

**APPENDIX 1**

**Effectively Managing the Recruitment  
of Non-Union Employees  
in the Toronto Public Service**

**June 19, 2009**



**Auditor General's Office**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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***Objectives of the recruitment process***

A key objective of the City’s recruitment process for non-union employees is to attract the largest possible pool of qualified candidates who are representative of the City’s communities. Another objective is to ensure that vacant positions are filled in a timely, fair, and transparent manner.

The effective management of the recruitment process aims to achieve these objectives through adequate corporate policies and procedures. Any lack of compliance with corporate policies and procedures presents a risk of not achieving the City’s objectives, hiring the wrong person or in certain circumstances may result in litigation.

***Management actions to improve accountability in the hiring process***

Since 2005 the City has taken several steps to enhance accountability for the hiring process. They include:

- completing a study by the City Manager entitled “Hiring Practices Customer Service & Compliance: Striking the Balance”, which provided a number of recommendations for improving the hiring process
- producing a Non-Union Guide to support divisional managers with hiring
- implementing a hiring file documentation checklist
- initiating quality assurance reviews on a sample of hiring files.

***Shared responsibility for employee recruitment***

Responsibility and accountability for the efficiency and effectiveness of City employee hiring decisions is shared between the operational division doing the hiring and the Human Resources Division.

***Hiring Division accountable for final decision***

City operational divisions are accountable for complying with Corporate hiring standards and for final hiring decisions. The Human Resources Division is responsible for setting Corporate standards, monitoring to ensure consistent application of hiring practices and archiving Corporate hiring records. The Division also provides guidance and advice to operational divisions on hiring policies and procedures.

## **Major Findings**

### **(1) The need to fully address recommendations made by Madame Justice Bellamy**

The Bellamy Report relating to the Toronto Computer Leasing Inquiry and the Toronto External Contracts Inquiry made two specific recommendations related to the hiring process at the City. These recommendations were as follows:

*“The City’s hiring process should include appropriate questions designed to elicit some perspective on the ethics of applicants. Applicants’ responses to the ethics questions should then be considered prominently in hiring decisions.*

*New City employees should receive immediate training on the ethical dimensions of their particular work.”*

Based on our review neither of these recommendations have been fully implemented. We could not locate specific evidence that appropriate questions “designed to elicit some perspective in the ethics of applicants” were consistently incorporated into the hiring process. In addition, while ethics training has been provided to certain senior level staff, specific ethics training for new hires is not being done.

### **(2) The need to address recommendations contained in the “People Plan”**

The Toronto Public Service People Plan and Learning Strategy was approved by the Employee and Labour Relations Committee in July 2008 and received for information by Council in September 2008. The Plan outlines strategic human resource planning and management in the City.

The People Plan in general has five goals and, in the context of this audit report, the goal most relevant to the recruitment activities of the Human Resources Division is:

*“we will attract and retain a skilled, high performing and diverse workforce.”*

Further, the City's Employment Equity Policy states that:

*"Citizens of Toronto are best served by a public service which reflects the diversity of the community which it serves. This is achieved through employment equity programs that remove barriers and monitor outcomes rather than by establishing requirements to precisely reflect the percentage of designated groups in the community."*

Finally, the City's Hiring Guide states:

*"external recruitment efforts will include outreach to access diverse applicant pools".*

***Implementation of certain recommendations from Audit of City Performance in Achieving Access, Equity and Human Rights Goals will provide the means to measure City progress toward realizing a more diverse workplace***

The Auditor General's 2008 report on Achieving Access, Equity and Human Rights contains recommendations related to developing, measuring and managing City progress toward a more diverse workplace. Specifically, one of the recommendations states:

*"The Executive Director of the Human Resources Division take steps to develop a proactive employment equity plan. Such a plan should include but not be limited to:*

- (a) Establishing corporate objectives for equitable representation of diverse groups*
- (b) Providing measures to remove barriers in achieving employment equity; and*
- (c) Including mechanisms for measuring and monitoring progress."*

Management's response to the Auditor General's recommendation in part indicated "implementation of the People Plan is underway which will effectively address recommendations provided herein."

During the course of this review, we were not able to identify any significant progress towards the attainment of the goal outlined in the People Plan. Having said that, the People Plan was only formally established in September 2008. However, we were not able to identify any means of community outreach “to access diverse applicant pools” in regard to those files we reviewed. Based on our discussions with management in relation to these files, there was a general acknowledgement that additional outreach activities were needed. We do however, acknowledge that a number of general outreach activities have in fact occurred.

