

Corporate Human Resources Strategic Plan for the GNWT Public Service

FINAL REPORT

Submitted by:

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ACRONYMS

ADM – Assistant Deputy Minister
DM – Deputy Minister
FMBS – Financial Management Board Secretariat
GNWT – Government of the Northwest Territories
LGANT – Local Government Administrators of the NWT
GOA – Government of Alberta
HR – Human Resources
HQ – Headquarters
IPS – Investing in Public Service
MLA – Member of the Legislative Assembly
NLA – Northern living Allowance
NWT – Northwest Territories
NWTTA – Northwest Territories Teachers Association
PY – Person years
SPSS – Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
UNW – Union of Northern Workers
WSSC – Workers Safety and Compensation Commission

1 INTRODUCTION

In October 2008 all Members of the 16th Legislative Assembly met together to discuss their vision for the next four years, agreeing on a vision of “strong individuals, families and communities sharing the benefits and responsibilities of a unified, environmentally sustainable and prosperous Northwest Territories.” These ideas and goals were further defined in *Northerners Working Together*, published in December 2008.

Based on the vision and priorities of the Assembly, the Cabinet identified a set of five strategic initiatives that will serve as the basis for the GNWT’s planned actions over the next four years. One of these, “*Refocusing Government*”, aims to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of government operations.

Department of Human Resources (DHR) responded in kind to this initiative with the goal of creating a Corporate Human Resources Strategic Plan and supporting Action Plan to guide implementation.

In striving to fulfill its mission, the GNWT faces several challenges which can be grouped in five areas:

Stabilizing Service Delivery

- Customer service response times to client departments needs to be improved;
- Pay and benefits inquiries and processes are inefficient;
- Service provision and corresponding roles are not always linked;

Attraction & Recruitment

- Comparatively higher salaries in private sector employment;
- Recruiting qualified Aboriginal employees (who constitute over 50% of the NWT’s population but comprise only about 31% of the NWT public service);
- Recruiting employees from the South, due to the high cost of living and the small size and remote location of most NWT communities;
- An aging workforce; imminent retirement of a large proportion of senior management;
- Recruitment pressures from a finite (and decreasing) skilled and professional labour pool;

Engagement & Retention

- Desire to develop northerners for leadership and management roles;
- Employee satisfaction and engagement including the provision of a quality and healthy work environment

Learning & Development

- Managing a work environment that has nine official languages (all but two of which are Aboriginal) and respects cultural differences and the unique social conditions of the North;
- Managing expectations (internal, external and public);
- Continuous change forces based on social, economic, political and fiscal realities – including competitive/attractive compensation and benefits;

Success & Succession

- Expensive housing, with limited staff housing availability in many communities;
- The loss of corporate history when public servants retire or pursue careers in the private sector.

Under these circumstances, developing a competent, professional work force born in the NWT remains an ambitious goal. While the government has made impressive strides since its establishment in 1967, the GNWT needs to successfully address both its pan-Canada and NWT-specific human resource challenges in order to fulfill its mission and achieve its vision and supporting objectives.

1.1 Project Goals and Objectives

The goal of the Human Resources Strategic Plan (“Strategic Plan”) is to ensure the GNWT public service reflects the demographics of the territory as a whole and provides a work environment that reflects principles of fairness, equity and accountability. Primary objectives of the strategic plan are to describe the initiatives that will be undertaken over the next decade in re-affirming the GNWT public service as the best place to work in the NWT. The plan will also set the stage and provide the framework for the development of individual departmental human resource plans.

The accompanying Action Plan (under separate cover) will be the guiding document that describes the specific work that will be undertaken between 2009 – 2012 in realizing the goals set forward in the strategic plan – a plan that will reflect the unique needs and aspirations of NWT residents.

The plans support the GNWT’s desire to ensure it has the “right people, in the right places at the right time”. To achieve this, the approach to the assignment facilitated the identification of innovation to manage the challenges and drivers facing the GNWT Public Service.

The **Strategic Plan** provides the vision, long-term goals and key initiatives necessary to guide the public service towards becoming an employer of choice in the territory over the next 10 years. It reflects the aspirations of multiple stakeholders: (1) the 16th Legislative Assembly; (2) GNWT public service; (3) special interest groups (e.g. youth, persons with disabilities, unions); and (4) Aboriginal government and Community government partners. It also reflects research into best practices within the public services in other jurisdictions.

The **Action Plan** identifies short-term objectives, actions, timeframes and performance results required to make progress in implementing the HR strategic plan and realizing the strategic plan’s stated goals during the 16th Legislative Assembly’s tenure. It focuses on issues such as developing a client-centered corporate culture; the creation of department-specific HR plans; resolving inconsistencies in service delivery to clients; enabling HR centres of excellence by building linkages across HR resources in various GNWT departments; and benchmarking the GNWT’s performance in relation to other jurisdictions.

1.2 Project Approach and Methodology

The collaborative team assembled for this project leveraged its collective strengths, including: thorough knowledge about the NWT context and history; experience in all aspects of human

capital planning and management; and the methodological aspects of the objectives achieved in successfully executing this project.

A facilitated and client-centered approach to strategic planning is key to an effective and successful set of plans. The real value of the approach is that most of the knowledge needed to establish priorities, confirm organizational culture and values, identify goals and develop actions/implementation plans for an enhanced planning framework exists in the management, staff and partners of the organizations involved.

The purpose of a facilitated approach was to mine the corporate knowledge by directly involving the management, staff, special interest groups, and partners in assessing and defining the future human resource and organizational needs. This methodology leads to:

- Confirm the common vision;
- Flesh out, goals and principles to support the vision;
- Identify the challenges and opportunities facing the department;
- Chart a path forward for achieving the goals while being sensitive to the unique NWT drivers facing the public service;
- Identify implementation requirements including costs, staffing changes, risks, and other factors based on findings;
- Identify performance measurement systems to evaluate the effectiveness of implementation plans;
- Identify implementation time frames, roles and responsibilities, accountability mechanisms, and contingency measures for implementation;
- Provide advice and options for innovative business practices; and
- Actively involve key partners (e.g. department heads, collective bargaining units, public service employees, Aboriginal and Community governments) in developing the HR Strategic Plan.

The consultants designed and led processes (i.e. focus groups and interviews) in such a way that issues were identified and discussed, the range of options were fully assessed and the implications of any selected action were fully understood and addressed (Figure 1). Details on the work program are available in Appendix 1. The collective project teams ensured that the right questions were asked, and that the right people were involved.

FIGURE 1: STRATEGIC PLANNING AND ACTION PLANNING STAGES



A variety of stakeholders reflecting the geographic diversity of the GNWT public service, as well as tenure, profession (e.g. health, social services, education, etc.) and rank (i.e. interns, management, senior management) within the organization were engaged, contributing valuable time and feedback to the review team.

The review team conducted interviews, meetings, focus group sessions, and surveys (both online and by mail), including individuals and organizations within and external to the GNWT. These sessions and surveys provided feedback from MLAs, the NWT Teachers Association, the Union of Northern Workers, deputy ministers, persons with disabilities and other special interest groups, Aboriginal governments, community governments, and all levels of GNWT staff, forming a solid set of qualitative and quantitative information to be analyzed and examined in developing the Strategic Plan. A tabular summary of the consultation methods for the various stakeholder groups is included under Appendix 2.

The strategic planning process as represented in Figure 2 below provides a guide to the overall steps.

FIGURE 2: STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS PHASES



1.3 Project Organization and Management

The Terriplan team worked with a collaborative, or partnership, approach with DHR in managing and successfully completing the assignment. In doing so, the following three principles of collaboration provided the foundation for effective cooperation, communication and active involvement of all parties in the project.

Principle #1: The approach must recognize a wide range of parties and interests and specifically accommodate these in the project design

The project design to collaboratively involve the various stakeholders in this project (i.e., the HR leadership and study team, the community governments, Aboriginal governments, DHR Senior Management, special interests, and the Terriplan team) in a manner that addresses the various interests, information requirements, and needs for involvement.

Principle #2: The project design is supported by collaborative teamwork

Teamwork and effective communications were key elements contributing to the design of this project. Close collaboration and regular, frequent communications among the key stakeholders on project progress, meeting results, potential issues, changes in direction or procedure were communicated quickly and effectively.

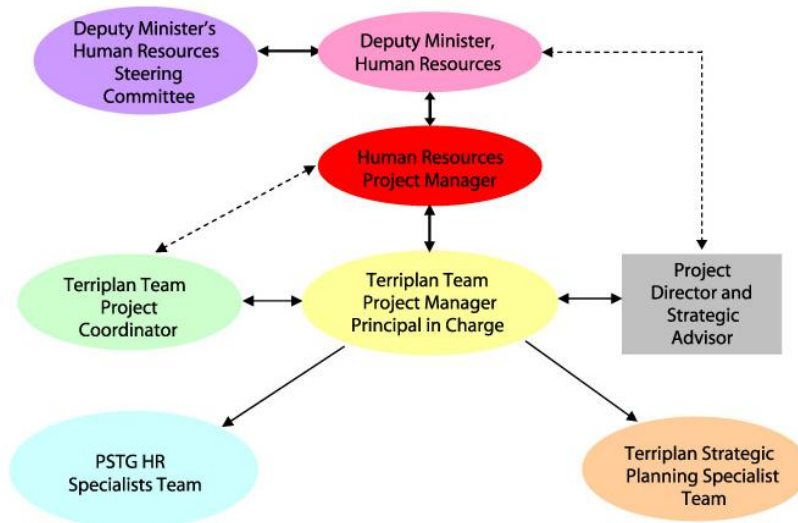
Principle #3: Decision-making should be based on collaborative solutions

A well-designed project can succeed in developing solutions that will have the support of all parties. To achieve this, information was freely shared/presented, key concerns and priorities

discussed, differing viewpoints explored, and outstanding issues resolved with a variety of key stakeholders to ensure the project objectives were being met through the project lifecycle.

To successfully execute the assignment, Terriplan's Project Manager was supported by HR and strategic planning specialist team members to ensure that timelines were met and deliverables were relevant and within the project scope. The Terriplan team worked closely with the GNWT's HR Strategic Plan Team (Figure 3).

FIGURE 3: TEAM STRUCTURE



1.4 Limitations and Data Gaps

Two limitations in our evaluation of the GNWT public service included:

- The scope of the review; and
- Extent of data collection.

1.4.1 Scope of the Review

The surveys, interviews, and focus groups were undertaken to collect a “snapshot” of the current state of GNWT human resource conditions. The methodology was effective in capturing a large volume of both quantitative and qualitative information reflective of the public service.

1.4.2 Extent of Data Collection

In terms of the online and mail-in surveys, the extent of data collected may have statistical significance for some, but not all groups (e.g. gender, age, position with the GNWT, tenure, location, position (i.e. intern / casual / full time), and ethnicity). However, the overall survey response rate shows that the results represent a statistically valid sample of stakeholders. The survey results, combined with feedback collected through meetings, interviews, and focus groups ensures that the Strategic Plan was informed by a comprehensive set of indicators and measures that are relevant to all members of the GNWT public service.

