



P.O. Box 1749  
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**Item No. 12.1.2**  
**Executive Standing Committee**  
**September 23, 2019**

**TO:** Chair and Members of Executive Standing Committee

**SUBMITTED BY:** Original Signed  
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Caroline Blair-Smith, Director, Human Resources/Office of Diversity & Inclusion  
  
Original Signed  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jacques Dubé, Chief Administrative Officer

**DATE:** August 22, 2019

**SUBJECT:** Workforce Supplemental Report - Gender Parity

**ORIGIN**

The Executive Standing Committee passed a motion on February 4, 2019 that the CAO review our hiring practices and policies and make recommendations to the Executive Standing Committee on what means could be initiated to achieve a better balance in relation to gender parity.

**LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY**

*Halifax Regional Municipality Charter, SNS 2008, c. 39*

34 (1) The Chief Administrative Officer is the head of the administrative branch of the government of the Municipality and is responsible to the Council for the proper administration of the affairs of the Municipality in accordance with the by-laws of the Municipality and the policies adopted by the Council.

**RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Halifax Regional Municipality:

1. Continue with the initiatives outlined in the Discussion section of this report including: updating the Hiring Policy, conducting the self-identification survey at an estimated cost of \$33,241 with net HST included, developing the Employment Equity Program, branding and community outreach.

- Two years following the rollout of the Employment Equity Program, assess the gender demographic data and make an evidence-based decision on the appropriate next steps at that time.

## **BACKGROUND**

### **Internal Scan**

When an employee is hired with HRM, the employee’s personal information is entered into the payroll system which currently only has two options to identify gender - male or female. Based on this data, gender statistics were reviewed over a five-year period. This review showed that the organization consists of 70% males and 30% females. These figures have remained consistent over the five-year period.

Within current leadership positions, 76% are males and 24% are females. The demographic detail was further expanded upon with the demographics by employee group:

| Employee Group | Total Full Time Employees | Male       | Female     |
|----------------|---------------------------|------------|------------|
| ATU 508        | 798                       | 86%        | 14%        |
| NSUPE 13       | 557                       | 43%        | 57%        |
| CUPE 108       | 271                       | 93%        | 7%         |
| HRPA           | 636                       | 70%        | 30%        |
| IAFF 268       | 466                       | 93%        | 7%         |
| Non-Union      | 640                       | 52%        | 48%        |
| <b>HRM</b>     | <b>3,368</b>              | <b>70%</b> | <b>30%</b> |

### **External Scan**

An external scan was completed to identify how HRM compares to other municipalities around gender parity. HRM’s male gender ratio is higher than those of the larger municipalities, as identified below.

| City       | Male       | Female     |
|------------|------------|------------|
| Calgary    | 69%        | 31%        |
| Vancouver  | 67%        | 33%        |
| Edmonton   | 63%        | 37%        |
| Saskatoon  | 63%        | 37%        |
| Ottawa     | 54%        | 46%        |
| <b>HRM</b> | <b>71%</b> | <b>29%</b> |

HRM’s data with respect to roles that are traditionally identified as male-dominated, Transit, Fire and Police, is consistent with those of other cities. A breakdown of Transit, Fire and Police gender statistics across various cities, in contrast to HRM, are included in Appendix A.

## **DISCUSSION**

Work is being done to increase the representation of women and other under-represented groups in the workforce. Initiatives have been put in place to address this imbalance, but the results will take time and further investment in resources is needed.

### **Current Hiring Policies and Practices**

HRM's Hiring Policy is currently being updated to provide greater clarity regarding fair hiring practices. This revision incorporates recommendations from the 2016 Employment Systems Review and aligns with the new Employment Equity Policy. The Hiring Policy has been expanded to address principles of fair hiring and to mirror the content of the Hiring Manager Certification program that was officially rolled out in January 2019.

In the absence of a revised policy, HRM's current hiring practices have been designed to ensure fair hiring including having diverse interview panels, anonymous scoring of testing and assignments, and consensus scoring of interviews.

### **HRM's Employment Equity Policy and Self-Identification Survey**

Employment equity is a strategy to enable equity-seeking communities the opportunity to achieve equity in employment opportunities and benefits. Employment equity involves both recognizing and responding. It requires employers to recognize that certain practices place employees from underrepresented groups at a disadvantage. Employment equity demands the elimination of such practices but also imposes positive obligation on the employers to facilitate the achievement of equity.

