

Government of Nunavut Response to the Standing Committee on Oversight of Government Operations and Public Accounts

Report on the Review of the 2010 Report of the Auditor General Of Canada to the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut on Human Resource Capacity in the Government of Nunavut

The Standing Committee held its hearings on the Auditor General's 2010 report on Human Resource Capacity in the Government of Nunavut on September 27-28, 2010. Witnesses from the Office of the Auditor General, the Department of Human Resources, the Department of Education, and the Department of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs appeared before the Standing Committee. The Auditor General's report presented fifteen specific recommendations. These recommendations addressed the areas of: planning, staffing, training and development and human resource tools. In response to these fifteen recommendations the Department of Human Resources presented an Action Plan.

Subsequently in March of 2011 Standing Committee presented the report on its review of the Auditor General of Canada to the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut on Human Resource Capacity in the Government of Nunavut. In its report Standing Committee made five (5) recommendations.

As per Rule 91(5) of the Rules of the Legislative Assembly, the Government of Nunavut has 120 days from the tabling of the Standing Committee Report to provide a comprehensive response.

This response individually addresses the specific recommendations made by the Standing Committee.

This response individually addresses the specific recommendations made by the Standing Committee, in furtherance of building human resources capacity within the Government of Nunavut.

Standing Committee Recommendation #1:
Issue: Reporting and Performance Measures

The importance of providing ongoing, formal reports to the Legislative Assembly on what specific actions are being taken to improve the human resource capacity of the government and an accounting of how their effectiveness is being measured. The Standing committee recommends that the next report on the status of the government's action plan in response to the recommendations in the report of the Auditor General be tabled in the Legislative Assembly on the first day of the fall 2011 sitting of the House. The Standing committee further recommends that this report, wherever possible, present clear measures of progress in achieving such goals as reducing the length of time required to fill vacant positions. The Standing committee further recommends that this report account for what specific collaborative initiatives have been taken by the Department of Human Resources, the Department of Education and Nunavut Arctic College. The Standing committee notes that the government's success in achieving measurable progress will help guide future deliberations concerning the question of whether the government's current model of centralized human resources management continues to be appropriate. The Standing Committee further notes that the results of the government's current functional review of decentralization, which are anticipated to be provided in mid-2011, will also benefit the consideration of this issue.

GN Response:

- *The Department of Human Resources looks forward to the opportunity to provide a report on the status of its action plan and will ensure that a report is tabled in the fall 2011 sitting of the Legislative Assembly.*

Standing Committee Recommendation #2:
Issue: New timeline for Beneficiary Representation

The importance of accelerating the Government of Nunavut's timetable for the setting of a new target date for achieving a fully representative level of Inuit employment across all occupational categories in its departments, Crown corporations and agencies.

GN Response:

- *The Department of Human Resources recognizes the importance of achieving a fully representative level of Inuit employment across all occupational categories in all departments, corporations and agencies. To reach a fully representative workforce the Government of Nunavut must assess its needs, determine what is available in the population served and determine the gaps between what is available and what is required.*
- *To work toward a fully representative workforce, the Department of Human Resources has numerous initiatives many on-going and several in the planning stages. The on-going initiatives include the implementation of the Inuit Employment Steering Committee. Meeting regularly, the committee is responsible for working within the Department of Human Resources as well as with departments/boards/agencies of the Government of Nunavut to implement and monitor programs that will assist in achieving a representative workforce in a timely fashion. Recent discussion has centered on the barriers to Inuit Employment and practical solutions to address these barriers.*
- *The Department of Human Resources has reviewed and improved the Transfer Assignment and Direct Appointment process. Improvements include: completion of performance reviews, criminal record checks and detailed analysis of each request. In the future requests will be reviewed to determine if a Learning Plan is necessary to assist in skills development and increase success rates of beneficiaries.*
- *The Department of Human Resources has been working with the Department of Community and Government Services (CGS) to review the computer hardware and software capacity of the Government of Nunavut with a view to developing a skills inventory system. This system would catalogue the skills required to perform jobs, the skills available within Nunavut and assist in predicting the gap between skills needed and availability of skills. This information will assist in setting*

specific training programs for beneficiaries, as well as provide strategic information that can assist in the promotion of Inuit Employment across the government.

