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The **Toronto Sun**

November 11, 2005 Friday
FINAL EDITION

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. 3

LENGTH: 210 words

HEADLINE: AT \$200GS, DEPUTY MINISTERS OUTEARN PREMIER

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BODY:

Ontario's senior bureaucrats were given raises of up to 6.3% over three years by **Ontario's** cabinet last month, the Sun has learned.

What is effectively a bump-up of salary ranges means deputy ministers are now eligible to make up to \$199,000 a year, plus additional performance incentives worth a maximum of 20% of their salaries. Annual compensation could total a maximum of \$238,800.

There are 1,719 senior managers within nine job classifications, ranging from deputy ministers to information technology managers, eligible for raises.

The increases -- their first since 2003 -- are retroactive to April 1.

Government services ministry spokesman Jason Wesley said the increases represent the type of raises recently given to unionized civil servants.

"When you break it down, it represents an increase of about 2% each year over three years," said Wesley.

Pay-for-performance incentives are given to civil servants who meet annual targets specific to their positions.

Cabinet approved an average 5.2% bonus across the board of senior management positions.

Prior to last month's raise, deputy ministers earned a base salary of up to \$187,150.

By comparison, Premier Dalton McGuinty's salary this year totals \$155,740, while backbench MPPs make a base salary of \$86,860.

LOAD-DATE: November 12, 2005