1.5 Report Structure and Organization

This report is structured as follows:

- 1.0 – Introduction
- 2.0 – Background
- 3.0 – Methodology
- 4.0 – Research and Consultation Findings
- 5.0 – Proposed Human Resources Strategic Plan

The report includes the following appendices:

- Appendix 1 – Work Program and Schedule
- Appendix 2 – Stakeholder Consultation Table
- Appendix 3 – Surveys
- Appendix 4 – Interview and Focus Group Questions
- Appendix 5 – Detailed Jurisdictional Scan
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The Action Plan – under separate cover and developed in concert with the strategic plan and includes the following components:

- Purpose as related to the strategic plan;
- Specific objectives;
- Detailed activities over three years;
- A communications plan;
- A change management plan; and
- Performance Measures

2 BACKGROUND

The following section describes the linkages between the GNWT Strategic Plan and this plan, provides contextual background information, briefly describes the GNWT Public Service and profiles the NWT labour market.

2.1 Linking and Integrating a Human Resources Strategic Plan to the GNWT Strategic Plan

A key organizational requisite for the GNWT will be to establish a vital link between the government strategic plan and this Strategic Plan. This link must be based on the ability of the government to have a workforce which is best able to achieve the objectives of the Strategic Plan. The government must ensure the right resources are in place throughout the public service and are effectively carrying out their responsibilities. In short, the GNWT Strategic Plan cannot be achieved without a well qualified, engaged, and vibrant workforce.

As an enabler and integrator, the Human Resources Strategic Plan will:

- Anticipate and plan human resource needs to achieve the government business plan;
- Anticipate required changes in the workforce (to respond to strategic business priorities and to anticipate changes due to demographic trends);
- Enable the government to align and concentrate resources on key business areas and areas of high priority within the Strategic Plan; and
- Enable decision-making and management effectiveness to achieve the Strategic Plan.

The following chart is an extract from the goals and priorities identified in the *Northerners Working Together* document. It identifies the six goals and those priorities which need to be considered as key government and business drivers of the Strategic Plan. It is important that the Strategic Plan is rooted in the overall philosophical and business directions of the GNWT so it is meaningful and relevant to the public, politicians, public service leaders and employees. As you review the key findings of the research and the strategic goals of the Strategic Plan, you will see common themes that are initiated in *Northerners Working Together* (next page). The Strategic Plan will enable innovation and risk taking throughout the GNWT.

Northerners Working Together

Goals and Selected Priorities of the 16th Legislative Assembly					
Strong and independent North	An environment that will sustain present and future generations	*Healthy, educated people	A diversified economy that provides all communities and regions with opportunities and choices	Sustainable, vibrant, safe communities	Effective and Efficient Government
<p><i>*Strengthen awareness of our northern identity and uniqueness by promoting our successes, our culture, our arts, and our languages with a proud and unified voice.</i></p> <p><i>*Build strong partnerships with northern governments on areas of common interest</i></p>	<p><i>*Work proactively with residents, communities and industry on mitigation of climate change</i></p>	<p><i>*Promote healthy choices and lifestyles</i></p> <p><i>*Improve support for children and adults with special needs and disabilities</i></p> <p><i>*Improve physical and mental well-being of our youth</i></p>	<p><i>*Build community human resource capacity with an emphasis on trades and entrepreneurial skills</i></p>	<p><i>*Pursue initiatives to reduce the cost of living...</i></p>	<p><i>*Thorough analysis of the efficiency, effectiveness and value of current government operations</i></p> <p><i>*Achieve greater effectiveness, efficiencies and a more client-focused, service-oriented approach through better planning, coordination and communication between GNWT departments</i></p> <p><i>*Improve human resource management within the GNWT through training, career planning and encouraging innovation by employees</i></p>

The Strategic Plan contains elements that are consistent through other strategic plans, including a strategic Human Resource Vision, Goals to achieve the Vision, Objectives to achieve the Goals, and Action Plans to ensure the objectives will be completed in the requisite timeframes. It will be important to ensure government leaders consider both this Strategic Plan and the GNWT Strategic Plan as an integrated effort, and to the extent possible, make decisions with both plans in mind.

It will also be important to implement and assess the performance of the organization in an integrated manner, wherever possible. This will provide the government with important information relative to success, challenges, and implementation effectiveness of both plans.

2.2 Defining Human Resources and Human Resource Management in the NWT context

The GNWT has a broad mandate within the NWT and serves a diverse community with unique interests and needs. The broad mandate of the government requires significant focus on the management of human resources, in order to enable the government to achieve its priorities. From the human resource management perspective, the government must have a public service workforce which is qualified and deployed in a manner which best serves the public. The government must put in place the necessary human resource management programs and

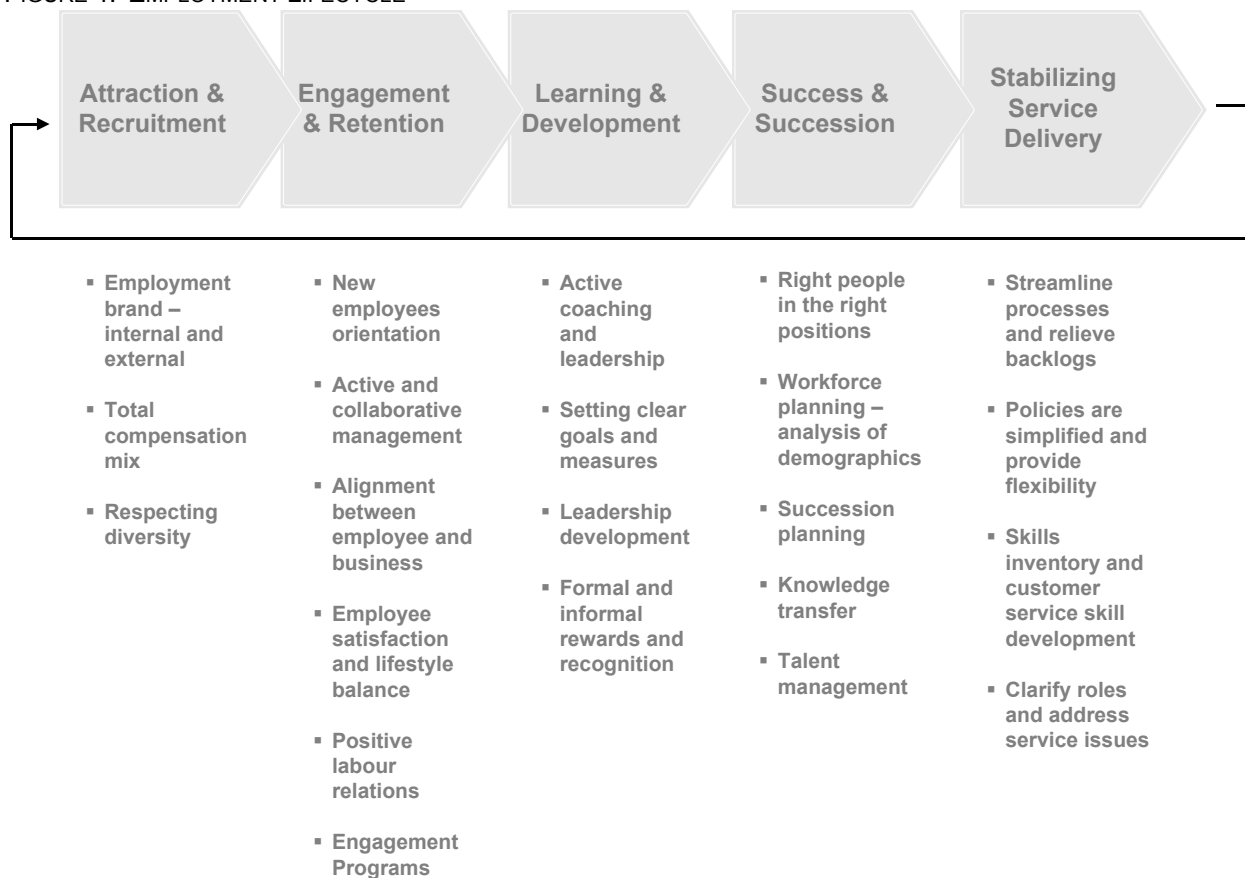
services which will enable the leadership of the public service to achieve its mandate. The government must also respond to current challenges, including:

- An ageing workforce and imminent retirements;
- Continuous changes based on social, economic, political and fiscal realities;
- Recruitment pressures based on a limited skilled and professional labour pool;
- The loss of corporate history when public servants retire or pursue other careers;
- High cost of living; and
- Remoteness and isolation.

Therefore the management of human resources, like other resources, must be carried out in a manner which responds to current pressures and challenges, anticipates future trends, and provides the workforce with opportunities to grow and develop.

Figure 4 illustrates an employment lifecycle which is relevant to the GNWT public service. Each element represents key human resource management requirements, and together the elements will provide for the effective management of human resources and a dynamic public service.

FIGURE 4: EMPLOYMENT LIFECYCLE



The lifecycle cannot, however, stand alone. Putting in place the necessary human resource strategies, programs, and activities to enable the lifecycle is an organization requisite. To be

effective, each lifecycle element will be supported by the Strategic Plan, and will assist leaders in achieving program success.

The effective management of human resources within the GNWT public service demands an infrastructure of programs and service to be achieved. Leaders must be given the authority to lead, and staff of the GNWT public service must be empowered to do their jobs and perform to the expected levels.

The environment, the breadth of the GNWT, and the overall needs of the public and the workforce, make the management of human resources a key priority for the foreseeable future.

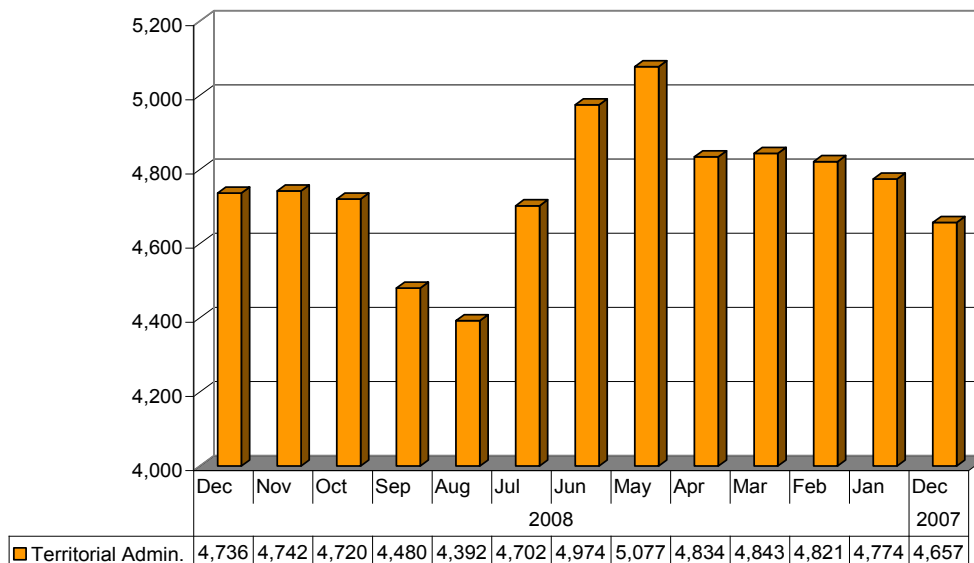
The environment, the breadth of the GNWT, and the overall needs of the public and the workforce, make the management of human resources a key priority for the foreseeable future.