It is worthwhile noting that one of the most progressive employers in Canada in relation to employment equity and diversity outreach and hiring has been the Toronto Police Service. The Service has won a number of awards for its efforts. The Toronto Police Service has an excellent reputation in this regard and the City would do well to consult with the Toronto Police Service with a view to emulating those best practices followed by the Service.

### **Other Recommendations**

Other recommendations included in this report pertain to the following areas:

- the need to evaluate the feasibility of developing a City-wide hiring policy
- the need to ensure conflict of interest issues throughout the hiring process are declared and documented
- the need to ensure documentation supporting hiring decisions is complete
- the need to ensure City policies are followed in areas such as reference checks, employment offers and probationary periods.

Although the union employee hiring process was outside the scope of this audit, it should be noted that it is likely that there may be similar opportunities to improve the hiring process in relation to hiring union employees. Consequently, the recommendations contained in this report should, where appropriate, be reviewed by management for their applicability to the hiring of union positions.

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## BACKGROUND

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***Human Resources Division reports to the City Manager***

The Human Resources Division is one of five divisions reporting directly to the City Manager. In February 2007, the Human Resources Division was restructured into the following six sections:

- Staffing, Compensation and Employment Equity
- Employee and Labour Relations
- Human Resources Standards and Decision Support
- Occupational Health and Safety
- Organization Development and Learning
- Strategic Human Resource Services

***Responsibilities of Staffing, Compensation and Employment Equity are varied***

The Staffing, Compensation and Employment Equity section leads, supports and guides the development, execution and management of the City of Toronto's staffing, employment equity, compensation and job evaluation strategies. The Section is responsible for:

- Overseeing all aspects of the hiring process including outreach, recruitment and selection
- The development of staffing related policies, programs and guidelines that meet legislative and collective agreement requirements and reflect the City's commitment to employment equity principles
- The development and administration of workforce transition policies and programs
- The development and administration of Toronto Public Service policies and programs for compensation, job evaluation, salary administration, pay equity, policy development, job design and job descriptions.

***Staffing, Compensation and Employment Equity Division consists of 75 staff***

There are approximately 75 staff members working with City divisions providing advice and support related to recruitment, selection and hiring decisions.

***\$7 million for Staffing, Compensation and Employment Equity section***

The approved 2008 Human Resources Division budget was \$28 million. The costs associated with the hiring function were approximately \$7 million or 25 per cent of the Division's 2008 approved budget.

In 2008, the City processed 1,135 staffing requisitions and hired 3,877 new employees. In addition, the City recalled or re-hired 2,076 employees who were previously temporary or part-time employees. Of the 3,877 new employees, 292 were for non-union positions.

***Various initiatives taken to improve hiring process***

Over the past number of years in order to improve the effectiveness of the hiring process, various initiatives have been introduced. These initiatives have included the following:

- In November 2005, the City Manager completed an internal review entitled "Hiring Practices - Customer Service & Compliance: Striking the Balance." This review contained a significant number of recommendations. While certain recommendations in the report have been addressed others are still in the process of being implemented.
- In March 2006, the Human Resources Division released a Hiring Guide and a Hiring File Documentation Checklist. The purpose of the Guide and the Checklist were to ensure that the hiring process at the City is conducted fairly and consistently.
- In October 2008, the Human Resources Division released a Non-Union Staffing Guide. The objectives set out in this Guide were to:
  - ensure vacant positions are filled in a timely, fair and transparent manner
  - minimize the need for employees to apply and be assessed for numerous postings
  - generate the largest possible pool of highly qualified candidates
  - foster ability to achieve service and business objectives
  - attract highly skilled and diverse candidates
  - ensure compliance with legislative requirements and the City's policies and guidelines.



The City is an extremely large corporation with a vast array of services. While in a number of circumstances there may be a need for flexibility in the non-union hiring process, it is important that certain hiring practices are consistently followed throughout the City.

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## **AUDIT OBJECTIVES, SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY**

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***Scope of audit  
restricted to non-  
union positions***

The Auditor General's 2008 Audit Work Plan included a review of City hiring practices. In order to limit the scope of this particular audit, our review was restricted to the hiring of non-union positions only. The hiring of union positions is governed by collective agreements and, consequently in general terms, the hiring process for union positions is more structured and less flexible. The hiring of union positions also has a built-in grievance process.

