

Highlights Departments and Offices continue to undertake activities that contribute to the creation of a welcoming, inclusive and culturally competent Public Service that is representative of the citizens we serve. This report provides highlights from the 2010-11 fiscal year. These highlights include:

- *Department of Health Hosts 1st Health Equity Forum*
- *Human Rights Commission, Disabled Persons Commission and the Collaborative Partnership Network Sponsors Annual Symposium on Disability*
- *Human Rights Commission Conducts Environmental Scan On Discrimination*
- *Communications Nova Scotia and Partners for Human Rights Showcase Diversity Films*
- *Public Service Commission Hosts Celebration for Pride Week 2010*

**Message from
the Minister**

I am pleased to present the 2010-11 report “**Moving, Toward Equity**”. This report provides a summary of the progress made in the 2010-11 fiscal year towards our goal to be a diverse workforce.

By achieving our diversity objectives, we will be better able to serve all Nova Scotians in an effective, inclusive and culturally competent manner. I truly believe having a diverse, respectful and inclusive Public Service has the power to open minds and influence the future in positive and exciting ways. As noted in the recent Speech from the Throne, “One of the strengths of a modern economy and society is diversity. Nova Scotia is no different.”

As one of the largest employers in the Province, we must lead by example. We are committed to creating an environment where differences are valued and respected.

I would like to thank Departments and Offices for their continued efforts and support and all employees who remain committed to our diversity objectives.

Yours sincerely,



Honourable Frank Corbett
Minister, Public Service Commission

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1. Introduction

The Government of Nova Scotia is committed to providing a workplace that is free of discrimination, values diversity, and promotes equality of opportunity for all people. This commitment recognizes fairness and equity as cornerstones of human resource management in the public service. Fairness and equity help ensure staffing decisions, access to training, and other opportunities are based on merit, and that no one is excluded for reasons unrelated to qualifications.

This report describes the progress made (2010-11) in achieving the objectives of the Employment Equity Policy. These objectives are:

- *to promote an inclusive, culturally competent public service that values diversity;*
- *to assist with the identification and removal of systemic barriers to employment and the advancement of members of the designated groups;*
and
- *to achieve a workforce where the designated groups are equitably represented.*

2. JobsHere Strategy

As part of the jobsHere plan to grow the economy, the province will unveil a new workforce strategy to help workers build new skills, learn new technologies, maximize their career opportunities and earning potential, and better understand their employment options. The workforce strategy will include:

- *attracting and retaining immigrants as skilled workers and entrepreneurs*
- *expanding participation in the labour force by members of disadvantaged or marginalized communities*

Some of the initiatives identified in the plan to support the jobsHere strategic direction and goals include:

2.1 More diversity in the workplace

This initiative is a result of having some groups that are under-represented in the workforce which limits economic opportunities for these Nova Scotians, and the workplaces not being able to benefit from the skill and experience that a diverse workforce builds. To address this, the Government of Nova Scotia will:

- *in collaboration with the four Employability Tables in the province (African Nova Scotian, Persons with Disabilities, Aboriginal, and Acadian), develop a plan to increase the number of people from these populations in the workforce. These tables are made up of community leaders, service providers, and government representatives.*
- *work with employers to create work environments where talents and skills are recognized equally for under-represented groups through workplace training, HR web resources, and co-op placement opportunities*
- *improve protections for Temporary Foreign Workers as part of a broader plan to create welcoming workplace environments for under-represented groups.*

2.2 Immigration Strategy

This strategy will attract international skilled workers with the technical skills and international contacts Nova Scotia needs to become more innovative, productive, and competitive. This will include

- *doubling the number of immigrants to 7,200 by 2020, bringing more entrepreneurs to the province, and growing the number of skilled individuals available to work in businesses and industries*
- *retaining international students and temporary foreign workers in Nova Scotia.*

2.3 Commitment of Departments and Agencies

As stated in the Nova Scotia Government's Employment Equity Policy, "Each Department shall develop a three-year Employment Equity Plan that will identify quantitative and qualitative equity goals and measures designed to both improve the representation of the designated groups and to build a corporate culture that values

diversity, is inclusive and is culturally competent."

An Employment Equity Plan is the department's and office's commitment to implement the Employment Equity Policy. It is a measurable action plan for achieving employment equity goals and creating a more representative workforce, as well as workplace conditions that welcome diversity.

An example of an initiative to support employment equity and diversity is the Public Service Commission's current review of all recruitment related policies and procedures that aims to streamline recruitment and selection related practises across government, and improve consistency and effectiveness.

