



# AUDITOR GENERAL

Halifax Regional Municipality

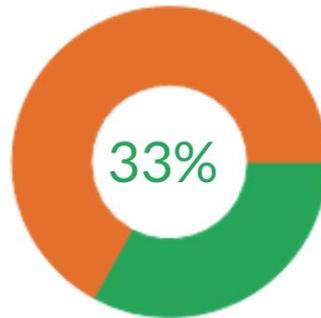


Follow-up Review – 2022 Audit:  
Management of Respectful Workplaces

March 20, 2024

# 2022 Report Review

## Management of Respectful Workplaces



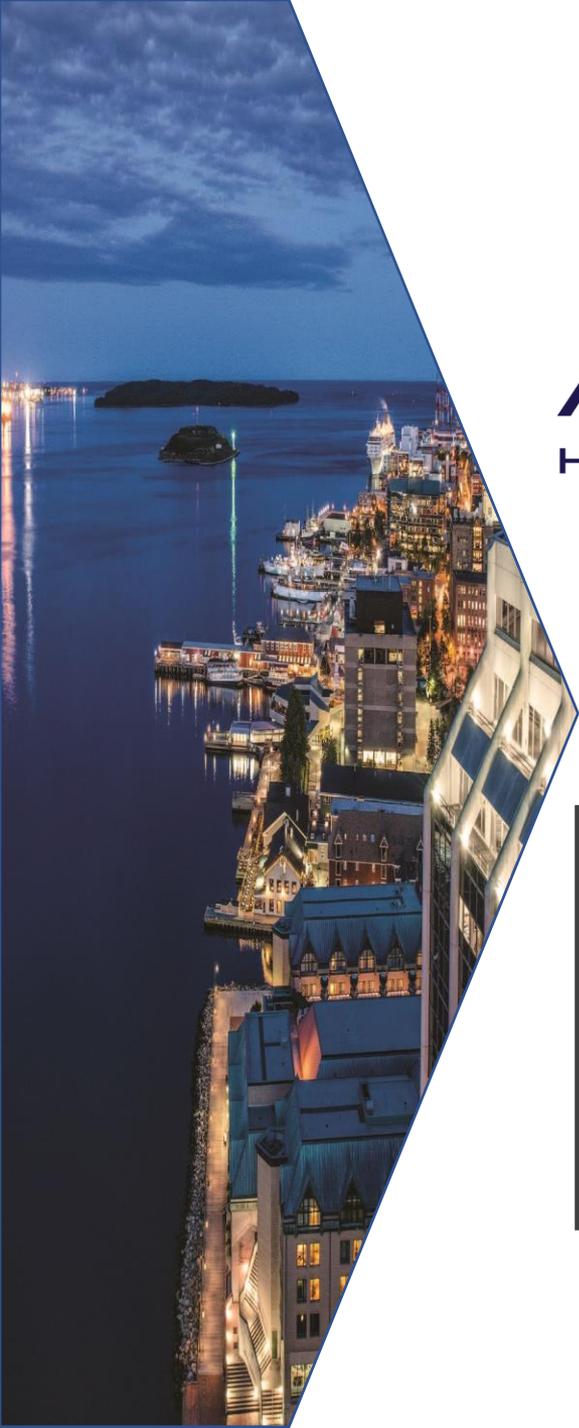
5 of 15  
Overall Recommendations  
Completed

# 2022 Follow-up – Work Outstanding

- 8 recommendations OS for HR
  - Includes: Developing performance measures, assessing status of training, and implementing quality control checks on harassment complaint files.
- 2 recommendations OS for CAOs Office
  - CAO needs to establish a whistleblower policy and implement a process to ensure proper investigations are completed.

# 2022 Follow-up – Work Complete

- Human Resources management has:
  - Harassment complaint file documentation requirements
  - Assigned responsibility to oversee HRM business unit's employee engagement initiatives
  - A process to help ensure policy accessible offline
  - A process to monitor workplace violence incident investigations
  - A process to ensure access to health and safety information system is updated



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## Management of Hiring Practices Audit

March 20, 2024

# Overall Conclusions

- Lack of clear and transparent practices leading to poor performance
  - Gaps in policies
  - Lack of guidance
- We had concerns with all 40 competitive files tested
  - Identified 4 with significant concerns around support for decisions
- All 10 appointments tested lacked adequate support
  - Identified 5 that we could not ultimately find sufficient evidence
- No data to help address areas of under-representation in organization
- Improvements needed to training and to control access to hiring files

# Detailed Results – 4 Key Policies

- Fair hiring and employment equity policies:
  - Detail fair recruitment and selection activities
  - No monitoring or reporting under fair hiring policy
- Non-union and appointments policies:
  - Lack of details leaves inconsistencies with fair and transparent hiring
    - Use of internal only vs open competition vs appointment
- Lack clear processes and guidance for many hiring activities
  - Appointments process, candidate screening and pre-employment checks

# Detailed Results – Competition Testing

- Concerns with **all 40 files tested**
  - Required extensive work and discussions with staff
    - Recruitment plans brief, incomplete details
    - Initial screenings, testings, and interviews not well documented
- Final decision not supported in 4 competition files
  - Assessment and rationale did not support who was hired
- No process to track non-compliance with hiring policies
- Positions designated for under-represented groups; need improvement
  - Qualified, self-identified candidates hired in tested files
  - No equity data to identify areas of under-representation

# Detailed Results – Appointments

- Unable to justify 5 of 10 appointments
  - 2 called temporary, not competed, effectively permanent
  - 2 reference only business unit restructuring, no explanation
  - 1 senior management position, no support
- Ultimately accepted circumstances for remaining 5 appointments
- Lack of support for all 10 appointments tested
  - Required extensive discussions and digging to find any support available
  - None showed how individual met qualifications
  - 4 files lacked an appointment request letter

# Detailed Results – Quality and Training

- Poor hiring file documentation and no quality monitoring
  - No process to review and check files are complete
- Not all hiring managers had taken mandatory training
  - 6 of 25 – lack hiring manager certification
  - 18 of 25 – lack diversity and inclusion
- No monitoring to confirm hiring managers completed relevant training prior to participating in hiring process

# Detailed Results – Inappropriate Access

- Hiring file access was not restricted
  - 22 employees had access not required for their job (addressed)
- Online recruitment system access issues
  - No process to monitor access
  - No information on access roles
- Confidentiality and conflict of interest forms not completed for many files
  - 17 of 37 competitions did not have completed forms

# Wrap Up

17 Recommendations

All accepted by management

HRM to implement  
recommendations

Follow up in 18 months

# Upcoming Reports

- 2023-24 Annual Report and 2024-25 Audit Priorities to release in April
- Upcoming follow up work will include:
  - Corporate Real Estate Development and Sale of Industrial Lands, Land and Building Acquisition and Disposal Audit





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Questions?