2.3 Profile of the GNWT Public Service

The GNWT is a major employer in the territory. Presently, the NWT public service employs about 1/10 of the total population and nearly 16% of the 28,930 persons aged between 15 and 59 years. The NWT public service is divided into 14 departments and 13 agencies and provides a broad range of programs and services to residents of the NWT's 33 communities. Fifty two percent (52%) of the NWT public servants are employed in communities and regional centres (i.e., not in Yellowknife). Most (86%) of the NWT public servants are Unionized.

From December 2007 to December 2008 territorial employment figures have fluctuated, with a net increase of 79 (Figure 5). Recognizing the challenges in recruiting and retention, combined with other policy-based demands (e.g. Affirmative Action), attracting and hiring new, qualified candidates to the GNWT will be a priority of the Strategic Plan.

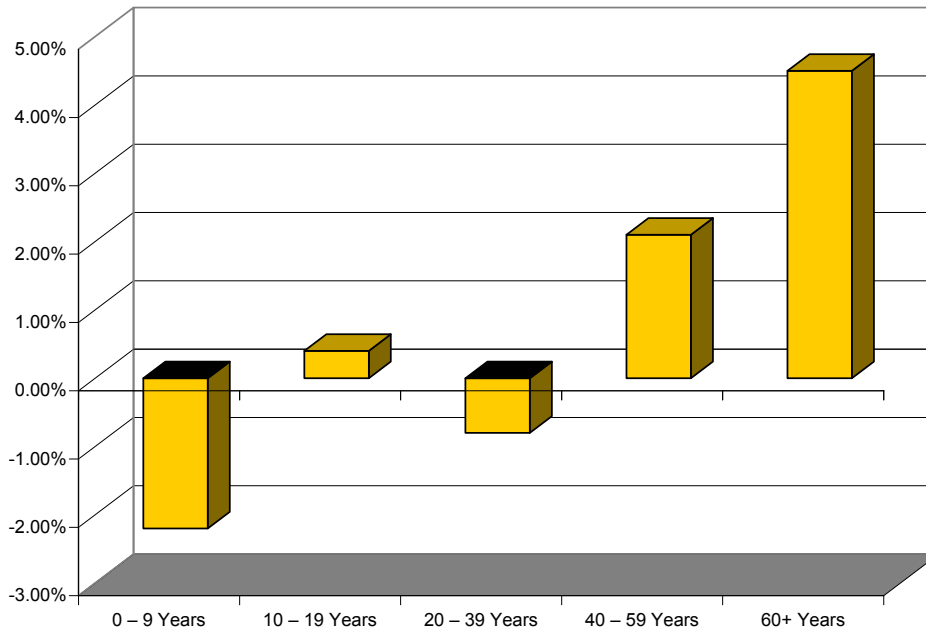
FIGURE 5: GOVERNMENT EMPLOYMENT (MONTHLY; DEC. 2007 – DEC. 2008)



Source: NWT Labour Force Activity - January 2009 – NWT Bureau of Statistics

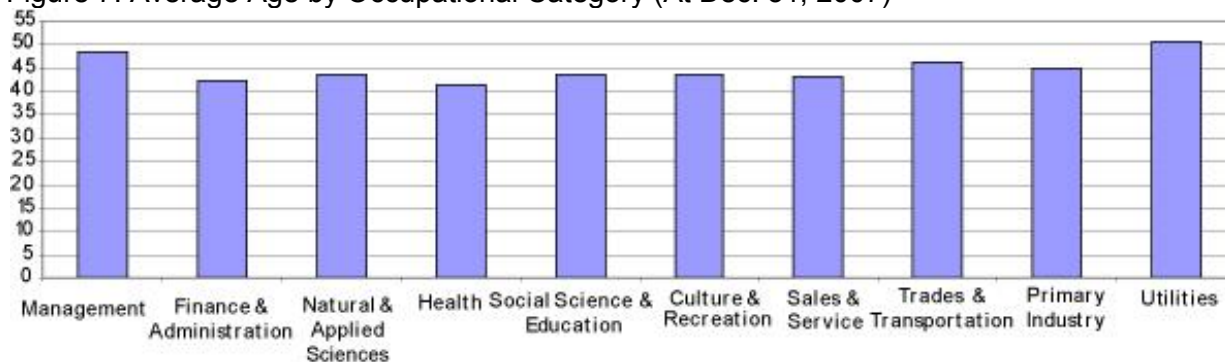
As of the 2007 GNWT Public Service Annual Report, the average employee was 44 years old, had a salary of \$73,589 per year and 7.6 years of service. Besides the 10-19 years age group, the 40 – 59 years and 60+ years age groups are growing the most quickly in the NWT (Figure 6). Figure 7 illustrates the average age by occupational category, showing health workers to be the youngest and utilities workers to be the oldest (on average).

Figure 6. NWT Population Growth, by Age: 1997-2007



Source: Statistics Canada Population Estimates

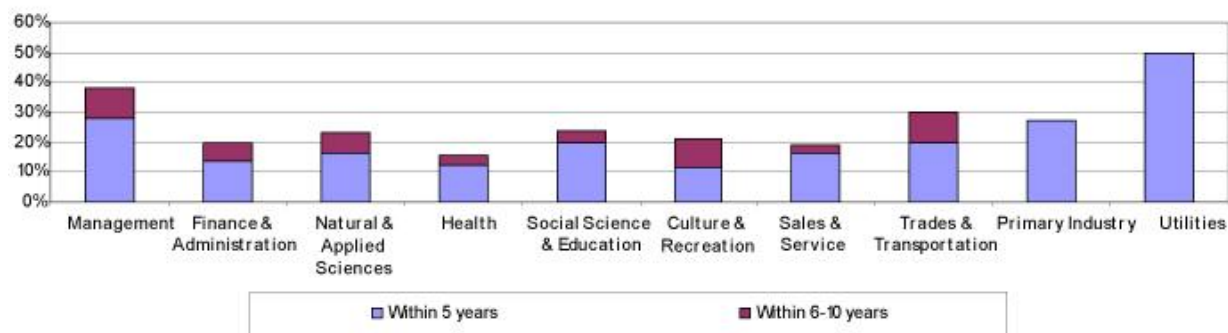
Figure 7: Average Age by Occupational Category (At Dec. 31, 2007)



Source: Government of the Northwest Territories 2007 Public Service Annual Report

Many occupational categories in the GNWT will face attrition (by retirement) in the coming years, most significantly Management and Culture & Recreation which are anticipated to lose approximately 10% of their ranks (Figure 8).

Figure 8: Retirement Rate Projection over the next 10 years (by occupational category; at Dec. 31, 2007)



Source: Government of the Northwest Territories 2007 Public Service Annual Report

Adding to these demographic shifts is another dilemma for the GNWT: it does not have consistently available revenues to make needed investments. Despite the GNWT's goal to provide affordable public services, revenue growth is not keeping pace with expenses. The high cost of providing basic public services in the North means that NWT taxpayers cannot generate all of the revenues necessary to fund these programs and services. The challenge will be to protect basic services and ensure that social well-being is not compromised, while making needed investments now to secure future fiscal and economic gains. The government's fiscal situation and strategy will affect how quickly the government can implement the actions identified in the Strategic and Action Plans. Other consequences of the fiscal situation include fewer approvals for funding larger scale training and development activities.

There are unique challenges to delivering public services in the NWT, including a majority Aboriginal population that represents a mix of cultures and official languages. NWT communities – many of them small (less than 1,000 residents) - are spread out over 1.2 million km² and the provision of services is shared among community, Aboriginal, territorial, and federal governments. Additionally, high costs of northern living and in some cases better-paying private sector jobs in the south lead people to move south.

However, and despite the financial and demographic pressures, the GNWT is faring well in terms of employee satisfaction. In 2004 the GNWT, along with several other jurisdictions, committed to conducting employee satisfaction and engagement surveys on a regular basis. This led to the first GNWT survey in 2006 and a commitment by the GNWT to re-conduct the survey every two years.

An overview of the 2008 survey results indicates that employees continue to show a high degree of job satisfaction and engagement as more than half agreed or strongly agreed with nearly all of the statements. Almost 88% felt they had positive working relationships with their co-workers. Additionally, over 86% of employees knew how their work contributed to the achievement of department goals and felt their job was a good fit with skills and interests. Table 1 provides a summary of the results.

TABLE 1: OVERVIEW OF RESULTS, 2008 EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION AND ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

	Strongly Disagree or Disagree (%)	Undecided (%)	Agree or Strongly Agree (%)
I know how my work contributes to the achievement of my department's goals.	5.4	7.7	86.5
I have opportunities to provide meaningful input into decisions that affect my work.	19.8	13.1	66.8
I have positive working relationships with my coworkers.	4.7	6.7	87.8
I have confidence in our senior leadership	23	21.4	55.3
The person I report to is an effective leader.	17.8	18.2	63.7
I have a positive working relationship with the person I report to.	8.6	12.5	78.5
My job is a good fit with my skills and interests.	5.5	8.1	86.1
My organization supports my work related learning and development.	16.4	16.5	67
I have opportunities for career growth within this organization.	26.7	22.8	50
I receive meaningful recognition for work well done.	25.6	19.9	54.3
I have support at work to provide a high level of service.	19.9	18.3	61.5
I have support at work to balance my work and personal life.	17.5	19	63.2
I am satisfied with my job.	11.6	16.4	71.8
I am satisfied with this organization.	22.2	22.1	55.4
Overall, I am satisfied with my employment.	10.5	15.1	73.1
I am proud to tell people I work for this organization.	11.6	18.2	68.5
I would prefer to stay with this organization even if offered a similar job elsewhere.	19.6	29.8	49.2
Overall, people in this organization are inspired to give their very best.	27.9	24.2	46.5
I would recommend this organization as a great place to work.	20.4	25.1	53
Overall, people in this organization strive to improve its results.	14.7	24.2	59.5
My job gives me the chance to do challenging and interesting work.	10.1	9.4	78.4
I am satisfied with my workload.	22.9	14.4	60.7
I am satisfied with my physical workplace conditions.	19.8	11.1	67.2
Commitment to quality is a high priority in this organization.	19.1	19.4	59.5
I feel this organization promotes an inclusive public service where staff are treated equitably.	27.8	18.9	51.3

Source: NWT Bureau of Statistics, March 2008

Table 2 summarizes the turnover by department, with the highest rate found in the Beaufort Delta Divisional Education Council (24.2%) and lowest rate in Finance (9.1%). The vacancies which occur from turnover will need appropriate recruiting strategies to fill these open positions, depending on the industry/field and location, among other factors. Retention and recruiting will be priority components of the Strategic Plan.