***Audit objectives***

The audit focused on determining:

- the effectiveness of internal controls over the hiring process for non-union employees
- the extent to which the hiring process is consistent, transparent and fair
- the extent to which legislative requirements are being followed.

The review covered the period from January 1, 2007 to December 31, 2008.

***Audit  
methodology***

Our audit methodology included the following:

- review of the Toronto Public Service – People Plan 2008 – 2011
- review of the report of Madam Justice Bellamy on the Toronto Computer Leasing Inquiry and the Toronto External Contracts Inquiry

- interviews with relevant City staff
- review of various human resources policies, procedures and guidelines
- review of related reports and legislation
- review of a sample of hiring competitions
- a survey of managers in the operating divisions
- review of relevant Corporate documents and records
- survey of hiring policies and practices in other jurisdictions including:
  - City of Ottawa
  - City of Hamilton
  - Province of Ontario
  - Region of York
  - Region of Peel
  - Region of Durham
  - City of Chicago
- discussions with the City of Toronto Administrative, Professional, Supervisory Association (COTAPSA)
- review of a report entitled “Management of Recruitment in the Australian Public Service” issued by the Australian National Audit Office
- discussions with the City of Toronto Ombudsman.

***Compliance with generally accepted government auditing standards***

We conducted this performance audit in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence that provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

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## AUDIT RESULTS

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### BELLAMY INQUIRY RECOMMENDATIONS RELATING TO HIRING NOT FULLY IMPLEMENTED

The Bellamy Report relating to the Toronto Computer Leasing Inquiry and the Toronto External Contracts Inquiry made two specific recommendations related to the hiring process at the City. These recommendations were as follows:

*“The City’s hiring process should include appropriate questions designed to elicit some perspective on the ethics of applicants. Applicants’ responses to the ethics questions should then be considered prominently in hiring decisions.*

*New City employees should receive immediate training on the ethical dimensions of their particular work.”*

In a report issued in 2006, one year after the publication of the Bellamy report, it was noted that the implementation of these two recommendations were “In progress”. It was further indicated that the implementation of the first recommendation was “ongoing” while the second recommendation had an implementation target date of 2007.

Based on our review, neither of these recommendations has been adequately addressed. There is no specific Corporate process which consistently ensures “some perspective on the ethics of applicants” is considered. Further while training has been provided to certain senior level staff, specific ethics training for new hires is not mandatory and consequently in certain cases is not being done.

#### **Recommendation:**

- 1. The City Manager be required to fully address the recommendations relating to hiring contained in the Bellamy Report. The Executive Director of Human Resources also be required to ensure that the quality control of hiring files include a monitoring process to address the Bellamy recommendations.**

## **DIVERSITY OUR STRENGTH. RECRUITING A DIVERSE WORKFORCE**

The City of Toronto has a population of approximately 2.5 million people and is regarded as one of the most multicultural cities in the world. For example, the 2006 census reported that almost half of the City's population is made up of visible minorities.

*A diverse workforce is a key City goal*

The City Council approved Toronto Public Service People Plan 2008 – 2011 includes a goal which states “we will attract and retain a skilled, high performing and diverse workforce.” The corresponding objective for this goal is “a culture that values and increases diversity at all levels of the organization.”

*City Employment Equity Policy is committed to achieving diversity through fair and equitable hiring process*

The City Employment Equity Policy also states “the City is committed to a policy of fairness and full equity in employment and services.” The policy goes on to say “Citizens of Toronto are best served by a public service which reflects the diversity of the community which it serves. This is achieved through employment equity programs that remove barriers and monitor outcomes rather than by establishing requirements to precisely reflect the percentage of designated groups in the community.”

*Auditor General Report noted the need for a proactive employment equity plan*

In a recent report entitled *Audit of City Performance in Achieving Access, Equity and Human Rights Goals (October 2008)*, the Auditor General noted that a proactive employment equity plan has not been developed by the City. One of the recommendations contained in that report was:

*“The Executive Director of the Human Resources Division take steps to develop a proactive employment equity plan. Such a plan should include but not be limited to:*

- (a) establishing corporate objectives for equitable representation of diverse groups.*
- (b) providing measures to remove barriers in achieving employment equity.*
- (c) and including mechanisms for measuring and monitoring progress.”*

The report further states that a Corporate employment equity plan is necessary to outline City employment equity principles, set objectives for equitable representation and identify the measures and tools staff require to achieve objectives.

