

NATIONAL CAPITAL COMMISSION

2003 Report on Employment Equity

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I. GENERAL OVERVIEW

This is the National Capital Commission's annual report as required under the *Employment Equity Act*. This report outlines our quantitative information as well as our qualitative measures covering the 2003 calendar year.

As a Crown corporation, the NCC is subject to the control and accountability regime set out in *Part X* of the federal *Financial Administration Act*. Crown corporation status allows the NCC to operate at arm's length from the federal government and gives it the independence it needs to apply an objective and impartial process of land use and design approvals to ensure that proposals are appropriate to the region's significance and heritage. A Commission (board of directors) governs the NCC and reports to Parliament through the Minister of Canadian Heritage.

In 1958, Parliament created the NCC as the successor to the Ottawa Improvement Commission (1899) and the Federal District Commission (1927) and authorized it to create a capital that would be worthy of Canada. The mission of the National Capital Commission is to create pride and unity through Canada's Capital Region (CCR). Parliament recognized the potential of Canada's Capital Region, when it gave the Commission the power not only to create a beautiful capital, but also to bring it to life with programs that would support the evolution of Canadian nationhood. The NCC is the only Crown corporation mandated to plan, build and use the Capital Region as a meaningful source of pride for Canadians. It does this through the building and maintenance of public spaces, but also through the production and coordination of nationally-significant programming.

The NCC strives to position itself in the Canadian workforce as an employer of choice. Being a small organization, the NCC employs a broad range of specialized and highly-skilled employees (for example, land-use planners, architects, biologists and recreologists). The present challenges continue to be retaining, developing and inspiring employees, along with increasing the rates of representation of designated group members.

II. QUANTITATIVE INFORMATION

The statistical profile of the National Capital Commission in 2003 indicated a total workforce of 505 employees; the representation of permanent full-time employees was 73% (371), and that of permanent part-time employees was 3% (13). The representation of temporary employees at 19% (95) is reflected on the date that this part of the workforce attained its peak.

Of the total number of temporary employees in 2003, 62% were women, 2.2% were Aboriginal peoples, 5.8% were persons with disabilities, and 8.0% were members of visible minorities. If the number of permanent and temporary employees were added together, our representation of all the designated groups would be higher.

In addition, of the 168 students employed at the Commission in fiscal year 2003-2004 (this represents an increase in size of the existing workforce of about one-third), eight (8) were Aboriginal peoples, four (4) were persons with disabilities and eleven (11) were members of visible minorities. This represents just under 14% of our total number of students hired from the designated groups.

WOMEN

In 2003, a little less than half the NCC workforce comprising permanent employees consisted of women (48%). Women made up 33% of all senior, middle and other management positions. As well, women represented 71% of all new permanent employees hired, while they also represented 55% of permanent employees terminated. Finally, 86% of all promotions among permanent employees were given to women in 2003.

ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

Aboriginal peoples made up 1.6% of the NCC workforce comprising permanent employees. This compares to the external availability rate of 1.1% for the Ottawa-Hull area and to the national availability rate of 2.1%. They were represented in four of the 14 occupational groups; two-thirds found themselves in the administrative and senior clerical personnel and clerical personnel groups.

PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

In 2003, the rate of representation of persons with disabilities increased from 2.1% of the NCC workforce comprising permanent employees to 4.9%. This compares to the external availability rate of 7.4% for the Ottawa-Hull area and to the national availability rate of 6.5%. The increase in representation is in large part due to the self-identification survey of the organization which was conducted in May 2003, along with a greater awareness and understanding of disabilities.