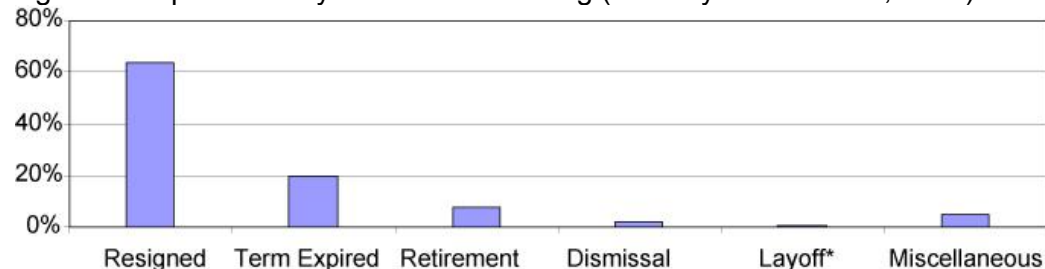
TABLE 2: EMPLOYEE TURNOVER BY DEPARTMENT (AS AT DECEMBER 31, 2007)

Department/Council/Authority	Percentage Turnover
Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations	11.40%
Aurora College	17.6%
Education, Culture and Employment	13.3%
Environment and Natural Resources	11.0%
Executive	15.3%
Finance	9.1%
Financial Management Board Secretariat	14.1%
Health and Social Services	16.2%
Human Resources	13.1%
Industry, Tourism and Investment	14.1%
Justice	11.9%
Legislative Assembly	23.1%
Municipal and Community Affairs	17.5%
Northwest Territories Housing Corporation	11.1%
Public Works and Services	9.2%
Transportation	11.9%
Beaufort Delta Divisional Education Council	24.2%
Commission Scolaire Francophone de Division	12.5%
Dehcho Divisional Education Council	16.3%
Sahtu Divisional Education Council	16.7%
South Slave Divisional Education Council	10.8%
Tijcho Community Services Agency - Education	14.8%
Beaufort Delta Health and Social Services Authority	20.1%
Dehcho Health and Social Services Authority	19.5%
Fort Smith Health and Social Services Authority	13.5%
Sahtu Health and Social Services Authority	16.9%
Stanton Territorial Health Authority	18.5%
Tijcho Community Services Agency - Health	11.8%
Yellowknife Health and Social Services Authority	14.6%
Overall Average	14.7%

Source: Government of the Northwest Territories 2007 Public Service Annual Report

Finally, employee retention and turnover rates help demonstrate employee satisfaction and commitment. In 2007, the employee retention rate was 85.3%; approximately 60% of GNWT employees resigned from their positions (Figure 9). The Strategic Plan addresses the inter-related issues which lead to these separations and will suggest actions to improve the retention rate as well as mitigate the number of resignations occurring in the GNWT.

Figure 9: Separations by Reason for Leaving (January – December, 2007)



Source: Government of the Northwest Territories 2007 Public Service Annual Report

2.4 NWT Labour Market Profile

The labour market in NWT is unique in that public sector employees make up a larger proportion of employees than is present in Canada nationally. Nearly 50% of employees in the NWT are public employees, compared to just over 20% in Canada (3.4 million of 14.45 million; Table 1).

Over the period August 2008 to January 2009, the total number of employees in the NWT has declined by over 5%. In these six months, the private sector has dropped 1,000 employees (about 9.5% in total), whereas the public sector has declined by only 1% (Table 3). The large drop in private sector employment is connected to the larger global economic downturn – which has affected the diamond-mining and natural resources industries - major employers in the NWT. Accordingly, airlines and service-based businesses have experienced the ripple effects of less activity in the NWT.¹

TABLE 3: NWT / CANADA LABOUR MARKET ACTIVITY (MONTHLY RATES)

NWT	Jan-09	%	Dec-08	Nov-08	Oct-08	Sep-08	Aug-08
Total Employees	19,700	-	20,100	20,500	20,900	20,800	20,800
Public	9,200	46.7	9,100	9,300	9,400	9,400	9,300
Private	10,500	53.3	11,000	11,300	11,500	11,400	11,500
Canada							
Total Employees	14,309,400	-	14,452,600				
Public	3,404,700	23.8	3,446,700				
Private	10,904,700	76.2	11,005,900				

Source: NWT Labour Force Activity - January 2009 – NWT Bureau of Statistics; Statistics Canada

On a different note, participation and employment rates are higher in NWT than in Canada as a whole. As Table 4 demonstrates, employment rates are historically higher in NWT than in Canada. Given the current economic climate, this information could be used in marketing and recruiting materials to attract candidates to the GNWT.

TABLE 4: LABOUR MARKET ACTIVITY (MONTHLY RATES)

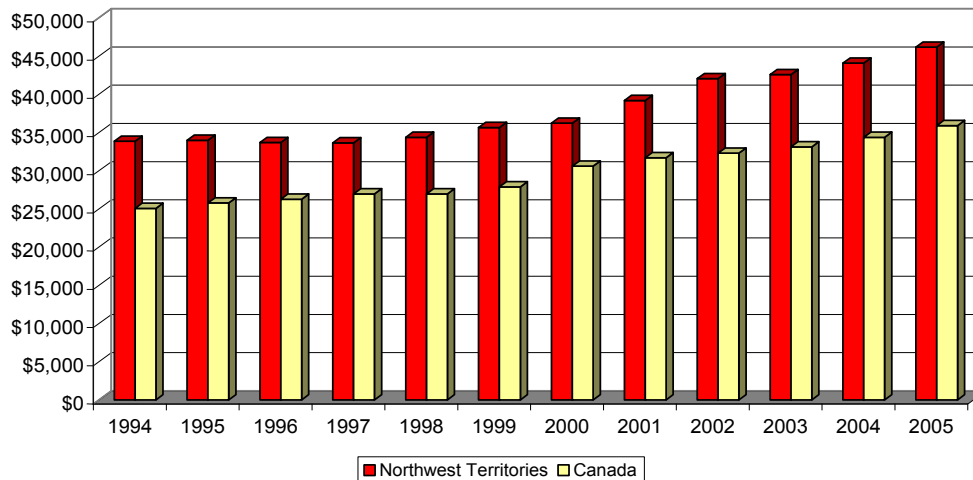
		Northwest Territories			Canada		
		Participation Rate	Unemployment Rate	Employment Rate	Participation Rate	Unemployment Rate	Employment Rate
2009	Jan	71.4	4.4	68.3	66.4	7.8	61.2
2008	Dec	72.7	5.2	68.9	67	6.3	62.8
	Nov	75.2	5.5	70.8	67.4	6.2	63.2
	Oct	75.6	4.6	72.1	67.7	5.6	63.9
	Sep	75.9	5	72.1	67.7	5.7	63.8
	Aug	76.8	5.8	72.3	69	6.5	64.5
	Jul	76.8	7.9	70.7	69	6.3	64.6
	Jun	75.1	6.8	70	68.9	5.6	65

Source: GNWT Bureau of Statistics website

¹ "Downturn Crushes Diamonds," Capital News Online; Feb. 13, 2009

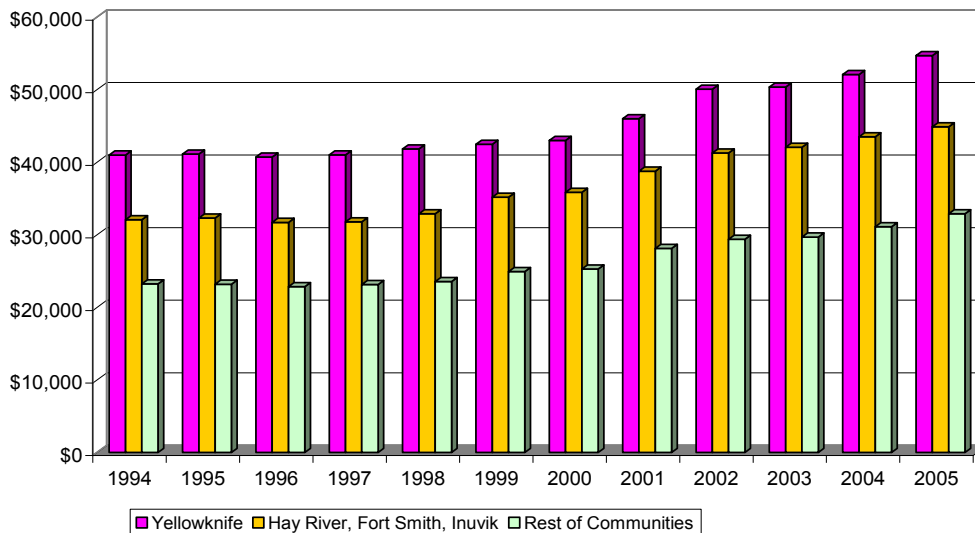
Average incomes are also higher in the NWT than in Canada, due to higher pay scales, enhanced benefits, and Northern allowances (Figure 10). This is another aspect that factors highly in the Strategic Plan. However, at the community level, there is an income disparity between Yellowknife and small communities in the territory (Figure 11/11a; next page). Generally, incomes are rising over time, but in many small communities the gap between what is earned and what is earned in Yellowknife is quite large. For example, in 2005, the average income in Gamètì was nearly \$30,000 less than the average in Yellowknife.