***City People Plan includes a number of goals and objectives***

The management response to the recommendation stated that the “*recommendation is addressed in the recently approved People Plan approved by Council in September 2008.*” The response further indicates that “*Implementation of the Plan is underway which will effectively address recommendations provided herein.*” In addressing the recommendations, the People Plan includes key actions required for 2008 – 2011. These key actions include the need to:

- Develop and implement recruitment strategies and initiatives as part of a division people plan that include increasing representation of designated groups (2008 – 2011)
- Engage in broader outreach activities and access the pool of internationally trained professionals, new immigrants and youth (2008).

Finally, the City’s Hiring Guide states “external recruitment efforts will include outreach to access diverse applicant pools”.

We acknowledge the City’s goals, objectives and action plans to address the need to “increase the percentage of designated groups” in the work place. While the goals, objectives and action plans to address the need to “increase the percentage of designated groups in the work place” are commendable, we were not able to identify specific progress in regard to meeting these goals, objectives and action plans. For example, the need to include “outreach to access diverse applicant pools” is an area that requires improvement. Particularly since we were not able to locate any significant evidence in the files we reviewed that this was being done. Based on our discussions with management, we acknowledge that general outreach activities have taken place with certain community groups. We were also advised by management that additional outreach as part of a formal plan and with consideration to the inclusion of diverse community groups over the long term is required and being developed.

***Toronto Police  
has a well  
earned  
reputation for its  
excellence in  
diversity  
outreach***

The City would do well to follow the lead of the Toronto Police Service in its diversity employment program. The Toronto Police Service was selected as one of Canada's best diversity employers for 2008. The Police Service was recognized for:

- Developing a recruitment strategy to hire from underrepresented groups – nearly half of their new recruits in 2006 were members of equity groups, including women, Aboriginal people, visible minorities and persons with a disability.
- Attending job fairs, community events and other functions to recruit new officers from the City of Toronto's various cultural and ethnic groups.
- Establishing a Diversity Management Unit in 2006 to oversee their diversity policy and procedures, diversity management and training programs and other related matters.
- Reviewing their promotional process to ensure it is equitable and accessible for women, visible minorities, Aboriginal people, employees and persons with disabilities.

We have met with the Toronto Police Service in regard to their employment equity and diversity outreach program and their methods for achieving successful community outreach. Representatives from the City Manager's Office should meet with the Toronto Police Service in order to solicit from them best practices in regard to community outreach.

The Toronto People Plan requires that the Human Resources Division report annually to the City Manager on Corporate-wide progress in achieving the goals and objectives of the Toronto Public Service People Plan. There is no requirement that status reports be provided to City Council.

**Recommendations:**

- 2. The Executive Director of Human Resources take steps to implement the action plans related to employment equity contained in the Toronto Public Service People Plan 2008 - 2011. The action plans to provide specific deliverables as well as a time frame for such deliverables. Regular progress reports be provided to City Council. In developing its specific plans, the Executive Director of Human Resources consult with the Toronto Police Services as well as other appropriate employers in order to ensure that its action plans represent best practices.**
- 3. The Executive Director of Human Resources ensure the City's external recruitment strategy includes outreach to diverse community groups. Evidence of such activities be documented in the files.**

*Diversity data available for non-union staff or only 11% of the workforce*

During 2007, the Human Resources Division through an employee survey process compiled diversity data for non-union staff or approximately 11 per cent of the workforce. However, a similar exercise was not conducted for union staff.

Consequently, the level of diversity among union staff, which is the majority of the City workforce, remains unknown. We have been advised that a workforce survey of unionized City employees is currently being discussed with employee union representatives.

**Recommendation:**

- 4. The City Manager in consultation with the City unions give priority to the development of a workplace survey for union staff. Such a survey be consistent with the non-union workforce survey. The results of the survey be reported to City Council and be used as a basis for addressing the City's employment equity hiring goals.**

## EVALUATE THE NEED FOR A HIRING POLICY

### *Significant numbers of guidelines to assist hiring managers.*

In 2006, the Human Resources Division implemented a Hiring Guide as well as a number of complementary guidelines to assist managers with the hiring process. In October 2008, the Non-Union Staffing Guide was produced to provide specific guidance for hiring non-union employees. These guides were developed to ensure the City hiring process is conducted in a fair, consistent and accountable manner.