MEMBERS OF VISIBLE MINORITIES

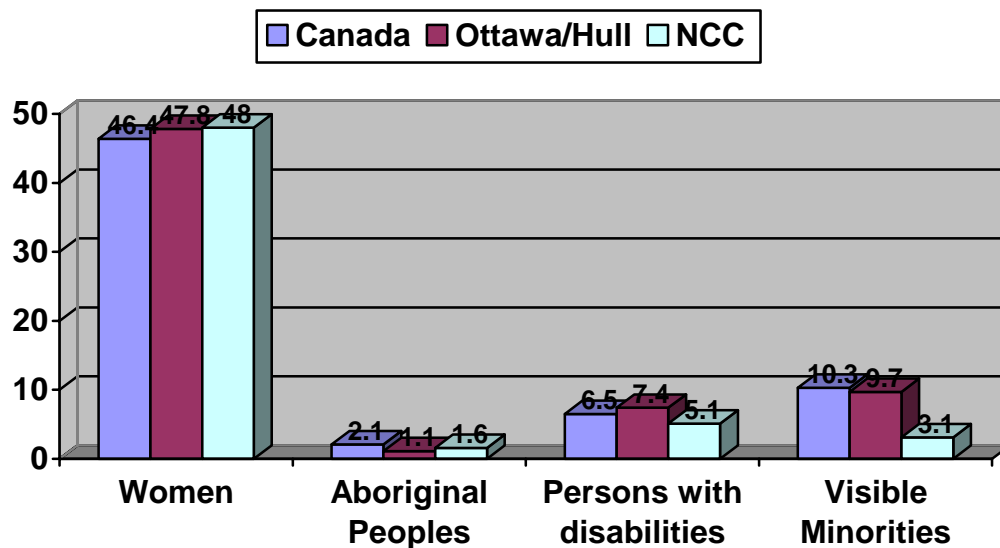
Despite some targeted recruitment efforts, more work remains to be done to improve the rate of representation of members of visible minorities. In 2003, members of visible

minorities represented 3.1% of the NCC workforce comprising permanent employees (which is an improvement over 2.4% in 2002). This compares to the external availability rate of 9.7% for the Ottawa-Hull area and to the national availability rate of 10.3%. Almost two-thirds of these employees were found in the professionals occupational group.

OVERALL REPRESENTATION

The Commission's total workforce was found in 13 of 14 occupational groups. The highest percentages were found in the areas of administrative and senior clerical personnel and professionals followed by the clerical personnel. The comparison of current representation in the Commission with 1996 Ottawa-Hull workforce availability information indicates that a significant representation gap continues to exist for members of visible minorities, while the representation of persons with disabilities has improved significantly, and Aboriginal peoples find themselves to be adequately represented.

The chart below represents the levels of representation of the designated group members as a percentage of the permanent workforce at the NCC (as at December 31, 2003) along with their workforce availability in Canada and in the Ottawa/Hull area.¹



¹ Source: 1996 workforce availability data

III. QUALITATIVE MEASURES

The National Capital Commission positions itself as a values-driven employer of choice. Embedded in its *Integrated management framework of our human resources* are a series of guiding principles which support its vision and its values, including that of providing a diversified, open, innovative, safe and harassment-free workplace.

Several noteworthy initiatives occurred during 2003 (and at the beginning of 2004), and are explained in further detail in the paragraphs that follow. A diversity committee has been created in an effort to assist the NCC in being more diversified, more inclusive and reflective of the Canadian population it serves. This initiative is also linked to the Cultural Diversity Alliance of the Canadian Heritage Portfolio announced in June 2003 and to the Portfolio's Employment Equity and Diversity Sub-Committee created in November 2003 that the NCC leads. As a Portfolio, we are hoping to build on the best practices and successes of one another and to strengthen our ability to respond to our legal obligations and social responsibility in the areas of employment equity and diversity.

Conducive Environment

Corporate values

The National Capital Commission and its employees are proud to enrich Canadian society. We realize our national mandate with dignity, integrity and passion. We embrace a spirit of open communication, cooperation and teamwork to foster a common vision, while professing and putting into practice the values of *respect, well-being* and *commitment*.