FIGURE 10: AVERAGE INCOME (NORTHWEST TERRITORIES & CANADA, 1994-2005)



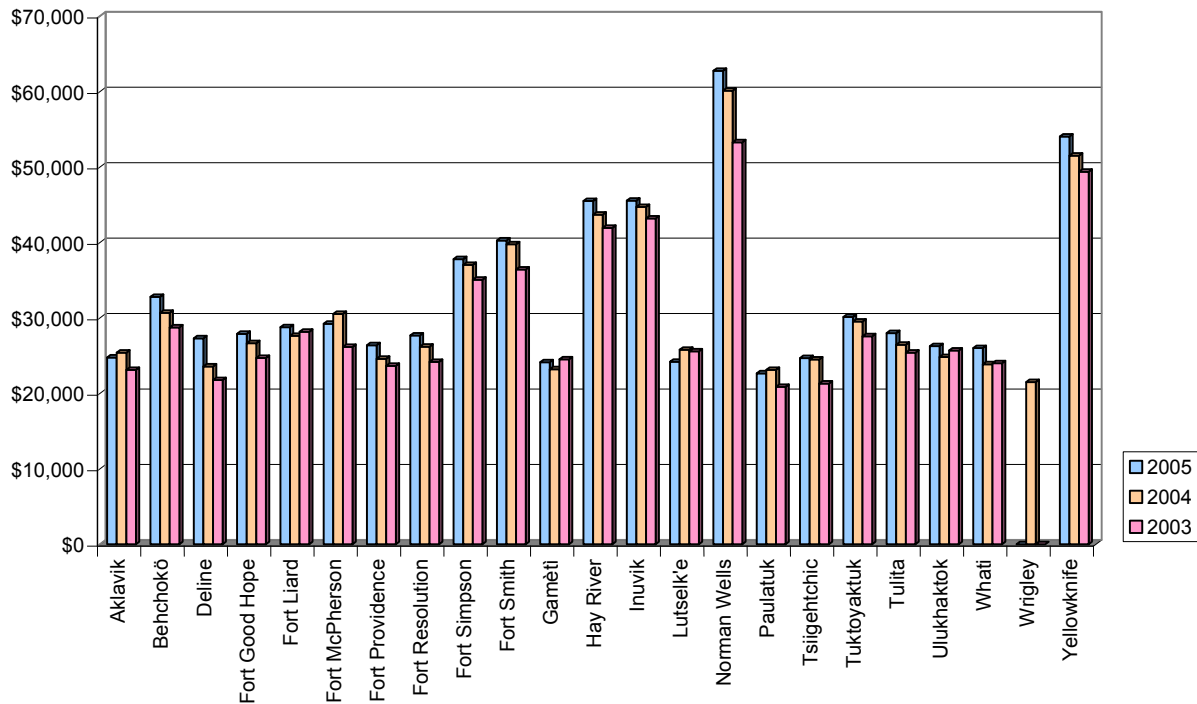
Source: Statistics Canada, Small Area and Administrative Data Division (SAADD)

FIGURE 11: AVERAGE INCOME, BY COMMUNITY (NORTHWEST TERRITORIES, 1994-2005)



Source: Statistics Canada, Small Area and Administrative Data Division (SAADD)

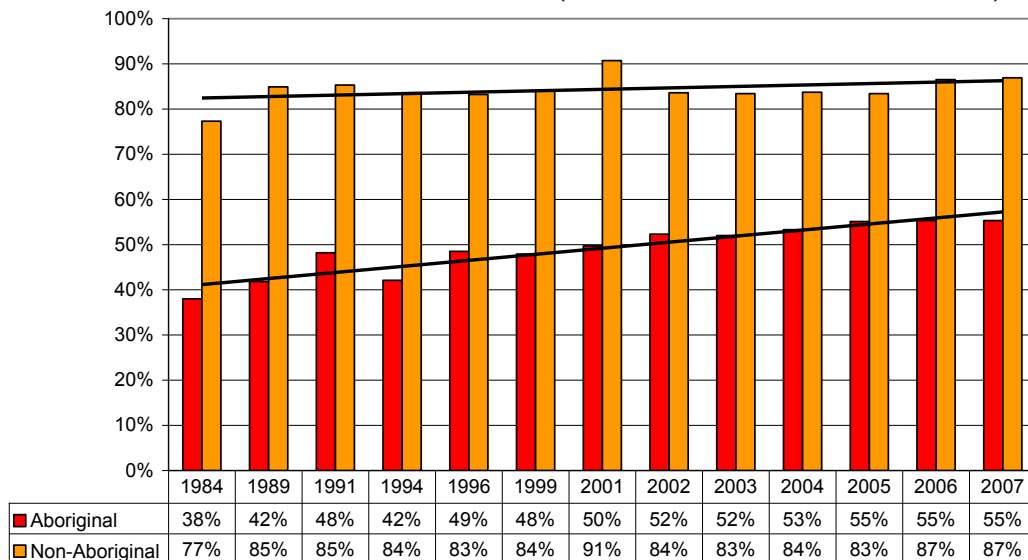
Figure 11a: Average Income (\$) Northwest Territories by community (2003 – 2005)



Source: Statistics Canada, Small Area and Administrative Data Division (SAADD)

Additionally, the employment rate disparity between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal populations is particularly significant. The margin has narrowed between 1984 and 2007, however just over half of Aboriginals are employed whereas nearly nine out of ten non-Aboriginals were employed in 2007 (Figure 12). In the context of Affirmative Action and creating a representative workforce in the GNWT, this aspect of employment will be prioritized in the Strategic Plan.

FIGURE 12: EMPLOYMENT RATE, BY ETHNIC GROUP (NORTHWEST TERRITORIES 1984-2007)



Source: NWT Bureau of Statistics, Census, Statistics Canada Monthly Labour Force Survey

Employment rates by gender (Tables 5 and 6) and ethnicity (Tables 7 and 8) are similar. Labour Force Survey (2008) data show that about half of Aboriginal males and females were employed, compared to 89% of non-Aboriginal males and 82% of non-Aboriginal females.² At the end of 2007, there were 1,475 indigenous aboriginal employees representing 31% of the public service. Women represented 33% of senior managers with 66 female employees in senior management. There were 29 indigenous aboriginal senior managers, which represented 15% of employees in senior management.³

TABLE 5: LABOUR FORCE ACTIVITY BY GENDER

	All Persons	Male	Female
Population 15 Years & Over	31,300	16,100	15,300
Labour Force	23,400	12,400	11,100
Employed	22,000	11,600	10,500
Unemployed	1,400	800	600
Not in Labour Force	7,900	3,700	4,200
Unemployment rate (%)	6.0	6.5	5.4
Participation rate (%)	74.8	77.0	72.5
Employment rate (%)	70.3	72.0	68.6

Source: Labour Force Survey, Statistics Canada, prepared by NWT Bureau of Statistics

TABLE 6: NWT EMPLOYMENT RATES BY GENDER

	All Persons (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)
15 - 24 Years	47.8	50.0	44.1
25 - 44 Years	83.7	85.5	80.3
45 Years & Over	69.4	69.2	67.8
Aboriginal	51.4	50.0	52.9
Non-Aboriginal	85.7	89.1	81.9
Yellowknife	81.8	85.9	77.8
Other NWT Communities	58.1	58.5	58.3
Less than Grade 9	29.7	31.6	26.3
Grade 9 - 11	52.1	56.4	46.9
High School Graduate	77.3	86.4	76.2
Some Post-Secondary Certificate or Diploma	70.6	75.0	66.7
University Degree	84.4	85.4	83.3
	92.6	95.8	93.1
2008	70.3	72.0	68.6
2007	73.6	74.8	71.8
2006	73.5	75.6	71.3
2005	72.3	73.8	70.7

² 2008 Northwest Territories Employment Rates (by gender); NWT Bureau of Statistics.

³ Government of the Northwest Territories 2007 Public Service Annual Report

2004	71.6	74.2	68.0
2003	70.3	71.8	68.8
2002	71.8	73.7	70.2
2001	70.0	73.2	66.7

Source: Labour Force Survey, Statistics Canada, prepared by NWT Bureau of Statistics

TABLE 7: LABOUR FORCE ACTIVITY BY ETHNICITY

Labour Force Activity

	All Persons	Aboriginal	Non-Aboriginal
Population 15 Years & Over	31,300	13,800	17,500
Labour Force	23,400	8,100	15,300
Employed	22,000	7,100	15,000
Unemployed	1,400	1,100	300
Not in Labour Force	7,900	5,700	2,200
Unemployment rate (%)	6.0	13.6	2.0
Participation rate (%)	74.8	58.7	87.4
Employment rate (%)	70.3	51.4	85.7

Source: Labour Force Survey, Statistics Canada, prepared by NWT Bureau of Statistics

TABLE 8: NWT EMPLOYMENT RATES BY ETHNICITY

	All Persons (%)	Aboriginal (%)	Non-Aboriginal (%)
Male	72.0	50.0	89.1
Female	68.6	52.9	81.9
15 - 24 Years	47.8	30.6	65.6
25 - 44 Years	83.7	68.8	94.6
45 Years & Over	69.4	50.0	85.5
Yellowknife	81.8	64.5	86.7
Other NWT Communities	58.1	47.7	83.0
Less than Grade 9	29.7	27.3	50.0
Grade 9 - 11	52.1	43.8	66.7
High School Graduate	77.3	71.4	83.3
Some Post-Secondary Certificate or Diploma	70.6	50.0	75.0
University Degree	84.4	72.7	93.0
	92.6	80.0	93.9
2008	70.3	51.4	85.7
2007	73.6	55.3	86.9
2006	73.5	55.3	86.5
2005	72.3	55.1	83.4
2004	71.6	53.3	83.7
2003	70.3	52.0	83.4
2002	71.8	n/a	n/a

2001	70.0	n/a	n/a
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Source: Labour Force Survey, Statistics Canada, prepared by NWT Bureau of Statistics

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Project Methodology

The research and analysis used many techniques:

- Jurisdictional scans of the Public Services of Yukon, Alberta, Nova Scotia, Ontario and Australia;
- Document review of HR initiatives and programs (current and some previous);
- Online and mail-in surveys;
- Focus groups; and
- Personal interviews.

Assumptions for the strategic and action planning included:

- Acceptance and participation by stakeholders;
- True and accurate responses to surveys, interviews, and focus groups; and
- Financial and social capital necessary for implementation.

3.2 Consultation methods

The Terriplan / PSTG team surveyed and interviewed a wide range of stakeholders in order to gather perceptions, opinions and knowledge about human resources issues. The stakeholder consultations component of the project encompassed four separate elements:

- Employee surveys (online and by mail);
- Focus group sessions;
- Key informant interviews; and
- Mail-back questionnaires for Aboriginal and community governments

An employee survey was designed to gather feedback from stakeholders on aspects of their experience in the GNWT public service, including the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges as they perceived them. Stakeholders had the option of filling in their survey through paper or online formats. In total, 1,077 responses were collected online and by mail, for a response rate of 59.8%. These results were tabulated and analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software. Responses to open-ended questions were aggregated by question topic and theme. The aggregated quantitative and qualitative data was more than adequate in identifying the key themes and issues affecting employees at all levels, as well as location (Yellowknife, regional, and community), and length of employment. A copy of the survey instruments is included as Appendix 3.

A series of community-based focus group sessions were held in four locations across the NWT in January 2009. These communities included Inuvik, Yellowknife, Fort Smith, and Hay River. Additional focus groups sessions in Yellowknife were held with interns, Aboriginals, senior managers, and persons with disabilities. The consultation process was the same for each group: a focus group session to gather feedback from informed stakeholders about their particular group. Focus group participants were pre-selected by the GNWT HR Strategic Plan team, in a random way that represented the workforce. Again, the intent was to solicit feedback on the strengths, weaknesses and effectiveness of the program. A copy of the focus group questions is included as Appendix 4.

Finally, a number of key informant meetings and interviews were held. A total of 18 meetings were completed via this process. Interviews were conducted primarily face-to-face, (when requested, by telephone) and lasted approximately 60 minutes in length. All key informants were contacted and sent the interview questions ahead of time in order to allow them the opportunity to prepare should they so desire. The questions (see Appendix 4) focused on the strengths, issues, program delivery, successes, challenges and effectiveness. Notes were taken during the sessions and later typed into an interview question template. When all interviews were completed, the interviewee responses were aggregated and analyzed for thematic similarities and differences.

