

Toronto Fire Services Diversity, Recruitment and Inclusion Plan Update

Date: February 14, 2017
To: Community Development and Recreation Committee
From: Fire Chief and General Manager, Toronto Fire Services
Wards: All

SUMMARY

This report responds to a request from the Community Development and Recreation Committee for an update on data, benchmarks, and employment equity strategies for improving equity goals. Toronto Fire Services (TFS) has consulted with the Equity Diversity and Human Rights (EDHR) Division, Human Resources (HR), and the Deputy City Manager on the production of this report.

The report provides an overview of previous TFS recruitment processes along with a summary of current diversity rates within TFS. Further, a detailed summary of improvement actions implemented to date, ongoing improvement initiatives and a summary of upcoming improvement initiatives is provided.

Finally, an overview of the TFS Inclusion Plan development process is provided along with a summary of the strategic priorities that will be addressed.

TFS is committed to becoming a recognized leader in fire service inclusion, equity and diversity. With the continued assistance and expertise of both EDHR and HR, the objectives outlined in this report will continue to be a top priority for TFS.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Fire Chief and General Manager, Toronto Fire Services, recommends that:

1. The Community Development and Recreation Committee receive this report for information.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There are no financial implications resulting from the adoption of the recommendation in this report. Any financial implications associated with the development and implementation of the TFS Inclusion Plan and changes that may be implemented as highlighted in this report will be considered either through separate reporting to the Standing Committee, or considered as part of future year Capital and Operating Budget processes.

The Deputy City Manager & Chief Financial Officer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT

The implementation of the Inclusion Plan is expected to lead to the identification and removal of barriers that qualified members of equity-seeking groups and vulnerable populations may face in accessing employment opportunities at Toronto Fire Services. The Plan pays particular attention to - but will not be limited to members of the four designated groups - women, Aboriginal Peoples, racialized/visible minorities, and persons with disabilities who have traditionally been excluded from a rightful share of society's economic opportunities and benefits. The Inclusion Plan supports the goals of the City's Talent Blueprint, the City's strategic workforce plan, of having "engaged, diverse, high-performing, adaptive and productive employees to meet our current and future needs." The long-term plan will be based in evidence and will be implemented with the guidance and support of Equity, Diversity and Human Rights and Human Resources divisions.

DECISION HISTORY

At its meeting of November 29, 2016, the Community Development and Recreation Committee requested the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services provide a report that includes data, benchmarks and employment equity strategies for improving equity goals and that the Fire Chief and General Manager consult with the Deputy City Manager and the Director, Equity, Diversity and Human Rights, to provide input and assist with the process.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2016.CD16.3>

At its meeting of January 31, 2017, City Council requested the Executive Director, Human Resources, and the Director, Equity, Diversity and Human Rights to prioritize workforce diversity, both through deeper analysis and action strategies, in Toronto Fire Services.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2017.EX21.6>

COMMENTS

Recruitment processes for frontline positions in TFS draw large numbers of applicants and are very competitive. While there has not been any growth within the Operations Division of TFS for many years, on average TFS hires approximately 100 staff each year to replace retiring Firefighters. Other recruitment entry points into TFS, while far less frequent than in Operations, include Communications, Fire Prevention, Public Education, Mechanical, and Administration. In any recruitment process, a number of available positions are filled via internal transfers in accordance with provisions of the Collective Agreement. Once internal transfers have been processed, external recruitment processes are initiated.

TFS works closely with HR, which is responsible for managing the hiring process in conjunction with the operating division. A Human Resources Consultant is assigned to work with TFS on a full-time basis, providing dedicated support to assist with meeting the division's recruitment needs. All applications for job postings are processed and tracked through Talent Flow, the City's job applicant tracking system.

EDHR and HR are working closely with TFS on the development of the TFS Inclusion Plan and on developing and implementing progressive strategies to enhance the overall inclusion and diversity within TFS and remove barriers to the employment, retention and promotion of all groups in the TFS.

Specifically, TFS will continue to work with EDHR and HR to develop equity and inclusion strategies that will enable TFS to better reflect the population we serve, and to enhance and expand the commitment to diversity, access, equity and inclusion.

Workforce Data

Count Yourself In Workforce Survey (CYI Survey)

On a City-wide basis, EDHR collects and manages workforce diversity data through the voluntary CYI survey. This survey provides up-to-date City-wide data and eliminates the need for individual Divisions to gather this data locally.

Preliminary data from the recent CYI Survey was reported to City Council in January 2017. City Council requested that EDHR and HR prioritize workforce diversity, both through deeper analysis and action strategies, in TFS. This will provide TFS with baseline evidence of demographic comparators for specific groups in the Toronto Public Service (TPS) workforce. Overall corporate and cluster results from the CYI survey are now publicly available. Divisional results for TFS such as Designated Group membership breakdowns will be available in the first quarter of 2017.