- Respect
 - We demonstrate respect in all our relationships based on mutual trust, strong ethical behaviour and through honesty, support and communication. *We value and respect the diversity of our workforce by embracing tolerance and acceptance, and by promoting and recognizing individual and group achievement, expertise and contributions.*
- Well-being
 - We recognize that the well-being of the individual is paramount to the success and the effectiveness of the organization as a whole. We promote well-being by encouraging a balance between our personal and professional lives. We foster an environment of flexibility, mutual understanding, fair and reasonable expectations, empowerment and growth. We promote a safe, healthy and secure workplace, motivating productivity, fulfilment and a stable workforce.
- Commitment
 - We demonstrate commitment to our mandate through accountability as builders, guardians and interpreters of Canada's Capital Region. We encourage and recognize creativity, initiative, resourcefulness and continuous learning. We strive for excellence and apply the principles of effective leadership, teamwork and open communication.

Integrated Human Resources Management Framework

In 2003, the need for an Integrated Human Resources Management Framework emerged from issues about recruitment, workload, succession, corporate memory and values. The Public Service wide Human Resources Management Modernization exercise lead by Treasury Board was another indication that the time had come for the NCC to think of its own HR Management Framework.

The framework is based on these three main elements of HR management: the organization, the employees and the managers.

Included as guiding principles for the element *The NCC, a values-driven employer of choice* are:

- To provide a diversified, open and innovative workplace
 - The importance of open, transparent, and timely communication is recognized
 - Human resources programs complement and reinforce each other
- To provide a healthy, safe and harassment-free work environment
 - Harassment and discrimination are not tolerated

Included as guiding principles for the element *Attracting and maintaining a competent, informed, committed and sustainable workforce* are:

- To recruit, through a competitive process, qualified candidates who meet the organizational needs and objectives of a competent and representative workforce
 - Attract competent people, possessing leadership qualities and who are representative of the population they serve, open to knowledge sharing and continuous learning
 - Competitions are announced to employees and draw on recruitment pools to enable the organization to meet its representativity criteria

Awareness campaign

An ongoing awareness campaign of matters regarding employment equity and diversity takes place through the course of the year (some in collaboration with the Senate of Canada), including e-mails and information kiosks. These awareness events related to Black History Month (February), International Women's Day (March 8), International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (March 21), Aboriginal Awareness Week (May 21-24), Canadian Multiculturalism Day (June 27), Women's History Month (October), and National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women (December 6).

Accommodation

We continue to provide accommodation to employees such as modified work to injured workers and to allow employees to work at home after surgery. Work schedules are also adjusted to provide variable start times where circumstances warrant, and modified work weeks are provided whenever feasible.

Ergonomic assessments of individual workspaces are provided on a priority basis to employees with medical certificates and to others upon request. Employees with disabilities who require that measures be implemented and appropriate adjustments be made in order to accommodate their needs are given immediate attention. During 2003-2004, a total of 94 ergonomic assessments were conducted.

Universal access

An internal committee comprised of several employees meets regularly to ensure that the issue of universal access is discussed and addressed within an organizational context.

Universal access is taken into consideration at NCC sites, and is part of any retrofit and/or renovation plans to existing buildings.

Sensitivity training is available to make all employees aware of the issue of universal access. In this regard, the fourth annual universal accessibility awareness activity was organized as part of Employee Recognition Day in June 2003. The activity was in the form of a relay race, and the participating teams competed against each other in a series of stages, each stage representing a different disability.

The event was well received by employees in attendance, and it served to increase people's awareness of the challenges that persons with physical disabilities face in their daily lives.

Policies and Programs

Employment Equity

The purpose of our employment equity policy is to establish a human resources management framework that ensures employment equity for women, Aboriginal peoples, persons with disabilities and members of visible minority groups.