- *The Department of Human Resources has developed a Strategic Human Resource Framework. The framework includes goals, objectives and strategies to improve recruitment, retention and training in the Government of Nunavut. All of the strategies have a performance measure and each measure has a measurement tool. A reporting schedule that indicates who is responsible for reporting on the measurement has been developed. The Tamapta Building Capacity Committee is responsible for receiving the measurement reports and monitoring the strategies.*
- *The Department of Human Resources has re-profiled a position to become a Quality Assurance Specialist. The position is responsible for conducting quality control audits on Human Resource Department programs. The outcome of the audits will be to recommend improvements in human resource processes. The position will audit the Summer Student Employment Equity Program and then will audit staffing files. These audits will ensure a focus on beneficiaries.*
- *Other Department of Human Resources initiatives to achieve a fully representative workforce across all occupational categories include:*
 - *Recent review and renewal of the Priority Hiring Policy*
 - *Modernization of the Public Service Act and Regulations*
 - *Occupational Training Programs*
 - *Career Development Strategy*
 - *Mentorship Program*
 - *Sivuliqtiksatsat Internship Program*
 - *Nunavut Advanced Management Program*
 - *Specialized Training Fund*
 - *Annual Training Needs Assessment Survey*
 - *Inuktitut/Inuinnaqtun Language Program, and*
 - *Employee and Cultural Orientation Programming*

Standing Committee Recommendation #3:**Issue: Review of annual increases in public service positions**

The importance of reviewing the long-term sustainability of annual increases in the number of positions in the territorial public service.

GN Response:

- *The Department of Human Resources recognizes the importance of reviewing the long-term sustainability of annual increases in the number of positions in the territorial public service and to this end implemented the practice of providing monthly vacancy reports to all departments. The departments are able to utilize these reports for planning purposes. We recognize that adding positions without looking at vacancies increases the total number of positions but does not provide a comprehensive position control plan for the Government of Nunavut. Recognizing which positions are vacant and the length of the vacancy will assist the department in determining the ability to provide specific services over a period of time, as well as assist in human resource planning within the departments.*
- *The Department of Human Resources is working with the Department of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs and the Department of Finance to review position control within the government to ensure all budgeted positions are entered into the Human Resource Information System to ensure accurate vacancy reporting.*
- *The Department of Human Resources Leave and Attendance initiative is also a response to long-term sustainability in regards to positions within the territorial public service. As the Government of Nunavut reduces absenteeism across all departments, boards and agencies, increasing the number of positions will not be required.*
- *These projects will have an impact on position control and thus impact human resource planning.*

Standing Committee Recommendation #4:
Issue: Tabling of Departmental Documents

The importance of timely tabling in the Legislative Assembly of key departmental documents, including the government's Public Service Annual Report and its quarterly Inuit Employment Reports. As of February 25, 2011, the 2009-2010 Public Service Annual Report had not yet been tabled, although the fiscal year had ended eleven months earlier. As of February 25, 2011, the most recent publicly-available quarterly Inuit employment report was for June 2010. The information in these documents is essential for ensuring that Members of the legislative Assembly and the public are kept informed of the government's actions and outcomes in the area of human resource management.

GN Response:

- *The Department of Human Resources agrees that it is important to table key departmental documents to the Legislative Assembly in a timely fashion. The Public Service Annual Report for 2009-2010 has been tabled in the Legislative Assembly. The 2010-2011 Public Service Annual Report is being completed and will be tabled in the fall session of the Legislative Assembly. The quarterly Inuit employment report for March 2011 has been completed and submitted to Cabinet. The June 2011 Inuit employment report will be tabled in the fall session of the Legislative Assembly.*
- *The Department of Human Resources is committed to improved reporting and the timely tabling of key departmental documents. To this end the Department of Human Resources is implementing a more efficient process of completing the quarterly Inuit employment report.*

Standing Committee Recommendation #5:**Issue: Government of Nunavut's position on federal funding levels**

The importance of clarifying, in its response to this report, the Government of Nunavut's position concerning federal funding levels in relation to the territorial government's obligations under Article 23 of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement.

GN Response:

- *The Department of Human Resources recognizes the importance of clarifying the Government of Nunavut's position concerning federal funding levels in relation to the territorial government's obligations under Article 23 of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement. The Government of Nunavut will continue to lobby the federal government for funding in regarding to obligations under Article 23. As well, the Government of Nunavut continues to work, at all levels within the government to increase capacity through dedicated programs, proactive practices, specialized/dedicated learning and work plans and active recruitment and retention protocols.*

Concluding Comments

The Government of Nunavut recognizes that many improvements are being made in Human Resources management such as improved report production, measurement of vacancies, review of systems and processes; there is still a great deal of work to be accomplished. Continuous progress in human resources practices will be made with the continued support of Standing Committee.