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Gouvernement du Canada
Ministère des Communications

ANNUAL REPORT - (1981 - 82)

CONCERNING IMPROVEMENTS IN [EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR PERSONS WITH PHYSICAL OR MENTAL HANDICAPS

Submitted to the
Treasury Board Secretariat
March 31, 1982

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The Department of Communications' Proposed Commitment
to Improvements in Employment Opportunities
for Persons with Physical or Mental Handicaps

Since June 1979, the Department of Communications (DOC) has outlined a series of commitments designed to improve employment opportunities for the handicapped. The number of handicapped persons hired and the special services offered by the department have increased substantially during this period. From year to year, specific and priority measures are easier to pinpoint.

Accomplishments 1981

The identification of handicapped personnel is a delicate issue. Up to now, we have made limited progress in establishing an inventory. Informally, the department knows that handicapped persons have been hired. To date, 30 employees have been unofficially identified.

1. Three deaf employees from our department and one from the Solicitor General's office enrolled in special language courses which were developed on their behalf. This initiative has proven to be a success, the Department of Communications welcomes other departments to make use of these courses.

2. Our regional office in Winnipeg had intended to offer computer training to blind students but, unfortunately, at the time that the course was to begin, a reorganization of the department precluded the staffing of CSI positions in the regions. One student was transferred to a term position in Ottawa where his work has been most satisfactory. When an indeterminate position becomes available, this employee will be referred for consideration. Also, under the COOP program, a blind student has been hired for his first assignment (engineering). Special living accommodations were supplied by the department's staff.
3. A person confined to a wheelchair was hired as an EL trainee in Winnipeg. This employee took part in an EL competition and was offered a promotion in another department. Nevertheless, the department feels that the training and development was beneficial to the employee and it plans to continue offering development positions to interested employees.
4. Special attention was given to the hiring of the handicapped but since the term positions available during 1981-82 required highly technical skills, progress was not as satisfactory as expected.
5. Officials from placement agencies have met with representatives from the Human Resources Section, thereby acquiring an overall view of our department which will enable them to refer qualified applicants who best suit our needs.
6. At the Halifax office, the department awarded a telephone operator's contract to a privately owned company which intends to hire handicapped employees. This contract will be concluded in April 1982.

Additional Results

1. We have made use of the Career-Oriented Summer Employment Program to hire a mentally handicapped person to work on computer terminals. As her performance has been most satisfactory, the program will be expanded to include employment opportunities for four handicapped persons during 1982-83. The department is considering the possibility of hiring some of these employees on a permanent basis in the upcoming year.
2. Recommendations to modify the entrance of the Journal Tower South and the layout of its washroom to permit accessibility to the handicapped have been submitted to Public Works Canada for implementation. Parking space in close proximity to the building has been reserved for a handicapped individual. As other handicapped people with similar needs are hired by the department, additional reserved parking space will be acquired without the initial complications.

Under the Building Retrofit Program, all studies have been completed and their results reported to Public Works Canada. Also, physical barrier areas have been identified in order that the appropriate modifications may be made to accomodate future handicapped employees.

3. For the use of the deaf and hard of hearing, Visual Ear devices have been installed in each of the regional offices and four terminals are accessible in the National Capital Region including one in the Minister's office. This will permit these employees to have greater access to communication channels.

ACTION PLANS 1982-83

Many action plans have been proposed for the upcoming year. Some of them were in their introductory stage at the beginning of 1982.

1. To review the departmental policy statement in accordance with the policies of the Treasury Board Secretariat.
 - rewrite departmental policy
 - obtain approval of policy
 - distribute policy to directors general, directors and employees

2. To reinforce the position of the Departmental Committee on the Handicapped.
 - set direction of Committee and involve interested employees in the program
 - monitor progress of program on a monthly basis

3. To provide information to employees of the department.
 - write and submit articles for their inclusion in the department's publication "Modulation".
 - design and display posters throughout DOC buildings to make employees aware of the problems faced by the handicapped.

4. To identify jobs which can be carried out by mentally handicapped people.

- contact and gather information from outside agencies engaged in rehabilitating handicapped people
- continue to identify jobs and to take the necessary staffing actions when positions become vacant
- monitor and document staffing action taken during the fiscal year.

5. To identify better means of creating an inventory of the handicapped population which will describe their work history, career plans and training requirements.

- develop procedures and disseminate information to personnel officers.

6. To identify needs for special equipment.

- examine requests for special equipment
- review suitability of current equipment (i.e. Visual Ear)

7. To provide awareness sessions to managers and staffing officers at Headquarters and in the regional offices across Canada.

- request assistance from PSC representatives
- identify managers and employees who should attend these sessions
- schedule and hold sessions.

8. To participate in the Homebound Handicapped Program (already in progress).

- make managers aware of this program
- provide help in identifying duties.