Further, the National Occupational Classification (NOCs) coding of City jobs in 2017 will help TFS identify any significant gaps between labour market availability of designated group members and their occupational representation in the TFS. This data will inform the development of long-term TFS Inclusion Plan hiring strategies and can enhance the City's ability to attract qualified candidates from Toronto's broad and diverse talent pool.

HR is developing an Inclusive Hiring Framework for the City. The TFS Inclusion Plan will be aligned with this as well.

EDHR and HR are in the process of developing corporate equity and diversity key performance indicators (KPIs). The emphasis will be on developing and implementing policies, strategies and programs that identify and remove employment barriers and monitor outcomes. TFS is working closely with both EDHR and HR and is committed to early adoption of these enhanced policies, programs and strategies as they become available.

TFS Personnel Data

Based on data gleaned from SAP and Quatro databases, a breakdown of the number females within TFS is summarized below in Table 1.

Table 1 - Distribution of Females within TFS (2016)

Division	Females (%) (As noted in SAP and Quatro)
Operations	5%
Fire Prevention & Public Education	25%
Communications	52%
Administration & Support Divisions	62%
TFS Overall	9%

Note: Females comprise 14 per cent of all TFS staff hired since 2012.

Recruitment Data

The collection and comprehensive analysis of applicant and recruitment data is essential to being able to effectively understand process challenges that may compromise the ability to attract and recruit highly qualified and diverse talent. Accordingly, TFS has implemented recruitment process analytics that now provide detailed information on each phase of the recruitment process. This is now allowing TFS to better understand where improvements can be made.

Since 2015, HR has been collecting data from applicants entering in and moving through the TFS Operations Firefighter recruitment process. Applicants for Operations Firefighter positions complete a Pre-Screening Questionnaire (PSQ) that forms part of the online application process for Operations Firefighter positions.

This segment of the application process requires applicants to confirm their successful completion of all pre-requisite qualifications that include OFAI Candidate Testing, NFPA professional qualifications, DZ driver's license, first aid and CPR.

The PSQ also provides applicants with the opportunity to voluntarily self-identify with respect to being members of designated groups. The PSQ includes gender (Male, Female, Transgender or Other), Aboriginal Peoples, ethnicity/race (Visible Minority) and Persons with Disability.

While in the past, this PSQ was only included in the Operations Firefighter recruitment processes, on a go-forward basis, HR and TFS will incorporate the PSQ into all divisional recruitment processes.

In response to CDRC direction on November 29, 2016, and in collaboration with HR, TFS undertook a comprehensive analysis of the Operations Firefighter recruitment processes that took place from January 1, 2015 through December 31, 2016. A summary of this analysis is provided in Table 2 below.

Table 2 - Operations Firefighters Recruit Applicant Pool

2015-2016	Total	Designated Groups	Toronto Residents
Applicants	2,444	28%	24%
Passed First Screening	1,189	23%	22%
Passed Second Screening	565	31%	13%
Interviewed	435	32%	34%
Successful Interview	309	38%	30%
Proceed to Medical	264	38%	25%
Job Offer	245	36%	30%
Hired	241	37%	30%

While divisions other than Operations were not included in the previous TFS "Path to Diversity" process, TFS has also analyzed some preliminary information related to Fire Prevention and Public Education recruitment.

From January 1, 2012 to December 31, 2016, TFS hired a total of 119 new staff in Fire Prevention and Public Education. Of the 119 staff hired, 33 per cent were identified as being female or visible minority.

Equity and Inclusion in Action

The TFS Inclusion Plan will strengthen the foundations for barrier-free recruitment, building on process improvements that have already been made or are currently underway.

Improvements Already Implemented

- Introduction of enhanced diversity values in screening matrix, placing a clear and demonstrated value on diversity;
- Formal and focused partnerships with EDHR and HR have been established;
- All TFS staff have completed focused Human Rights and inclusion training;
- TFS recruitment selection matrices for Operations Firefighter have been revised to remove a number of potential process and procedural barriers;
- TFS recruit training has been expanded to include additional training on Human Rights and City of Toronto Anti-Harassment / Discrimination Policies;
- TFS interview panels have been rebuilt in response to recommendations provided by EDHR and HR aimed at promoting a more inclusive and increasingly diverse interview environment;
- Online application processes have been streamlined, simplified and clarified;
- Career information for prospective candidates has been significantly streamlined and is easily accessible via the TFS website;
- Recruitment process analytics have been established and implemented in all TFS recruitment processes;
- Interview panel conflict of interest review and declaration processes have been implemented across TFS;
- Enhanced candidate analytics have been introduced into the OFAI Candidate Testing Process in response to recommendations made by TFS.