The work to modernize staffing processes has already begun and includes implementing new ways to assess and recognize prior learning, including recognition of foreign credentials through a Prior Learning Assessment Recognition (PLAR) pilot program. This multi-year initiative supports government's Workforce Strategy and will increase accessibility of opportunities within

the civil service. Linkages under the PLAR pilot will be established with other departments, universities and organizations, such as the Immigrant Settlement and Integration Services of Nova Scotia. In addition, workplace culture training programs focusing on common values and maintaining a welcoming work environment for all employees will be enhanced, such as the Respectful Workplace Training.

2.4 Becoming an Organization that Values Diversity

Government will continue working to create an environment of fairness, equality, mutual respect and understanding in the public service for all employees regardless of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, mental or physical disability, spiritual beliefs, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, marital status, family status, religious affiliation, or socio-economic status.

Government's objective is to create a public service that:

- *is a model employer that values*

diversity as an organizational strength;

- identifies and removes barriers of racism and discrimination that exclude or disadvantage employees or applicants;*
- is an inclusive organization;*
- is a learning organization that supports the development of all its employees;*
- has developed and maintained strong partnerships with communities;*
- has employees with the cultural sensitivity and competency to provide excellent services to all citizens; and holds itself accountable for this vision*

2.5 Becoming Representative of the People We Serve

In order for the Nova Scotia public service to develop a culture that values diversity it must become representative, at all levels, of the people it serves. Achieving this includes supporting affirmative initiatives to help ensure groups that have historically been excluded from employment and promotion opportunities are equitably represented throughout the organization.

Our objective is a public service that:

- is representative, at all levels, of the people it serves;*
- has achieved employment equity for Aboriginal People, African Nova Scotians and Other Racially Visible Persons, Persons with Disabilities, and Women in occupations or positions where they are under-represented;*
- proactively recruits applicants who are members of the designated groups;*
- proactively provides developmental opportunities for employees from the designated groups;*
- has a corporate culture that helps retain skilled members of the designated groups;*
- has representatives of the designated groups equitably distributed in all occupations and pay levels; and*
- holds itself accountable for our support for diversity and our employment equity goals*

3. Measuring Our Progress “An Organization That Values Diversity”

While it is important to track progress numerically, it is also important to recognize that diversity is more than merely measuring our statistical profile. It is about how we work together, how we ensure that all employees are valued, and how they feel a sense of belonging and engagement.

The efforts of departments and offices have the most influence, and a positive impact on the culture of the public service and on its representation.

3.1 Highlights of Departmental Activities

The Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness (DHW) Diversity Committee held their **First Annual Health Equity Forum** on March 18, 2011.

In keeping with Nova Scotia’s commitment to building cultural competence in public systems, the Forum provided an opportunity for system-wide education and capacity building in the area of health equity. The objectives of the Forum were:

- *To increase knowledge and awareness of health equity and support system change*
- *To develop a culturally competent health system*
- *To provide an opportunity to collaborate on effective ways to work across sectors to address the social determinants of health, and promote health policy*

The Forum supported broad understanding of inequities with respect to; employment equity, emphasizing culturally competent recruitment and hiring; and focused on health inequities and their impact on the mental health of two,

key populations. This year, these populations included immigrants and refugees, as well as the populations who make up the Pride Community: lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.

The Forum was attended by service providers, public servants, healthcare staff, academics and communities. It consisted of presentations from Department of Health and Wellness staff, keynote addresses by national mental health experts, community first voice presentations, as well as a panel of public servants and local experts who discussed employment equity and the importance of cultural competence in the workplace. The Forum attracted over 80 participants, with over 80% reporting an increase in knowledge of healthy equity, after the event.

Human Rights Commission, Disabled Persons Commission and the Collaborative Partnership Network Sponsors Annual Symposium on Disability

In celebration of the United Nations International Day of Persons with Disabilities, the Collaborative

Partnership Network, the Nova Scotia Disabled Persons Commission and the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission hosted the 3rd Annual Symposium on Inclusive Education and Employment, with the theme, *“Transition through learning and work: A journey with purpose.”*

This two-day event featured keynote speakers, panel discussions, an employer and education showcase, interactive workshops, and plenty of networking opportunities for employers, educators, unions, community-based agencies and government representatives.

It was an opportunity to learn of the challenges and opportunities Nova Scotians with disabilities face in making transitions, while obtaining an education, securing meaningful employment and contributing to their communities. Issues of disabilities in the African Nova Scotian, immigrant and refugee communities were raised. Moreover, the audience was challenged to start recording credible statistics and to conduct research to address the lack of reliable statistics as well as information on disability

in the visible minorities in Nova Scotia. Over 200 people participated in the event.