These guidelines generally provide management with a certain degree of flexibility in certain aspects of the hiring process. However, there is in our view the need for a Hiring Policy document which clearly identifies areas in the hiring process where flexibility is not advisable or indeed permissible.

Our review of a sample of hiring files identified inconsistent practices in how each Division initiates the recruitment process, screens applicants, documents assessments, checks on references and how various correspondence is retained.

One of the key actions identified in the People Plan 2008 - 2011 is for Human Resources to conduct a best practices review of staffing policies. In completing this review, the Human Resources Division should evaluate the feasibility of adopting a City-wide Corporate hiring policy.

### **Recommendation:**

- 5. The Executive Director of Human Resources in consultation with the City Solicitor evaluate the feasibility, benefits and risks of adopting a City-wide Corporate hiring policy.**



## **ENSURING APPROPRIATE DOCUMENTATION IN SUPPORT OF HIRING DECISIONS PREPARED**

The initial step in the hiring process once applications have been received involves screening employment applications and identifying qualified individuals meeting predetermined criteria. The assessment process may include written or practical tests, interviews or a combination of both.

### ***Conflict of interest situations should be declared***

In accordance with the Conflict of Interest and Employment of Relatives policies, members of the Toronto Public Service must avoid situations where personal interest, actual or potential, conflict with the interests of the City. Participants in the hiring process are not to be involved in any part of the employment process if a relative or close personal friend is a candidate.

Once the period for accepting job applications is closed, applications are reviewed to assess whether or not they meet predetermined qualifications. The Human Resources Division uses a standard form to assist managers in documenting applicant assessments.

### ***Inconsistencies in determining and applying screening criteria***

Finally, our review of job competitions found that in most cases screening criteria were appropriately defined and applied to each candidate. However, there were a number of instances where this was not the case. In addition, staff did not consistently complete the screening form for each competition. In some cases, we were unable to confirm which applicants were screened in because they met all the qualifications.

Further, the form contains a section where City staff responsible for screening are required to declare whether or not any conflict of interest exists in regard to the applicants.

In the majority of hiring files we reviewed, the conflict of interest declaration was not completed by those participating in the hiring process. We could not find any documentation indicating that there was no conflict of interest between the assessor and the applicants.

**Recommendations:**

- 6. The Executive Director of Human Resources direct all staff to complete the appropriate screening documentation for all employee applicants. All such documentation be retained in hiring files.**
- 7. The Executive Director of Human Resources direct all staff involved in the hiring process that documentation relating to conflict of interest declarations be completed and retained.**

*Use of a pre-determined passing grade in hiring competitions*

The majority of employment competitions are conducted through an interview process. Answers to questions posed during the interview are graded and past practice requires a 70 per cent passing grade in response to these questions. With the introduction of the Non-Union Staffing Guide in October 2008, greater management discretion is allowed regarding the passing grade, although the guide requires that the passing grade be established prior to the start of the competition.

*Final decisions require documentation to support the integrity of the process*

For all of the job competitions included in our review, the selection criteria was to be based on a passing grade of 70 per cent. In certain situations, while the successful person scored the highest they had in fact not attained the predetermined 70 per cent grade. We also found in a number of cases that the person who scored the highest grade was not the successful candidate. In a few instances, documentation was not available to validate the final decision.

According to management, a number of factors are considered in the final determination of the successful applicant. While there may be situations where the assessment summary and final decision is not always the same, documentation explaining the rationale for the final decision should be maintained.

**Recommendation:**

- 8. The Executive Director of Human Resources direct all staff involved in the hiring process to ensure that there is an adequate level of documentation in all hiring files to support hiring decisions. Such documentation is critical in any potential hiring dispute.**

## **Policies Relating to Reference Checks Not Always Followed**

### ***Reference check process requires review***

One of the final steps in the hiring process is to conduct a reference check on the successful candidate. Corporate policy provides specific direction in relation to employment references.

Applicant consent for conducting reference checks was not always obtained. In certain cases, the appropriate number of references were not contacted and in about half of the files we reviewed there was no documentation indicating a reference check had in fact been conducted.