These sessions included:

- Individual Meetings with the Union of Northern Workers and NWT Teachers Association (2 total);
- Interviews with MLAs (4 total);
- Interviews with Secretary of Cabinet & Deputy Ministers (8 total); and
- Interviews with DM, Assoc. DM, and HR Directors of the Department of HR (4 total).

The number and variety of consultation methods used in our assessment process provided a set of rich qualitative information and quantitative data for evaluation, allowing the teams to discern the patterns, themes, and key issues facing the GNWT public service.

4 JURISDICTIONAL REVIEW

This section is a summary of a review of jurisdictions beyond the NWT conducted as part of this project. It provides the GNWT with an understanding of the similarities and differences across jurisdictions and provides human resources best practices. Much of the information presented in this summary, and contained in the full Jurisdictional Review contained in Appendix 5 will inform and enhance decision-making relative to the strategic direction of the GNWT. Together with the information and findings contained in Sections 4.2 – 4.5 this section will support the basis of the preferred strategic plan.

Jurisdictions within Canada and internationally were identified for review based on both similarities with the GNWT and the availability of relevant human resource strategy documentation. The following public sector jurisdictions were reviewed:

1. Government of Yukon;
2. Government of Alberta;
3. Government of Nova Scotia;
4. Government of Ontario; and
5. Government of Australia.

The review identified information about current government strategies relating specifically to human resource management, or more broad government strategies which contained a human resource management component. Where possible human resource/workforce plans, business plans, annual reports, and other related public documents provided the source documentation for this review.

Based on a review of information within each jurisdiction, the strategy was analyzed and information has been compiled as follows, in order to present a consistent view for the reader:

- Summary of strategy focus; and
- Summary of key strategy priorities.

In terms of jurisdictions reviewed, the consulting team limited the scope to public sector organizations within Canada primarily. Based on the experience of Terriplan's HR specialist team members, this provides the government with some relevant organizations, many who share similar workforce traits and trends. In addition to the public sector organizations within Canada, one international jurisdiction was chosen for review. This jurisdiction was chosen because there were some interesting commonalities with the Government of the Northwest Territories. These included, the geographic dispersion of the population, the requirement to provide services in remote communities and the large aboriginal population within the country.

The jurisdictional review provides significant perspective and input to the Human Resources Strategic Plan and will provide opportunities for the GNWT to consider similar approaches and strategies as other jurisdictions, if feasible. It also provides the GNWT with an opportunity to understand current strategic directions, priorities, and the types of programs and actions being taken to achieve the priorities within other jurisdictions.

4.1.1 The Yukon Government

The Yukon government developed a Labour Market Framework which is a ten year plan that covers both public and private sector employees and is targeted at the whole of Yukon. The Investing in Public Service (IPS) covers all 4,405+ territorial government employees in 14 Ministries/Departments.

The IPS supports the goals in the Corporate Human Resource Plan that builds on successes and provides a strategy to implement initiatives to address the following:

- Succession planning;
- Safe and healthy workplaces;
- Recognizing public sector excellence;
- Communicating with employees; and
- Establishing an organizational cultural framework.

There is an emphasis on developing the Yukon Government as an “employer of choice” – building on the Yukon Training Strategy developed in 1998.

The Advanced Education Branch of the Government led an interdepartmental planning process to prepare a framework which will help address Yukon’s labour market development on a variety of fronts. This initiative touches on all sectors (private and public), and interest groups.

4.1.2 The Government of Alberta

The Government of Alberta (GOA) created a Workforce Plan, which is a three-year plan (2008 – 2011) that covers all 30,000+ provincial government employees in 27 Ministries, and all Agencies, Boards, and Commissions.

The Government of Alberta strategy addresses key HR challenges by focusing on three priority areas:

- Attracting
- Developing
- Engaging

Attracting - *Marketing the GOA as an attractive employment option, effective business processes to support recruitment, compensation and benefits package that encourages people to join and stay.*

Developing - *Promoting continuous learning/ development, strengthening leadership at all levels, and improving career growth opportunities.*

Engaging - *Enabling managers to support engagement and retention, focusing on recognition and performance management, increasing use of flexible work options, and enhancing programs/supports to ensure healthy and safe work practices.*

4.1.3 The Government of Nova Scotia

The Government of Nova Scotia established a Corporate Human Resource Plan, which is a five-year plan (2005 – 2010) that covers all provincial government employees in 19 Ministries/Departments, and all Agencies.

The plan addresses key HR challenges by focusing on five key goals:

- Skilled, committed, and accountable public service;
- Employer of choice;
- Safe/supportive workplace;
- Diverse workplace; and
- Be a learning organization.

There is an emphasis on developing and implementing a Corporate Attraction and Retention Framework.

4.1.4 The Government of Ontario

The Government of Ontario HR Plan is a three-year plan (2008 – 2011) that covers all 68,000+ provincial government employees in thirty Ministries, and many Agencies, Boards, and Commissions.

The Strategy addresses key HR challenges by focusing on three key strategic priorities:

- Attracting and retaining diverse talent;
- Building capacity to sustain a world-class organization; and
- Engaging all employees to achieve results.

4.1.5 The Government of Australia

The Management Advisory Committee of the Government of Australia provides an overview of the key issues facing the Australian Public Service, and specific actions to respond. The Corporate Plan identifies the key strategic priorities for the 2008-09 year. Both documents cover all public service employees in 20 Portfolios/Departments, and all Agencies.

The Strategy addresses key HR challenges by focusing heavily on the following:

- Graduate recruitment; and
- Career development.

4.1.6 Common Themes Across Jurisdictions

There were common themes (workforce challenges and HR strategy developments) across jurisdictions noted during the course of the review. Where appropriate and applicable to the GNWT, the strategy directions and developments will also be embedded into the GNWT Human Resources Strategy. This section will summarize these common themes.

1. The critical environmental and workforce challenges currently being faced by each jurisdiction are similar – aging population, population is growing slowly, labour demand is projected to exceed labour supply, changing employee expectations, and labour segments (e.g. women, persons with disabilities) are not optimally utilized.
2. Recruitment and Attraction: multiple strategies to target different potential candidate groups to increase streams of potential recruits (e.g. persons with disabilities, younger workers, Aboriginal persons, women, mature workers, internationally trained professionals, and at-risk individuals).

3. Significant Investments in Organizational Learning/Training Programs: emphasis on leadership skills, and alignment of learning with talent management.
4. Rewards and Recognition: both formal and informal recognition to better meet the needs of diverse workforces.
5. Workplace Health and Safety: focus on employee wellness – at work and at home.
6. Developing fully integrated technological tools to support both potential and current employees in all areas of the employment experience – attraction, recruitment, orientation, performance planning, rewards and recognition, training/learning, retention, talent management, succession planning, workforce planning, knowledge transferring (full transparency).

4.1.7 Jurisdictional Differentiators

There were a number of differentiators of each jurisdiction. The emphasis is on the interesting and unique elements within the respective strategies, plans, and documents. The GNWT strategy may consider similar points of differentiation to address its unique characteristics, challenges and opportunities.

Government of Yukon

- “Investing in Public Service (IPS) – serving Yukon people” supports and builds on the Corporate Human Resource Plan – focused, relevant, and actionable strategy document.
- The “Labour Market Framework for Yukon” led by the Yukon Government is a cross-sector initiative that addresses all critical workforce challenges currently being faced by Yukon employers.
- Emphasis on work placements for employees with disabilities, and workplace accommodation.
- Strategies to transfer knowledge of experienced workers includes addressing pension and benefits issues of phased-in retirements.

Government of Alberta

- Highly effective multi-faceted marketing strategy (attraction) that has matured over time, which has primarily focused on students and young professionals in Alberta.
- Intern Network provides networking and skills development opportunities for interns across the organization.
- Additional compensation contributes to retaining employees who work in certain locations in Alberta (e.g. Fort McMurray).
- Employee-paid post-employment benefit programs for retirees.
- Executive and Senior Manager Mobility Program has strengthened the “One Employer” concept.
- Multiple highly effective, popular, and credible supervisor/manager skills development programs (e.g. Supervisor Certificate Program).
- Rolled out customized workforce strategy documents for specific industries.

Government of Nova Scotia

- Commitment to providing a healthy workplace for its employees.
- Leadership in recognizing credentials/skills of foreign trained workers.
- Creating internal (Nova Scotia public service employees) talent pools that will more expeditiously respond to staffing needs.
- Targeted workforce planning and career path programs for specific professional groups.
- Targeted creation of diverse talent pools – diversity and non-indigenous talent pools.
- Professional growth opportunities through exchange work programs with other government funded agencies, other levels of government, and private sector.
- Creation of an Office of Health Promotion to champion the Healthy Workplace Program.
- Establishment of a “beyond compliance” occupational health & safety strategy to surpass full compliance of legislative requirements.
- Nova Scotia as an Immigrant Employer – leader in recognizing international credentials, and hiring designated groups and immigrants.
- Affirmative Action focus – promoting and strengthening the Affirmative Action Inventory for Casual Employment, annual accountability reporting, and education.
- Acadian/French Language Services Strategies.

Government of Ontario

- Multiple talent attraction programs that target specific groups, and provides additional talent pool streams – Youth and New Professionals Strategy (Ontario Internship Program, Learn and Work Program, Internship Program for Internationally Trained Individuals, and the Aboriginal Youth Work Exchange Program).
- Canada’s Top 100 Employers for 2009.
- Canada’s Best Diversity Employers 2008.
- Greater Toronto Area’s Top 75 Employers 2009.
- Testing of “entry surveys” for new employees regarding the employment brand.
- Partnership with Ability Edge (www.abilityedge.ca) to train persons with disabilities to become Recruitment Consultants.
- Partnership with Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council (TRIEC) for new Canadians.
- OPS Ideas Campaign (ideas and innovation) engages employee improving public service delivery.
- Strategy to target mature workers to explore part-time work, gradual decrease in work assignments, or modified work weeks.

Government of Australia

- Development of corporate “communities”.
- Focus is on graduate (new workers entering job markets) recruitment and development.
- Engaging in strategic agreement making to recruit and retain graduates.
- Maintaining ongoing relationships with quality unsuccessful applicants for future vacancies.
- Integrating mobility opportunities into regular performance management processes.
- Initiatives that provide positive employment outcomes for Indigenous people – initiatives link to targeted government strategies.