This is supported by the following:

- No person shall be denied employment opportunities or benefits for reasons unrelated to ability.
- we shall make reasonable accommodations to ensure that persons in designated groups achieve a degree of representation in each occupational group in the employer's workforce.
- we shall implement employment equity and diversity in a unified and coordinated manner in accordance with the approved Employment Equity Plan.
- we shall endeavour to provide quality service to all Canadians by establishing a workforce of qualified employees that reflects the diversity of Canadian society.

Universal Access

Our policy on universal accessibility establishes a responsibility framework which governs the Commission's activities concerning universal access for the public and NCC employees.

Recruitment

The NCC posts its external competitions through a variety of networks, including its own website, the Public Service website and a number of designated groups organizations.

In an effort to further make known its commitment to the principles of employment equity and to encourage candidates from the designated groups to apply, the NCC bolstered its statement on all employment opportunity posters to read as follows:

The National Capital Commission is committed to the principles of Employment Equity and to achieving a workforce which is representative of the diversity of the Canadian population. We strongly encourage candidates to self-identify if they are an Aboriginal person, a member of a visible minority group or a person with a disability.

Student employment program

The NCC is committed to augmenting the number of students hired from the employment equity designated groups, as this not only serves to increase employees' awareness of employment equity, but it also offers the opportunity for the NCC to bridge qualified students from the designated groups into permanent and term positions upon completion of their studies. The Federal Student Work Experience Program is beneficial in assisting managers at the NCC to recruit students from the designated groups. This initiative is in keeping with the numerical target (15%) which was established to increase the rate of representation of students from the designated groups.

General orientation program

There is an ongoing commitment to incorporate equity and diversity issues into human resources management. A General Orientation Program directed to new employees is offered on a monthly basis, and includes information on employment equity. Furthermore, as part of the General Orientation Program, information workshops are offered to all employees on a weekly basis. This included a specific session on employment equity and diversity in 2003.

Partnerships

Canadian Heritage Portfolio

The NCC Executive Director, Human Resources participates actively with other Human Resources senior managers within the Canadian Heritage portfolio of federal employers at finding means of collaborating more closely in developing and implementing numerous human resources programs and activities including employment equity initiatives. In addition, the Employment Equity Coordinator seeks out opportunities on a continual basis to participate in employment equity initiatives within the Canadian Heritage portfolio.

Cultural Diversity Alliance

The Cultural Diversity Alliance, whose representatives are senior officials of organizations that are part of the Canadian Heritage portfolio, have agreed to develop common initiatives and share expertise, resources and models of good practice, to ensure that we respond to Canada's increasingly diverse society. Building on our

commitment, we work together with the goal of achieving full inclusion in our workforce, and in our programs and services.

Employment Equity and Diversity Subgroup

The mandate of this working-level committee, which was created in November 2003 and which NCC chairs, brings together members of the Canadian Heritage portfolio to:

Work together, as members of the Canadian Heritage portfolio to share expertise, resources and experiences, with particular emphasis being placed on identifying key priority issues and developing solutions, the goal being to value diversity and achieve full inclusion in our organization.

Thus far, the Subgroup has met three times (November 2003, January 2004 and March 2004) with the next meeting scheduled for June 2004. This forum is proving to be a fertile ground for brain-storming ideas for initiatives and for sharing best practices.

National Council of Visible Minorities

In April 2004, the NCC Employment Equity Coordinator, along with a co-worker, attended the National Council of Visible Minorities (NCVM) 2-day conference in Ottawa. Events such as this one are beneficial in obtaining good ideas for increasing the level of representation of visible minorities in our organization and for increasing awareness of the issues facing members of this group.

Interdepartmental Forum on Employment Equity

The NCC Employment Equity Coordinator attends the Interdepartmental Forum on Employment Equity (IDFEE) on a regular basis in an effort to keep abreast of developments within employment equity in the federal arena as well as to benefit from the dialogue which includes the sharing of best practices and ideas from other federal employers.

