

UNION INTERPARLEMENTAIRE



INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION

Association of Secretaries General of Parliaments

COMMUNICATION

from

Ms K. FLOSSING
Secretary General of the Swedish Riksdag

on

Roadmap 2014: ongoing work to develop the Riksdag Administration

Session
Quebec 2012

Roadmap 2014

Introduction

The Riksdag Administration's work should be carried out in a judicious manner in a climate characterised by trust and confidence, with a clear division of responsibilities, well-defined decision-making chains and good working conditions. All developments should be undertaken with the Administration's task of creating the best possible conditions for the Riksdag's and MPs' work in mind.

Roadmap 2014 is the common designation for the long-term measures to develop the Riksdag Administration, to be undertaken during the electoral period 2010-2014.

The Roadmap is the systematic structure for various development measures within the Administration. The purpose of Roadmap 2014 is to ensure that development measures undertaken in the period 2010-2014 are sustainable, and are pursued with the aim of achieving the common goal.

Background

When Secretary-General of the Riksdag Kathrin Flossing took up her post in October 2010 she initiated a series of interviews in order to learn about and become well acquainted with the Administration. A consulting firm was assigned the task of interviewing MPs, officials and external stakeholders about their view of the Administration.

The interviews revealed that the Riksdag Administration is characterised by a strong service culture, with knowledgeable and professional staff whose work is given high marks by the clients - the MPs. One wish that was clearly expressed by the members was for the officials at the Riksdag to obtain better understanding of the conditions of the members of the Riksdag. The survey also showed, like the staff surveys in 2008 and 2011, that the staff are on the whole satisfied with their workplace, but that there is a need for modernisation and renewal in a number of areas.

A few brief findings from the interviews:

- About the organisation and work procedures: The lack of horizontal communication in the organisation is considered to be rather problematic. The link between core activities and support activities only occurs in the Management Group. The responsibility of the line manager is sometimes unclear.
- About the culture: The Administration is perceived to have a strong service culture – it is a positive and service-minded organisation. The culture feels ever so slightly anxious – as if it were expecting criticism from all directions? A lack of trust and confidence?
- About the Administration's strengths: The political leadership considers that the MPs are treated fantastically with good service. The Administration is knowledgeable and professional. There is a very good working environment and atmosphere – the staff are in general satisfied, proud and committed.

The result of the interviews carried out by consultants was presented to managers and the political leadership, where the plan for continued work was given approval.

Goal formulation

Based on the results of the series of personal interviews, previous staff surveys, etc. as regards areas for improvement in the Riksdag Administration, the management has formulated an overall goal for Roadmap 2014:

The Riksdag Administration should be a distinct, modern, professional, committed and involved parliamentary administration, offering even better support to the parliamentary process.

The goal formulation should serve to support work with the roadmap and ensure that all measures aim for the same goal.

The four development areas:

The issues included in the roadmap have been organised into four development areas. However, assignments often span more than one development area.

- **Management.** This is about how the Riksdag Administration is managed, for example, the role of the Secretary-General of the Riksdag in relation to the Riksdag Board, rules and policy documents.
- **Organisation.** This is about possible organisational changes that may be called for.
- **Communication.** This is about communication in its broadest sense, both internal and external, and includes everything from meetings to plain language.
- **An attractive workplace.** This covers employer and employee issues, including managerial and staff development, the workplace culture and core values.

The organisation of the Roadmap 2014 process

The work with the Roadmap is led by the Secretary-General of the Riksdag together with the Management Group which serves as the steering group. The managers in the Administration have an important role to play in ensuring that work on the Roadmap reaches all staff. A coordinator is responsible for overall coordination of the development work's various elements. The coordinator is assisted by a project secretary. Two communicators from the Information Department support the work with Roadmap 2014.

Support at the political level is secured and updates provided continuously at the Speaker's weekly coordination meetings, group leader meetings, in the Riksdag Board and at the Council for Members' Affairs.

Working procedures

The work with the Roadmap is carried out by staff in the Administration in the form of various assignments decided by the Secretary-General of the Riksdag after consultation with the steering group. The assignments are carried out within the regular organisation or by specially appointed working groups with representatives from different parts of the Administration.