4.1.8 Best Practices

Based on this review and based on current human resource management approaches, the following are offered as best practices for consideration when building human resource strategies, both from the perspective of the strategy (structure and approach) and from the perspective of content:

To be effective, and as a best practice, the structure and approach for a human resource strategy in the public sector must:

- 1) **Consider and address all elements of the workforce, the demographics of the jurisdiction** – strategies that apply to a dispersed and diverse workforce (as in the GNWT), must not limit their intent or application to a particular portion or group within the workforce. To limit will cause a mal-adjustment and loss of symmetry for the entire workforce. The strategy must be, and must be seen to be, integrated and inclusive to all employees
- 2) **Reflect the economic feasibility and implications of the Strategy** – The strategy must be developed in a manner which reflects current and projected economic realities of the jurisdiction. The Strategy itself should be architected in a manner which considers a reasonable investment, and must be clear as to the necessary investment required.
- 3) **Ensure an appropriate investment in marketing and communicating the strategy** – A strategy is a necessary point of departure for excellent human resource management and vision for the future. For leaders, it should be seen as an opportunity to announce and celebrate the vision and demonstrate leadership and commitment. For employees (current or prospective) it should serve to instill confidence in the employer. A marketing and communication plan to support the plan is a necessary practice that should serve an employer well through the course of the strategy.
- 4) **Be developed and implemented in an inclusive manner** - including the involvement of leaders, employees, bargaining agents, and other stakeholders is very common at all points of the strategy development, implementation, and feedback phases.
- 5) **Have clear metrics and means of measuring outcomes and achievements** – As with organization-wide business and strategic plans, it is critical to establish a means of measuring the progress, outcomes and achievements of a Strategic Plan.
- 6) **Have dedicated leadership to create, implement, monitor and report on the progress or challenges of the strategy** – many organizations underestimate the effort to implement an approved human resource strategy. Many organizations now dedicate a function (often part of the human resources organization) to supporting leaders in the management and monitoring of a human resources strategy. Typically the “hard work” begins at the point a strategy being approved. This may include the creation of new programs, the evolution of existing programs, or the “wind down” of existing programs.

Best practices in human resources strategic plans indicate the inclusion of some or all of the following content components:

- 1) **Focus on Employee Wellness** – Often included with health and safety or healthy workplace strategies, employers are focusing significant effort on ensuring the workplace, and the “employment experience” recognizes the stresses an employee may experience at work, at home, and in the community. In many cases, programming and activities are developed in a manner which includes employees and bargaining representatives.
- 2) **Focus on efficient and effective recruitment practices** – Many employers do not wait for a “true vacancy” to begin a recruitment action. Given the dearth of talent in many occupations, employers are considering more aggressive, constant, and focused recruitment strategies – to ensure there is a constant availability of talent in the workplace. Recruitment processes are also being significantly streamlined.
- 3) **Focus on Retention** – A focus on retaining employees continues to be a key best practice for employers in the public and private sector. Employers are deploying concerted efforts through both compensation and non-compensation based initiatives and interventions to compel employees to remain with the employer. Human resource strategies consistently address retention as a primary pillar with supporting actions and programs to increase retention rates.
- 4) **Focus on Marketing and Communicating the Strategy** – Employers are placing a significant priority on ensuring employees are aware of the presence of a human resource strategy and the various components of the chosen strategy. Employers are realizing that engaging employees early through the development and implementation of a strategic plan provides necessary assurance that the employer places a significant emphasis on the effective management of human resources.
- 5) **Focus on Leadership Development (including commitment and accountability for the success of the Strategy)** – Employers continue to rely on their executive and management teams to support human resource management efforts, to support the implementation of key strategic components, and to support the communication to employees.

4.1.9 HR Trends and Innovations

In addition to the best practices noted above, the following are offered as noted trends and evolving innovations in human resource management:

- 1) **Empowerment and streamlined decision-making** – Ensuring leaders are empowered to effectively manage their human resources, including decision-making and participating actively in the development and implementation of Human Resource strategic plans and the accompanying programs and activities to enable the plans.
- 2) **Effective Human Resource Service Delivery** – Employers are focusing efforts on streamlining the delivery of human resource services, both strategic and operational (transactional) and are relying on quality technology solutions to enable and inform effective delivery.
- 3) **Focus on Workforce Information Management as a mandatory management tool** – As performance measurement continues to evolve relative to the management of human

resources, the collection, analysis, and reporting of workforce information continues to become a critical element and tool.

- 4) **Self Serve access to information for employees** – Through the use of web-based tools (including workforce information, learning, performance planning, etc.) employees are able to better access information, learning programs (development, orientation, etc.) to support their employment. This continues to be a significant trend and enabler for employers and employees.
- 5) **Human Resource Program “simplicity” (including web-enabled support)** – Employers are evolving away from cumbersome program documentation, toward providing more user-friendly program information for leaders and managers. This is consistent with external trends, particularly internet-based communication and information.

4.1.10 Environmental Considerations

The review also described environmental considerations present within each jurisdiction that impact respective HR strategies. These include workforce and population demographics, geographic challenges, other unique considerations of the jurisdiction (labour competition and supply and demand of skilled labour). The review did not account for impacts under consideration as a result of current economic conditions.

5 SWOT ANALYSIS

Information gathered from focus group participants, survey participants and research findings provided insight into the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) impacting the GNWT and is presented in Section 5. Information from the SWOT, informed the project teams about the key themes that emerged and identified areas that should be considered and addressed by the Human Resources Strategic Plan. Where applicable, information in sections 5.1 – 5.4 was presented in a manner which aligned to the components of the Human Resources Strategic Plan, presented in section 7. In compiling and presenting this information, every effort was made to ensure the integrity of the comments and data collected was preserved. For the purpose of context and presentation, limited edits were made when information gathered from survey and focus group participants was included. In most instances direct quotes were used.

Furthermore, in some instances, strengths were also identified as weaknesses. This apparent inconsistency is likely the result of two things. First, the use of broad categories (such as compensation) to summarize findings, and second, the different perspectives provided by the diverse stakeholders who participated in the survey and/ or focus groups. In reviewing the detailed information presented in sections 5.1 – 5.2 there were for example, certain elements of the compensation program that were cited as strengths (such as the pension plan) and other elements (such as the base pay for some positions) that were cited as weaknesses. This meant that when the Human Resources Strategic Plan was developed, it was important to understand and address specific, versus generalized, strengths/ weaknesses. Additionally, in some cases, elements of broad categories (such as base pay) were seen as a both a strength and a weakness. It was therefore important to develop customizable solutions that were capable of meeting the diverse needs different stakeholders. For example, recommendations for addressing potential weaknesses with base pay are flexible enough to allow adjustments to be made to employee groups affected by uncompetitive base pay versus adjusting base pay for all employees.

5.1 Key Strengths

Key strengths of the GNWT's current human resources program identified by literature and statistical research, focus group and survey participants are presented in this section of the report. When developing the overall Human Resources Strategic Plan it was important not only to leverage these strengths but also to ensure that they continued to be supported by the new strategy.

The strengths presented in this section of the report emerged in response to a number of questions posed to both survey and focus group participants. For reference, a sample of questions that were specifically designed to encourage focus groups to identify the GNWT's strengths included:

- *What are the strengths of the GNWT Workforce?*
- *What is most satisfying about working for the GNWT?*
- *What attracted you to the GNWT originally?*

Overall, focus groups and survey participants identified a number of key strengths of the GNWT as an employer. Key themes included:

- A positive, dedicated, loyal and diverse workforce;

- The opportunity to be involved in interesting work;
- Competitive compensation and benefits (including the pension plan); and
- The “allure of the north” and the “northern community”.

More specific details on the strengths are as follows. Additional information is presented in Appendix 6.

Affirmative Action/Diversity

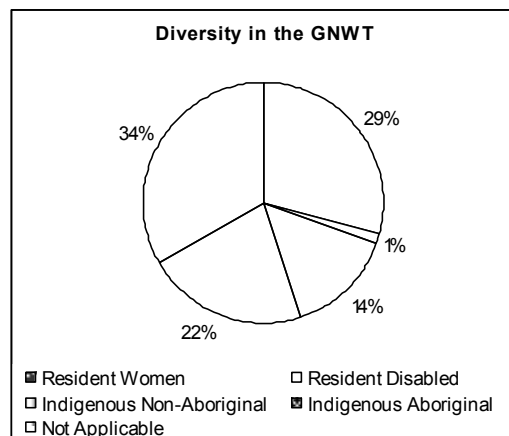
Participants provided feedback relative to the tolerance and sensitivity of the GNWT towards cultural differences. There was a general belief that the workforce is comprised of employees with diverse educational, cultural and career backgrounds and that the Affirmative Action policy has had and continues to have a positive impact on the careers of women in management and some Aboriginal persons. Furthermore, there were indications that leadership supported Affirmative Action.

Selected feedback and data:

- “Diversity of people and backgrounds are a strength of the GNWT”;
- 66% of survey respondents belonged to a designated group;
- “I think the commitment to Affirmative Action is there, resources are attached to this”;
- “I was hired under an Affirmative Action policy”;
- “I was part of the Northern Careers Policy and I was fortunate. I got a job because I was aboriginal and I was a woman”; and
- Support for the Affirmative Action policy was expressed during focus groups with Aboriginal employees, senior management, Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) and deputy ministers;

A breakdown of the diversity of the GNWT Public service is presented in Figure 13.

FIGURE 13: DIVERSITY OF THE GNWT WORKFORCE



Marketing Public Service and the GNWT

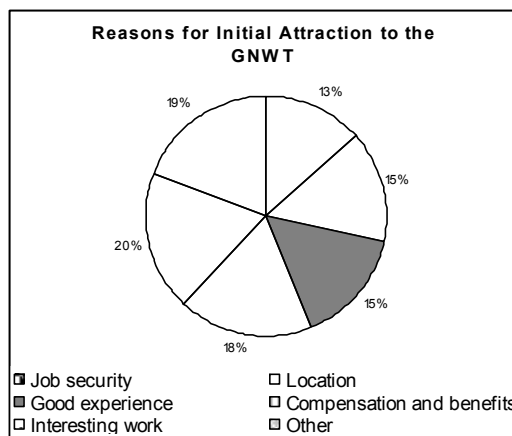
The “allure of the north” and the “northern” experience, combined with opportunities to work on a broad range of meaningful opportunities that may not be available, in other locations and/ or

organizations, to individuals with the same level of experience were identified as a positive feature of the GNWT by the majority of focus group and survey respondents.

Selected feedback and data:

- The NWT is an interesting society/ part of the country;
- Employees have an opportunity to be part of the fabric of the north and a chance to be exposed to a unique northern and local experience;
- “Love it in the North!”;
- “I am a life long northerner and enjoy making a difference”;
- The work/ projects carried out by the GNWT are meaningful and provide opportunities for employees to participate in work/ projects that make a difference;
- The size and relative flatness of the GNWT provides employees with opportunities to form relationships with colleagues in other regions, allows for enterprise-wide work to be carried out, means that things “get done”, provides opportunities to be creative and means there is an ability to effect change;
- Employees of the GNWT are continually exposed to diverse and interesting work/ projects and have flexibility within their job descriptions and duties to take advantage of these opportunities; and
- Interesting work, good experience and location were selected by survey participants as three of the most common reason for being initially attracted to work for the GNWT (Figure 14).

