



Treasury Board of Canada  
Secrétariat

Secrétariat du Conseil du Trésor  
du Canada

Canada

# Employment Systems Review

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## **Executive Summary**

The Treasury Board Secretariat is charged with the responsibility of assisting the Government of Canada to manage its resources in a manner consistent with the government's goals and priorities. The organization is undergoing organizational renewal brought on by the infusion of new recruits, a changing and modernized comptrollership model, and a revised strategy and vision. These changes include a new approach to the provision of services to client organizations, and a revamped focus on human resources management that strives to promote a workplace that provides for the development of its employees.

Given the Treasury Board Secretariat's responsibility to the employer of the Public Service, and given its commitment to provide direction and leadership with respect to personnel management, the organization wishes to implement the best practices available for the achievement of Employment Equity goals.

This employment systems review that is required by the Employment Equity Act and Regulations will contribute to improving the quality of personnel management within the Treasury Board Secretariat by highlighting perceptions, policies, and practices whose alteration will provide for a more equitable workplace.

The ultimate goal of this exercise is to allow the Secretariat to develop strategies to remove barriers to the hiring, retention, and career development of members of visible minority groups, people with disabilities, women, and Aboriginal peoples. The review of available statistics identifies if and where these designated groups are underrepresented throughout the occupational categories. Employment policies, practices and systems were analyzed through review of human resources documentation and data received in focus groups and interviews. These reveal some of the formal and informal barriers to the participation of designated groups found within the systems that are responsible for recruiting, retaining, and developing employees and managers alike.

## **Highlights of Quantitative Findings**

The representation rate for women in TBS is higher than the workforce availability. Women are well represented at all levels including the EX levels, and get more than their share of most staffing actions. Only in the PE group are women somewhat compressed in the lower levels. With respect to training, women are well represented in all types of activities, except conferences and retreats.

The representation rate for members of visible minority groups is much lower than workforce availability. Members of visible minority groups are promoted at a higher rate than their representation within TBS, but receive less than their share of acting assignments of more than 3 months. They are recruited at levels below their workforce availability, and are represented only at the first level of the Executive Category.

Aboriginal peoples are represented within TBS at a rate lower than their external availability. While Aboriginal peoples participate in staffing actions, promotions and recruitment at rates above their representation within the Secretariat, they are assigned out of the department at five times their representation rates. Aboriginal peoples receive training at rates equal to their representation, and do not seem to be compressed at lower levels.

The representation rate for persons with disabilities within the Secretariat is above workforce availability. They have a higher rate of promotions and staffing assignments than their representation within TBS, but receive a lower share of management training than their representation would warrant.

## **Highlights of Qualitative Findings**

These qualitative findings were discovered through consultation with employees and managers in a number of focus groups, one-on-one interviews, and through review of human resources documentation.

The qualitative review of the employment systems of the Treasury Board Secretariat reveals that, while many of its policies and practices support the achievement of employment equity goals, there are systemic and attitudinal barriers in place that could have an adverse impact on attracting, hiring, and retaining members of the designated groups within the organization.

Examples of systemic barriers within the Secretariat include unequal access to developmental/ acting assignments, selection processes that do not focus on particular accommodation needs, and the lack of designated group representation on selection committees or recruitment drives. Other examples that can impede the retention and development of designated group members include the policy that performance appraisals be initiated by employees and not be documented, the expectation of extensive overtime work, a lack of awareness and knowledge about designated group members, and the absence of role models.

## **General Recommendations**

The following provide some examples of key corrective measures recommended. The ESR Report highlights recommendations for each employment system (for itemized recommendations consult Section 10, Summary of Recommendations).

Corrective measures are recommended to remove the systemic barriers in various components of the employment systems. For example:

- outreach recruitment techniques that actively target designated group members;
- early documentation of job expectations, and the required completion of performance appraisals; and
- physical demands analysis.

Corrective measures are recommended to address attitudinal barriers to the full participation of designated group members such as:

- workshops and training sessions that familiarize and sensitize participants to the abilities, availability, and cultural differences of members of the designated groups; and
- management accountability for human resources management generally, and for their responsibilities under the Employment Equity Act.

## **Next Steps**

Once approved by relevant stakeholders, the Employment Systems Review Report will be made available to all staff. An action plan will be developed to set some priorities and timetables for the implementation of recommendations: this action plan will become an integral part of the Employment Equity Planning Cycle for the Treasury Board Secretariat and a building block toward making Employment Equity a reality.