Human Rights Commission Conducts Environmental Scan on Discrimination

Understanding themes and trends of discrimination in Nova Scotia is critical to the Commission’s ability to prevent and resolve discrimination. Qualitative and quantitative research must occur to fully understand how discrimination affects the daily lives of Nova Scotians. For these reasons, an environmental scan was conducted to analyze themes and trends of discrimination in Nova Scotia. The major findings revealed that:

- *Education is the key to eliminating discrimination*
- *Race was the most frequently covered topic at 70% of news articles in the media analysis*
- *Survey participants felt that racial discrimination, among others is “alive and well in NS”.*
- *Some communities such as the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and disabled communities experience transcending discrimination,*

which means that they experience discrimination within the community because of their race, religion etc.

- *At 44%, disability is the most frequently cited characteristic in Nova Scotian human rights complaints*
- *Survey participants felt that discrimination is happening because Nova Scotians have a tolerance for racism and racist remarks, which are a form of ignorance and cannot be changed unless acknowledged.*
- *Survey participants felt that Nova Scotia culture allows for generalizations to be made about groups; Nova Scotians care about the individual person, but are unsure of a community of people that are different than what is 'normal'.*

Communications Nova Scotia and Partners for Human Rights Showcase Diversity Films

In March, Communications Nova Scotia worked with Partners for Human Rights to organize their 2nd annual mini film festival to commemorate the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

The films shown were:
*I Am Canadian, The Right to Bare Arms, Wild West
Still Here: A Journey to Triumph
Pier 21 Gateway of Hope
Driving While Black*

The objectives of this mini film festival were to raise awareness of human rights and to raise the profile of the local filmmakers and their work. Several employees from across departments supported the event.

Public Service Commission Hosts Celebration for Pride Week 2010

The Public Service Commission Minister Frank Corbett raised the Pride flag at Province House in July to recognize and support Pride events held in Nova Scotia throughout the summer. This represented the first time in history that a Pride flag was flown from the legislature, which symbolizes government's support for diversity in all our communities.

The Commissioner of the Public Service hosted the celebration and welcomed government employees, families and supporters to the symbolic event. The minister and the commissioner were joined

by members of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex (LGBTI) network. The network, formed in March 2009, is a safe-place for public servants who identify with lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex communities to discuss opportunities to create a more inclusive work environment. With more than 35 public servants as members, the network is growing and gaining support. The PSC has also made a contribution to the LGBTI network to support the development of their LGBTI website which will be made available through a link on the PSC home page.

Public Service Commission employees and the LGBTI network also marched together to support diversity in Halifax's 2010 Pride Parade. The theme of the float was "*Proud to Serve all Nova Scotians.*"

3.2 Diversity Education

We continue to build opportunities for public servants to increase their skills and competencies in the area of

diversity, and offered the following courses in this fiscal year:

Diversity and Employment Equity:

This foundational program introduces the language and concepts of diversity, along with strategies for equity and inclusion. This is a mandatory program that all new public servants are required to take within a reasonable time of joining government.

Diversity Management for Leaders:

This module is designed to enhance key leadership skills to manage an increasingly diverse workforce that will ultimately improve personal, employee and organizational performance.

Aboriginal Cultural Awareness E-Learning Module:

This E-Learning Module uses an aboriginal culture training program Institute and endorsed by the Assembly of First Nations. The program is customized to meet the needs of the province's public servants.

The training program has five key components with a specific module on the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia. The program complements the Aboriginal perceptions training that is also offered to Nova Scotian Public Servants.

Aboriginal Perceptions:

This popular program recognizes that an understanding of the contemporary Aboriginal community is essential to our work as government employees and individuals. This course is designed to provide a practical, hands-on approach to working with Aboriginal people.

Acadie at a Glance: The Acadians of Nova Scotia and French-language Services.

Thanks to the Office of Acadian Affairs *Acadie at a Glance: The Acadians of Nova Scotia and French-language Services* is a new workshop designed to help government employees become more aware of the Acadian and francophone community in Nova Scotia. delivery, consider department increase its ability to offer services in French.

Cultural Competence for Public Servants:

This course introduces the skills, knowledge and attitudes required to interact with and serve culturally diverse people, and work effectively in cross-cultural situations.

