regulatory Impact Analysis Statements on the original regulation(s).