Finally, our review found inconsistent practices in the reference check process. Inconsistencies were evident in the questions asked and the manner in which responses are recorded and retained.

#### **Recommendation:**

- 9. The Executive Director of Human Resources direct all staff involved in the hiring process to follow and comply with City policies on employment references.**

## **Employment Offer Letters Should be Retained**

### ***Employment Offer Letter serves as the employment agreement***

Once the assessment selection and reference process is complete, a written employment offer is provided to the successful candidate. The written offer formally documents the employment offer. This process also serves to obtain the agreement of the applicant on the salary, terms and conditions of employment. The fully executed offer letter serves as the employment agreement and is retained by the Human Resources Division.

Written employment offer letters in some cases were not signed by the employee and, in certain cases, were not filed in the appropriate Corporate human resources file.

#### **Recommendation:**

- 10. The Executive Director of Human Resources direct all staff to ensure that a fully executed copy of the current employment agreement is obtained and retained in the employee's Corporate human resources file.**

## **Standards for Evaluations of Probationary Employees Should be Developed**

### ***Performance evaluations required during probationary periods***

A six-month probation period is generally provided for non-union new hires. The probation period is specified in the job offer letter and provides the City an opportunity to assess the new employee's job performance.

The City does not maintain a Corporate standard for evaluating new hire performance during the probation period.

Human Resources staff advised that monitoring and documenting performance during the probation period is the responsibility of the hiring division.

In our survey of non-union hiring managers, a minority of managers conduct and document performance reviews during the probationary period.

Lack of a Corporate standard to monitor non-union employee performance during the probation period contributes to inconsistent practices across City divisions and may result in a missed opportunity to provide performance feedback to newly hired employees. As well, the City may risk challenges in dismissing employees when feedback on poor performance during the probation period is not documented.

### **Recommendation:**

- 11. The Executive Director of Human Resources develop Corporate standards which requires the written evaluation of newly hired non-union City employees during the six-month probationary period.**

## **MANAGING THE HIRING PROCESS – THE HIRING OF EXTERNAL CANDIDATES TAKES TOO LONG**

### ***In 2005, a City Manager report recommended a benchmark of 75 days for the hiring cycle***

In 2005, a report by the City Manager indicated that, "The Human Resources Division does not have a performance measure or benchmark for the length of time to fill a position." This report recommended a benchmark of 75 calendar days from requisition date to the date the employee assumes the new position. This benchmark was adopted for a short period then discontinued.

*No specific benchmark exists*

In September 2008, City Council adopted the Toronto Public Service People Plan 2008 - 2011. This plan identifies the “number of days to fill a vacancy” as a performance measure, although there is no specific predetermined target for monitoring the hiring process. We have been advised that the Human Resources Division is in the process of developing a Corporate benchmark to measure how long it takes to fill a vacant position.

In our survey of a number of government agencies, it is a common practice to measure the efficiency of the hiring process through a “days to fill” performance measure. A benchmark of 75 days is a common target used by the organizations we surveyed.

*It takes too long to hire external staff*

In our review of City hiring files, the average time to fill a vacancy for internal competitions was 69 days from the job requisition date to the employee acceptance date, which is significantly shorter than for external competitions which took an average of 139 days. We have been advised that delays in the hiring process are often a result of scheduling conflicts between Human Resources staff and the hiring division. There is currently no information available which would indicate the stage of the hiring process which takes an inordinate amount of time to complete.

Pending the outcome of management’s benchmark study, the 75 day benchmark should be used as a baseline measure to recruit non-union employees. By analyzing various stages of the hiring process, management can assess where the process is taking longer than anticipated and take corrective action.

**Recommendation:**

- 12. The Executive Director of Human Resources develop a hiring benchmark to measure the time required to complete the hiring process for non-union employees and monitor the performance of each hiring unit against the established benchmark. The Division evaluate the current hiring process to determine where “bottlenecks” in the process occur. Steps be taken to address these areas.**

## Extent and Timing of Quality Reviews Should Be Evaluated

Documentation retained in City hiring files validates decisions made and serves as a record of the hiring process. The Human Resources Division is accountable for ensuring adequate documentation is retained to demonstrate the integrity, transparency and fairness of the hiring process. When procedures are not followed or documentation is not adequate, the City assumes the risk of challenges to the integrity of the hiring process.