Respectful Workplace:

Every employee wants to work in an environment where they will be respected. This half-day program explores the provisions of the Respectful Workplace Policy using video scenarios, presentations and group discussions. Participants learn how to identify disrespectful behaviour and how to respond appropriately. All provincial government employees are required to take this course.

Leading a Respectful Workplace:

In the course of their normal duties, people who manage others can become aware of a workplace incident in which one employee has been disrespectful of another. This program is designed to help supervisors deal with these difficult situations.

3.3 The Diversity Round Table

The Diversity Round Table is an inter-departmental forum that provides advice and guidance as government works toward a diverse and inclusive public service. Champions from several key departments and offices continue to participate on the Diversity Round Table to work collaboratively to develop ways to support diversity and employment equity.

The Round Table achieves its purpose by:

- *ensuring we have a common understanding of diversity and what it means to be a culturally competent organization;*
- *sharing information on what is happening across government including identification of best practices;*
- *ensuring a coherent approach to diversity;*
- *building momentum to create and enable change;*
- *bringing expertise to the Round Table (individual experience, position/content expertise);*
- *providing advice and feedback on developing initiatives and/or policies*

4. Reporting Our Progress: “A Representative Organization”

It is the responsibility of the Public Service Commission to provide departments and offices with information on the profile of their organizations and to provide information on the representation of the designated groups in the province as a whole.

All newly hired employees with the Nova Scotia public service are provided with, and are encouraged to complete, a voluntary workforce self-identification survey called “Count Yourself In”. This information is confidential and maintained electronically on the SAP Human Resource system, which allows for tracking of statistics such as retirements, transfers and promotions. The self-identification survey can be completed on-line at www.gov.ns.ca/psc/workforcesurvey. The current bi-annual employee survey does not provide an accurate representation on the number of employees belonging to designated groups. We are exploring ways to encourage more employees to self-identify in the employee

survey, so we can more accurately identify issues and concerns relevant to designated groups within government. This is an interim measure, as we determine a methodology to gather accurate data on the representation of the designated groups in the Nova Scotia public service.

4.1 2010-11 Organizational Profile

Table A provides a snapshot of the profile of the Nova Scotia public service as of March 31, 2011. In total, 6.4 % of public servants identified themselves as being a member of a designated group. This is a decrease from 2010 when 7.1 % self-identified. Table A also shows the number of designated group members in Nova Scotia who are in the Nova Scotia labour force from the 2006 Census, which is the most recent information available at the date this report was written.

The public service strives to be representative of our communities at all levels of the organization. One measure of how we are doing is to look at the representation of designated groups in

Table A: Profile of the Nova Scotia Public Service, March 31, 2011

Groups	All Ages 2006 (% of Prov. Pop'n)	In Labour Force 2006 (% of Total Prov. Labour Force)	Public Service March 31, 2011 (% of Total Public Service)
Aboriginal Persons	24,175 (2.7%)	11,259 (2.3 %)	92 (0.8 %)
African Nova Scotians & Other Racially Visible Persons	37,690 (4.2 %)	17,660 (3.7 %)	342 (2.8 %)
Persons with Disabilities	179,100 (20%)	54,560 (11.5 %)	350 (2.9%)
Total	240,965 (26.9%)	83,470 (17.5 %)	784 (6.4%)

Sources: Government of Nova Scotia SAP-Human Resources Database System, 2006 Canadian Census as reported on NS Community Counts www.gov.ns.ca/finance/communitycounts/

Table B: EC Levels of Designated Groups in Civil Service, March 31, 2011

EC Level	Number (percent) of designated groups in EC positions by level	Number (percent) of women in EC positions by level	Total number of employees in each level
EC 6-8	11 (7.2 %)	130 (85.0 %)	153
EC 9-11	39 (5.8 %)	418 (61.8 %)	676
EC 12-14	38 (6.3 %)	267 (44.4 %)	601
EC 15-17	6 (4.4 %)	57 (41.9 %)	136
Senior Officials	1 (3.2 %)	15 (48.4 %)	31
Totals	95 (6.0 %)	887 (55.5 %)	1597

Source: Government of Nova Scotia SAP -Human Resources Database System

management roles, expressed as Levels 6-17 in the Excluded Compensation (EC) plan. The EC is a classification and pay plan for provincial government managers and administrative support staff who are not represented through collective agreements.

In 1993, the date of the first

workforce survey in the Nova Scotia civil service, women occupied 30 percent of management positions. Today, over 50 per cent of management positions are held by women.