To ensure that the goal of the Roadmap process is reached, progress is followed up regularly in the Roadmap group and its steering group.

Roadmap meetings

Between January and May 2012 a total of about 60 roadmap meetings were held with all the staff in the Riksdag Administration.

The purpose of the meetings was to:

- Provide information about the work with the roadmap
- Discuss the goal of Roadmap 2014 and how members of staff can contribute to achieving the goal
- Hear the staff's thoughts and opinions on the continued roadmap process

The roadmap meetings were also a way of sharing good examples of working procedures that others can benefit from, but also submitting suggestions for improvements both in one's own working group and within the Administration as a whole.

Three areas are repeatedly mentioned in the proposals on how to improve the Riksdag Administration:

- Management issues (better planning, more rapid decision making)
- Internal communications (social media, information from management meetings)
- Increased understanding of each others' work

The proposals and opinions that have been submitted will be analysed to see what the Administration can develop further.

Resources

As the work with the roadmap is primarily carried out within the regular organisation, any costs that arise will be taken from the regular budget. A smaller sum has, however, been earmarked for measures that do not naturally belong to a specific department or division.

Follow-up and evaluation

The work will be followed up on an ongoing basis in connection with tertiary follow-up reports and annual reports.

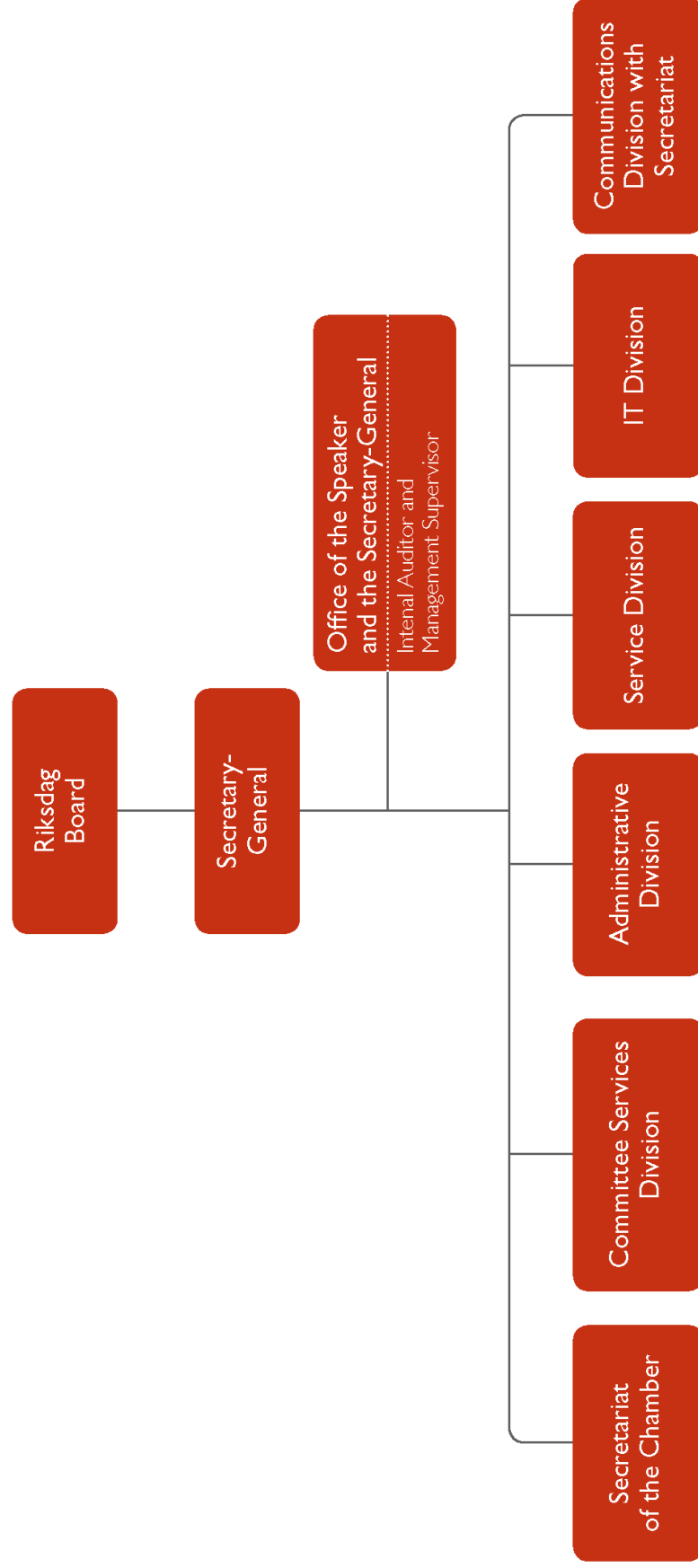
Experienced difficulties