In our review of hiring files, we found instances of non-compliance with procedures as well as shortcomings in documentation maintained in the file.

### *Quality assurance reviews for 5% of hiring files*

Human Resources staff conduct a quality assurance evaluation of the hiring process to detect errors, omissions or issues of non-compliance with Corporate hiring requirements. The review is performed after the employee is hired and on a sample basis. Five per cent of hiring files are reviewed. Human Resource managers rely on quality assurance review results to validate compliance with Corporate hiring policies. No other form of file review is conducted to ensure the integrity of the hiring process.

While a post-process quality assurance review is helpful in detecting errors, omissions and compliance issues for future hiring processes, the review is of no value in correcting issues related to the current hiring file.

A quality assurance review would provide more benefit if conducted prior to offering the position to the prospective candidate. For instance, if the quality assurance review noted no reference checks were performed on a prospective candidate, this deficiency could be immediately remedied.

While the extent and timing of quality assurance reviews is the responsibility of management, consideration should be given to current practices.

### **Recommendation:**

- 13. The Executive Director of Human Resources review the current extent and timing of quality reviews of hiring files. Consideration be given to conducting a certain number of such reviews on current open hiring files.**

## TRAINING REQUIRED FOR HIRING MANAGERS

The Organization Development and Learning Section in the Human Resources Division is responsible for organizing Corporate training courses. One course offered by this unit is the “Basics of Staffing” course.

In 2005, a City Manager report found only a small number of managers had attended the “Basics of Staffing” training course. The report recommended that hiring managers be required to take the staffing course prior to being permitted to conduct any hiring on their own.

*Only 27% of hiring managers attended training*

In spite of the recommendations made by the City Manager that “hiring managers be required to take the staffing course offered by Human Resources prior to conducting any hiring activities (e.g., testing, interviews, reference checks) independent of Human Resources”, our review indicated that only 27 per cent of divisional hiring managers had attended the “Basics of Staffing” course.

### **Recommendation:**

- 14. The Executive Director of Human Resources ensure all current and new divisional hiring supervisors and managers attend the “Basics of Staffing” training course.**

## DURATION OF ACTING ASSIGNMENTS EXCEED CORPORATE POLICY

*Corporate policy for acting assignments*

The City’s Acting Assignments Policy is intended to ensure procedures governing the assignment of employees temporarily assigned to perform the duties of another are consistent, cost effective and fair.

Managers have the option of placing an employee in an acting capacity for six months or less if the urgency of the assignment does not allow time for a competitive process.

When an acting assignment is expected to be longer than six months, the position is required to be posted internally.

*In our sample, the average time in an acting assignment is 16 months*

In 16 of 40 competitions reviewed, an employee was acting in the position. The acting employee was the successful candidate in 12 of the competitions reviewed. The average duration for each one of these acting assignments was 16 months.

Our file review also noted that a written offer letter was not always filed for acting assignments resulting from a job competition.

When the acting assignment resulted from a divisional appointment, no offer letter to convey the terms and conditions of the assignment existed.

Since an acting assignment changes employee roles and responsibilities, agreed upon terms and conditions of the acting assignment should be documented.

**Recommendation:**

- 15. The Executive Director of Human Resources review acting assignments to ensure such assignments comply with Corporate policy. The Executive Director of Human Resources review the documentation requirements for acting assignments of non-union employees to ensure Corporate records include written documentation detailing the terms and conditions of acting assignments.**

**RELEVANCE OF RECOMMENDATIONS TO AGENCIES, BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS**

*Recommendations have relevance to City ABCs*

The recommendations contained in this report likely have relevance to the hiring process at the City's Agencies, Boards and Commissions.

**Recommendation:**

- 16. The City Manager forward this report to the City's Agencies, Boards and Commissions. Further, the City Manager request that relevant recommendations contained in this report be implemented.**



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## CONCLUSION

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Our review of the recruitment process at the City identified a number of opportunities for improvement. Certain of our recommendations pertain to the requirement to follow established policies and procedures. For the most part, existing policies and procedures are adequate, but in a number of cases they are not being followed. The lack of compliance with policies and procedures is indicative of ineffective management, and supervision.

The recommendations in this report are relatively easy to implement and can be completed at minimal or no cost. Their implementation will assist the Division in ensuring that its non-union recruitment process is viewed as fair, transparent and in compliance with legislation, policies and procedures.