In order to continue improvements in the area of career advancement, the public service will

do more to engage other designated group members to help identify the barriers they are facing in their career development needs, interests and opportunities. Work has already begun in assigning a National Occupational Classification (NOC)¹ code to all civil service positions to ensure more accurate comparisons and reports with other jurisdictions.

4.2 Diversity Employment Programs

Diversity Accommodation Fund

The Employment Equity Policy provides a directive that states: “Departments shall provide reasonable accommodation to applicants, candidates and employees.” Accommodation is an individualized process by which the employer removes barriers in the recruitment and selection process, as well as in the workplace.

The Diversity Accommodation Fund helps the public service attract and retain employees

with disabilities by ensuring workplace-related barriers are removed. Accommodations can include technical aids and devices, ergonomic assessments, interpreter services and minor workplace modifications or modified work hours.

In 2010-11, the Diversity Accommodation Fund provided support for accommodation in several departments and offices. The Fund supported 38 accommodations needs for approximately \$19,000 in the 2010-11 fiscal year.

Diversity Talent Pool

The main goal of the Diversity Talent Pool is to help increase public service representation of the province’s four designated groups: Aboriginal persons, African Nova Scotians and other racially visible persons, persons with disabilities, and women in under-represented or non-traditional positions.

The pool has more than 200 resumes from pre-screened, skilled applicants, whose qualifications range

¹ The National Occupational Classification (NOC) is the nationally accepted reference on occupations in Canada. It organizes over 30,000 job titles into 520 occupational group descriptions.

from high school diplomas to master's degrees and PhD's. It provides easy access to applicants, is a quick way to fill casual needs, helps to diversify the workforce, and allows individuals to gain work experience within the provincial government. In the 2010-2011 year, 15 people referred from the pool successfully competed for positions in various government departments.

The Public Service Commission has also been promoting the talent pool in Nova Scotian communities by making presentations to at least 10 organizations every year that serve the designated groups and other community members.

Summer Diversity Program

The Summer Diversity Program offers summer employment to qualified students in their chosen fields of study. This program is designed for Aboriginal students, students with disabilities, and African Nova Scotians and other racially visible students who attend university, community college or a post-secondary trade school. Students participating in this program gain valuable experience in order to

compete for permanent positions.

For the summer of 2010, the Public Service Commission funded nine positions in nine departments.

These included:

Department	Position
Health	Junior Financial Analyst
Natural Resources	Wildlife Ecologist Assistant
Office of the Ombudsman	Junior Ombudsman Representative
Labour and Workforce Development	Policy Analysts (2 positions)
Fisheries and Aquaculture	Aquaculture Outreach Biologist
Nova Scotia Environment	Nova Scotia Youth and Conservation Corps. Summer Support Staff
Community Services	Business Analyst
Communications Nova Scotia	Communications Intern

Summer Female Mentorship Program

The Summer Female Mentorship Program provides opportunities for women enrolled in post-secondary education, who are pursuing careers in non-traditional occupations to gain relevant career experience. The program provides the opportunity for participants to work with a female management employee in their chosen field. This program places full-time female university and

community college or trade school students in fields related to their education where women are under-represented.

In the summer of 2010, the Public Service Commission funded 10 positions under this program. The following positions were funded:

Department	Position
Energy	Petroleum Geoscience Assistant
Nova Scotia Environment	Water Resources Intern Environmental Assessment/GIS Intern
Natural Resources	Environmental Education Assistant Extension Forester Assistant
Justice	Forensic Technician
Fisheries and Aquaculture	Fisheries Science Officer
Nova Scotia Agricultural College	Environmental Field Research Assistant Aquatic Science/Aquaculture Technical Assistant
Art Gallery of Nova Scotia	Museum Technician

Diversity Selection Panel Pool

The Employment Equity Policy has a directive regarding the make-up of Selection Panels when a candidate has identified as a member of a designated group. The Policy Directive states:

“Departments should make every effort to have a member of a designated group on Selection Panels when a candidate has identified as a member of a designated group.”

The Public Service Commission has established a Diversity Selection Panel Pool to support this directive and to ensure that fairness, objectivity and diverse perspectives are an integral component of the selection process.

The Pool provides a resource to Hiring Managers to establish representative competition panels and gives members of the designated groups hands-on experience on recruitment and selection. There are currently about 71 public servants from the designated groups who have been trained and available to support diverse selection panels.

5. Conclusion The Government of Nova Scotia aims to become a diverse workforce that is representative of the public we serve. While we continue to make progress, there is still more to be done. We are proud of our accomplishments to date and look forward to further embracing diversity and creating a welcoming, supportive workplace.



diversity