When dealing with a process as long-term and exhaustive as Roadmap 2014, it is natural to encounter difficulties during the course of work. One thing that has been noticed is that changes can be perceived as frightening if the staff are not accustomed to them. Here is some good advice for parliamentary administrations facing similar improvement measures:

- Early, clearly-stated communication on what is to be done and why
- Transparency during the course of work so that everyone is aware of what is happening
- Endurance: See it through. Don't give up!

Organisation of the Riksdag Administration

as of 1 January 2012

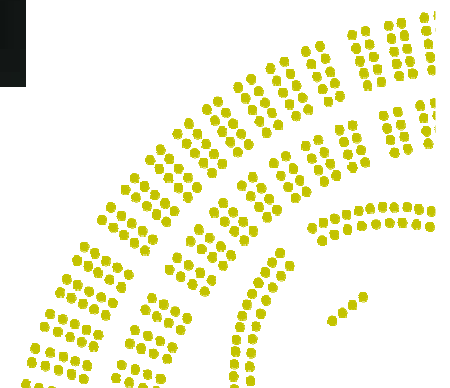


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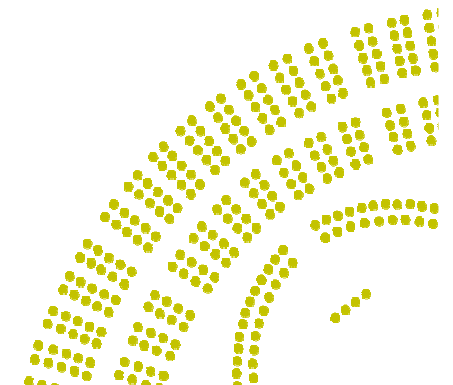
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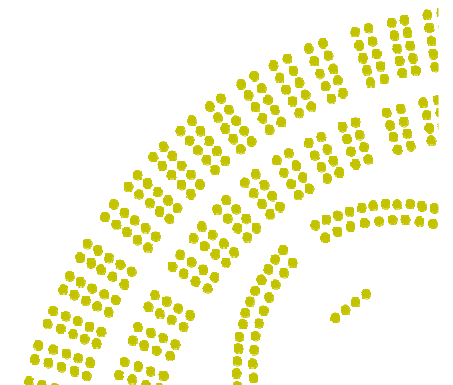
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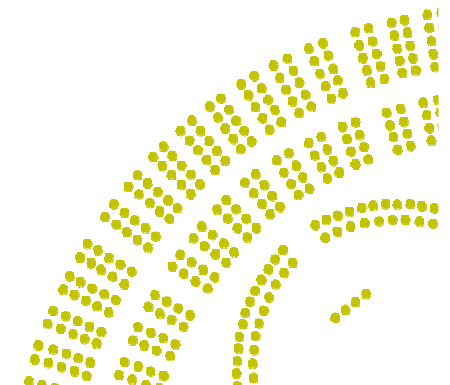
Our goal

A distinct, modern, professional, committed and involved parliamentary administration, offering even better support to the parliamentary process



Experienced difficulties

- Early, clearly-stated communication on what is to be done and why
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- Endurance: See it through. Don't give up!



Possible questions to be discussed at Ms Flossing's communication

- In several of the Nordic parliamentary administrations, a process of administrative change is currently in progress. In the Swedish Parliament this process is referred to as Roadmap 2014. What is the purpose of this work?
- What is the role of the politicians in this work?
- How is the work organised?
- How can commitment and participation be achieved in the process?
- What difficulties has the Administration encountered?