An updated Employment Equity Policy was approved by the CAO on September 4, 2018. The policy states that the objective is to increase the representation within the HRM workforce, in occupations or positions where they are under-represented, of individuals from the following groups:

- (a) Racially Visible People
- (b) Women
- (c) Indigenous/Aboriginal People
- (d) Persons with Disabilities
- (e) LGBTQ+ community

The policy also states that, "*Through approval of this policy, the CAO commits Halifax Regional Municipality to an Employment Equity program that is accountable and results oriented.*" The framework of the Employment Equity program is currently being developed. The entire Employment Equity Program will be finalized following the completion of the self-identification survey. This survey is required for HRM to understand the demographics of HRM's employees and to complete a comparison to census data to determine the gaps in regard to alignment of employees to the citizens we serve. The Office of Diversity and Inclusion anticipates that the survey will cost \$31,875 plus net HST (total \$33,241) and plans to conduct the survey late 2019.

### **Employer Branding**

Human Resources and Corporate Communications are currently developing a new employer branding strategy. This three-phase strategy will include:

- Increasing the reach of our employment opportunities and to create a greater appeal for our non-traditional candidates.
- Enhanced communication and social media presence that will be customized for the unique opportunities and/or enhance our ability to communicate our broad career opportunities.
- Expanded social media presence/website content to include testimonials, day in the life of an HRM employee, etc.

This three-phase strategy would be effectively launched over the next 18 months with an evaluation of the effectiveness and if necessary adjustments will be done following the 18 months to determine a long-term approach.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The self-identification survey is estimated at a cost of \$31,875 plus net HST (total \$33,241) and will be sourced from existing HR budget in the Special Project Fund – E401-6919 (Diversity & Inclusion – Special Projects).

### **RISK CONSIDERATION**

N/A

### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Over the past year, HRM staff have been spending more time engaging with the community with a specific focus on increasing connection to underrepresented groups. These connections will assist in formalizing HRM's community engagement strategy.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

N/A

### **ALTERNATIVES**

Council could direct staff to cease efforts to increase representation of women in the workforce; however, it is not recommended as this is a significant component of HRM's Employment Equity Policy.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

Appendix A: HRM's City workforce composition by gender for traditionally male-oriented divisions in comparison with various cities across Canada.

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A copy of this report can be obtained online at [halifax.ca](http://halifax.ca) or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210.

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## **APPENDIX A**

HRM's City workforce composition by gender for traditionally male-oriented divisions in comparison with various cities across Canada.

| <b>Transit</b>   |             |               |
|------------------|-------------|---------------|
| <b>City</b>      | <b>Male</b> | <b>Female</b> |
| <b>Calgary</b>   | 81%         | 19%           |
| <b>Edmonton</b>  | 82%         | 18%           |
| <b>Vancouver</b> | 86%         | 14%           |
| <b>Toronto</b>   | 87%         | 13%           |
| <b>HRM</b>       | 86%         | 14%           |

| <b>Fire</b>      |             |               |
|------------------|-------------|---------------|
| <b>City</b>      | <b>Male</b> | <b>Female</b> |
| <b>Saskatoon</b> | 90%         | 10%           |
| <b>Toronto</b>   | 91%         | 9%            |
| <b>Calgary</b>   | 92%         | 8%            |
| <b>Edmonton</b>  | 94%         | 6%            |
| <b>Vancouver</b> | 96%         | 4%            |
| <b>HRM</b>       | 93%         | 7%            |

| <b>Police</b>    |             |               |
|------------------|-------------|---------------|
| <b>City</b>      | <b>Male</b> | <b>Female</b> |
| <b>Ottawa</b>    | 61%         | 39%           |
| <b>Calgary</b>   | 66%         | 34%           |
| <b>Vancouver</b> | 75%         | 25%           |
| <b>Edmonton</b>  | 78%         | 22%           |
| <b>Saskatoon</b> | 80%         | 20%           |
| <b>Toronto</b>   | 91%         | 9%            |
| <b>HRM</b>       | 70%         | 30%           |