Specific Initiatives

Self-identification survey

In May 2003, the NCC conducted an organization-wide self-identification survey. Thanks to the efforts and collaboration of the employer and of the employee representatives, the overall rate of participation in the survey reached 87%, and the results revealed a significant increase in the number of employees who self-identified as persons with disabilities.

Employment equity plan

The NCC Employment Equity 3-year Plan contains actions to foster employment equity, as well as diversity initiatives, linked to the Corporate Planning Process which incorporates a Human Resources Management Component that makes equity issues a priority. The plan is designed to deliver reasonable progress toward employment equity.

In 2003, work began on reviewing and updating our 3-year plan.

Diversity Committee

In January 2004, the NCC created a Diversity Committee composed of about 10 members. The committee includes a member of Executive Management Committee who serves as Diversity Champion, and who is also our representative on the Cultural Diversity Alliance, an initiative of the agencies within the Canadian Heritage portfolio. Other members of our Committee include the employment equity coordinator, a union representative, and designated group members.

The Diversity Committee's mandate is:

- provide advice to Executive Management Committee and Human Resources Branch of NCC on the implementation of the *Employment Equity Act*;
- serve as a forum for discussion on employment equity and diversity, both in employment and in programming;
- participate as a consultative body for various organizational initiatives by providing employment equity and diversity perspectives (for example programming, interpretation, marketing, etc);
- organize and participate in training and awareness activities related to employment equity and diversity;
- update and review 3-year employment equity action plan, implement initiatives and monitor it on a continual basis.

The Diversity Committee meets on a bi-monthly basis and minutes of the meetings are posted on the Intranet.

IV. CONSULTATION

The NCC consults with its employee representatives on matters related to employment equity by way of its Labour-Management Consultation Committee (LMCC). Efforts are also underway to consult and to collaborate with employees in the implementation and revision of the NCC Employment Equity Plan by way of a working group made up of several members of the newly-formed Diversity Committee.

Employee self-identification

Consultations took place with employee representatives in December 2002 and in February 2003 in an effort to organize and conduct our organization-wide employee self-identification survey. Consultations revolved around the revision to the self-identification form along with the communication and promotion tools accompanying the survey.

V. FUTURE STRATEGIES

The National Capital Commission recognizes that work remains to be done in continuing to develop and implement strategies which have been identified in the past, and strives to continually renew its efforts in achieving reasonable progress in employment equity. The creation of its Diversity Committee is an important initiative and should serve to move the employment equity file forward in our organization. The following are initiatives which we intend to consider in our revised and updated 3-year plan:

- Instruct people involved in staffing process to ask candidates if there are any accommodation requirements necessary at the time of scheduling interviews.
- Explore the possibility of having designated group members participate on selection committees on a regular basis.
- Implement mechanisms to track and monitor performance data in the recruitment and staffing processes for candidates as well as designated group members. This includes tracking the numbers of designated group applicants (both successful and non-successful) hires from inside, outside, term and permanent, as well as acting appointments and developmental activities.
- Ensure that the outreach mechanisms and networks are in place and are known to all.
- Monitor the use of advertising and determine which types of recruitment and staffing methods are the most successful for which designated groups and utilize them as frequently as possible.
- Review and promote the use of the Student Employment Program as a means of attracting, recruiting and retaining highly qualified designated group members.
- Raise awareness of managers and supervisors with respect to workload expectations and stress to ensure that workload doesn't become a systemic barrier.
- In the context of its General Orientation Program, continue to deliver a series of employment equity and diversity information sessions to all managers and employees. Explore the possibility of developing partnerships with other federal employers to increase the frequency of the sessions in an effort to give a greater number of employees the opportunity to participate.
- Integrate accountability for employment equity into performance review process for all managers.

- Develop and implement communications tools to ensure that employees are made aware of available resources and support within HR and the NCC in general, and articles via e-mails, on topics of interest, urgency or importance such as harassment, dealing with specific disability issues, etc.

Suzanne Gustafsson
Executive Director
Human Resources Branch
May 2004