Improvements Underway

- In collaboration with Toronto Employment and Social Services (TESS), the former TFS Firefighter Career Access Program (FCAP) will be optimized and expanded to include all TFS entry level positions;
- A comprehensive review of TFS-wide recruitment selection matrices and related processes is underway in collaboration with EDHR and HR;
- Research on best practices in community outreach is ongoing;
- The TFS Inclusion Plan Working Group, which includes a broad cross-section of TFS staff, has been commissioned in partnership with the TPFFA;
- Training and designation of TFS senior staff as Positive Space Ambassadors is underway and will be completed by the end of 2017;
- In collaboration with EDHR and HR, recruitment data collection tools are being enhanced and expanded to include all TFS recruitment;
- Benchmark surveys of comparable fire departments across Canada are ongoing;
- Outreach materials and website content is in the process of being enhanced and will align with the objectives of the TFS Inclusion Plan.

Development of the TFS Inclusion Plan: Immediate Next Steps

The initial framework of the TFS Inclusion Plan has been developed. This framework includes the following key objectives:

- Conduct focused community outreach and education on all TFS career opportunities with the goal of increasing the number of applications from Toronto residents and members of Designated Groups (Females, Aboriginal Peoples, Persons with Disabilities, Racialized Groups, Visible Minorities, LGBTQ2S communities);
- Develop optimized and enhanced recruitment and hiring process with the goal of operating transparent, consistent and equitable processes for all TFS recruitments;
- Identify and eliminate systemic biases and barriers to employment that may exist with the goal of providing equitable opportunity to all individuals;
- Develop a comprehensive post-recruitment support network for new staff with the goal of ensuring supports are in place for staff as they commence their TFS career;
- Foster an increasingly inclusive and welcoming culture across TFS with the goal of achieving leading edge inclusivity.

In order to best inform the development of the TFS Inclusion Plan, EDHR and HR have recommended that TFS commission a comprehensive Employment Systems Review by a well-qualified third-party. This would provide a comprehensive employment cycle review and clearly define tasks, timelines, outcomes, success measures and deliverables. It will also identify any systemic barriers that may exist within the TFS recruitment process. TFS will work with the Deputy City Manager's office to identify funding options to facilitate this important work. Any funding shortfalls will be included in the 2018 TFS budget submission.

As TFS moves forward with the development of the Inclusion Plan in collaboration with EDHR and HR, the following work packages will commence:

- Through the Employment Systems Review, identify barriers experienced by equity-seeking or vulnerable populations (including Females, Aboriginal Peoples, Persons with Disabilities, Racialized Groups, Visible Minorities, LGBTQ2S communities) in seeking or securing employment with TFS and strategies for the removal of barriers;
- The development of data requirements and success measures such as KPIs;
- The development of strategies for continuous and sustained improvement;
- The development of pre-qualification checklists for potential candidates that provide applicants with assistance on compiling the qualifications and documentation that are required in order to be considered in the recruitment process;
- Leverage existing TFS staff and resources to increase focused community outreach with the primary goal of increasing the number of Toronto resident applications from all groups, including traditionally under-represented communities;
- Review the Toronto Police Service Ambassador Program and identify opportunities to leverage current staff to champion this type of outreach program in TFS;
- Identify opportunities to better leverage communication tools for outreach;
- Create a new Fire Chief's Advisory Council on Equity and Inclusion in order to leverage the expertise and perspective of stakeholders, community partners, and subject matter experts to oversee the implementation of the TFS Inclusion Plan.

Short Term Objectives

While the TFS Inclusion Plan will result in a number of objective-based outcomes, the following preliminary objectives are being implemented in advance of the completion of the TFS Inclusion Plan:

Objective 1: Expand TFS community outreach efforts by not less than 10%.

Objective 2: In collaboration with EDHR and HR, expand the definition and analysis of diversity in TFS to be inclusive of self-reported: Gender, Aboriginal Peoples, Persons with Disabilities, Racialized Groups/Visible Minorities, LGBTQ2S communities.

Objective 3: Produce updated TFS recruitment videos and social media content that market diversity as a value to increase the visibility and attraction to all TFS career opportunities.

TFS is committed to becoming a recognized leader in fire service inclusion, equity and diversity. With the continued assistance and expertise of both EDHR and HR, the objectives outlined in this report will continue to be a top priority for TFS. Supported by the foundation of the TFS Transformation Plan, the development of the TFS Inclusion Plan will drive the implementation of best practice with the goal of achieving a highly skilled, diverse, exceptional workforce that is ideally suited to serve the City of Toronto.

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