FIGURE 14: REASONS FOR INITIAL ATTRACTION TO THE GNWT



Compensation and Benefits

Compensation for a number of positions, including the internship program is perceived to be competitive. Furthermore, respondents indicated that compensation and benefits have an important impact on the GNWT’s ability to attract and retain workers.

Selected feedback and data:

- The pension plan, job security, student financial assistance, education benefits, fixed term contracts and flexible hours were all cited by focus groups as strengths of the GNWT;

- “As I originally am from ON, I moved to the North, due to lack of full-time employment in ON, and the experience would be an asset to me. Yes, the wages here are exceptional”; and
- “Superannuation pension plan is the main reason I remain with the GNWT”.

Retention

Numerical data suggested that the GNWT is comprised of a number of long-tenure employees which suggests that retention in the GNWT is a strength. Furthermore, when compared to northern municipalities, retention in the GNWT is strong.

Selected data:

- 44% of survey respondents indicated they have been with the GNWT for over 10 years and 24% of respondents indicated they have been with the GNWT for 5 – 10 years (Figure 15).
- According to survey data, compensation and benefits are a primary reason to remain with (Figure 16), and for initially being attracted to work for, the GNWT (Figure 14 above).

FIGURE 15: TENURE WITH THE GNWT

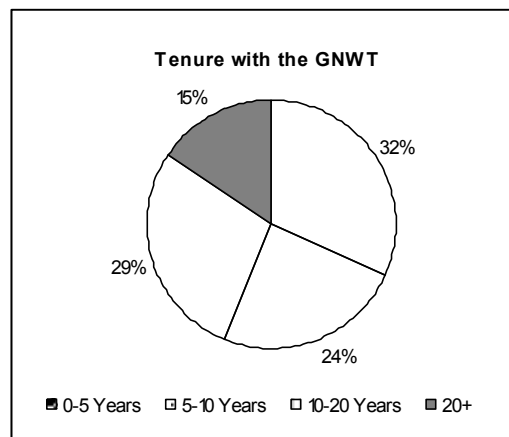
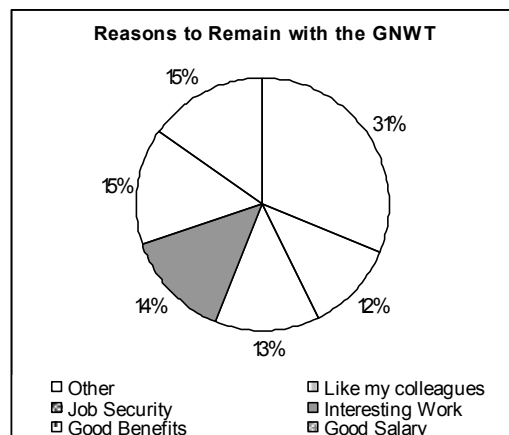
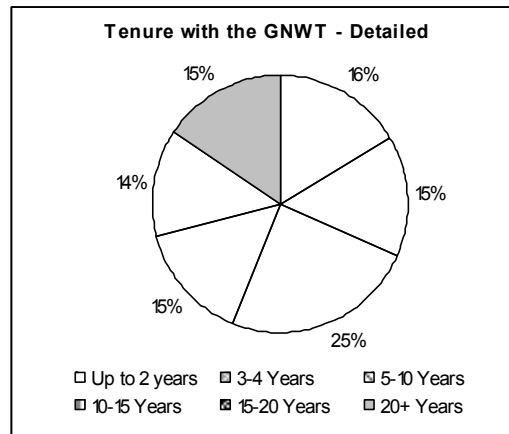


FIGURE 16: REASONS TO REMAIN WITH THE GNWT



- According to the 2007 NWT Community Government Human Resources Survey commissioned by the Local Government Administrators of the NWT (LGANT), municipalities were able to keep the majority of their employees for three years. Information collected from survey participants showed that 84% of the workforce at the GNWT had been there for over three years (Figure 17).

Figure 17: Tenure with the GNWT - Detailed



Wellness

A number of comments related to the positive work environment and the strengths of the GNWT's employees were made. These comments generally referenced the dedication, commitment and support that workers showed to their jobs and each other.

Selected feedback and data:

- Employees are great to work with, are open to new ideas, hardworking and generally happy to work for the GNWT;
- Employees of the GNWT are "dedicated, committed and loyal";
- 54.9% of survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they are treated with respect by their colleagues; and
- There are "good relations with employees".

Labour Relations

Limited comments about positive (or negative) aspects of labour relations at the GNWT were expressed by respondents. Any comments that were made suggested that labour relations were generally acceptable and/ or working well in some departments.

Selected feedback:

- "Labour Relations is not bad, but you have to know who to go to";
- "Labour relations is working well in some departments"; and
- "Close relationships with elected officials means issues can be resolved more quickly".

Lifelong Learning

Learning and development opportunities that existed were generally perceived to be informal. Developmental opportunities that exist allow employees to learn by taking initiative and to accelerate their learning by participating in diverse kinds of work/ projects that may not be available to someone with their level of experience in other settings.

Selected feedback and data:

- Overall, multiple respondents indicated that there are a number of opportunities for employees to gain exposure to diverse kinds of work/ projects;
- “The size of the GNWT and its departments means that you do much more and sooner”;
- “The range of opportunities for advancement are a strength”;
- Focus group participants indicated that opportunities for advancement, personal and professional growth, continuous challenge and career pathing are available in the GNWT; and
- 50.1% of survey respondents “agreed or strongly agreed” that they are satisfied with their career progress in the NWT public service.

Feedback and Rewards

Feedback from survey and focus group respondents suggested that the provision of feedback and rewards depended on the department and/ or individual managers. In instances where feedback and/ or rewards are being provided it is perceived to be working well.

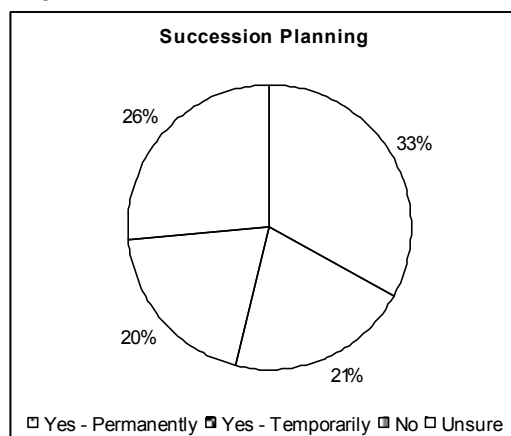
Selected feedback and data:

- "Good job", "thanks for coming in", "really appreciate the effort" goes a long way to improving morale and costs NOTHING. I get that a lot from my direct supervisor. Others do not”;
- 45% of survey respondents “agreed or strongly agreed” that performance reviews were conducted on a timely basis; and
- 44.3% of survey respondents “agreed or strongly agreed” that their immediate manager ensures they are aware of the knowledge and skills required for development.

Succession Planning

- There was limited information from focus groups relative to Succession Planning. Data collected from survey participants indicated that 51% of survey respondents believed that if they were to leave the organization there is someone in the GNWT who could step into their job (Figure 14).

Figure 18: Succession Planning



5.2 Key Weaknesses

Key weaknesses of the GNWT's current employee management program identified by focus group and survey participants are presented in this section of the report. When developing the overall human resources strategy it was important not only to address these weaknesses but also to ensure that the human resources services delivery model was capable of supporting the solutions that were recommended to address these weaknesses.

The weaknesses presented in this section of the report emerged in response to a number of questions posed to both survey and focus group participants. For reference, a sample of questions that were specifically designed to encourage focus groups to identify the GNWT's weaknesses included:

- *What are the major challenges you face?*
- *What is not working in HR management?*
- *In what areas does the Department of Human Resources need to improve to meet your service delivery needs?*

Overall, focus groups and survey participants identified a number of key weaknesses of the GNWT's existing human resources program. Key weaknesses identified by staff, included:

- Training, mentoring and coaching opportunities (60%)⁴
- Recruitment and retention (40%)
- Compensation/ remuneration (25%)
- Workplace culture; work-life balance (20%)
- Promotional opportunities/ Succession planning (17%)
- Communication and cooperation between people and/or departments (15%)

More specific details on the weaknesses are as follows. Additional information is presented in Appendix 6.

⁴ Percentages refer to the combined data outcomes from the online, mail-back and focus groups.

Affirmative Action

Most comments related to Affirmative Action pointed to a perceived lack of progress in improving the representation of Aboriginal persons in the GNWT and/ or the perceived lack of support and enforcement of the policy by management. Furthermore, concerns were expressed about the consistency with which the policy is administered, the perceived unfairness of the policy and the lack of support provided to help Aboriginal persons once they are in their roles. A number of Aboriginal persons indicated that they had encountered challenges with the Affirmative Action Policy at the GNWT.

Selected feedback and data:

- “The Affirmative Action plan has long been discarded”;
- “There is no buy-in from senior management and they are not trained on how the policy works”;
- “A lot of aboriginals are in regions versus headquarters”;
- “Affirmative Action is not the same for every department”;
- “I am a white person who has resided in the north for over 20 years and feel that the Government is continually discriminating against me because I am not an aboriginal”;
- As a result of Affirmative Action, “We are putting people in jobs they are not qualified to do”;
- “The Affirmative Action policy has had the side-effect of placing some people in positions that they are neither motivated nor truly experienced/ qualified to handle”;
- “As an Aboriginal person I often find it hard to work for this government”;
- “The interview process can exclude aboriginal people even though they have the experience and knowledge; I think the interviews are flawed”.

These comments should be taken in the context of weaknesses. Strengths of Affirmative Action have been detailed in section 5.1.

Marketing Public Service and the GNWT

A number of concerns were expressed about the negative connotations associated with working for the GNWT and a decrease in the prestige that was once connected to working for the public sector.

Selected feedback:

- “There are negative connotations of working for the public sector”
- “The Prestige of working for government now is not seen as having the same draw”.

Compensation and Benefits

Widespread concern about communication and a lack of responsiveness on the part of HR related to compensation and benefits was expressed during the focus groups and in survey responses. Furthermore, there were significant concerns about the perceived lack of competitiveness in the GNWT’s pay for certain positions relative to the competition and/ or the decreasing difference between “northern” and “southern” salaries which is having a negative impact on attraction and retention.

Selected feedback:

- “Appropriate salary for appropriate education. Journeyman salaries are too low compared to people in other positions who have basically no education but strong union representation. You can't attract trades people for those salaries”;
- “Salaries in my field no longer competes with southern provinces...in fact the NWT salary is lower then southern provinces for an equivalent position – and taking into consideration the fact that the cost of living is higher then southern provinces”;
- “Been an employee for almost 20 years. The difference in salaries between here and the Southern provinces is becoming much closer. If one chooses to work up here, it does cost more and if you want people to stay the Northern Allowances should be adjusted”.

Retention

A number of survey and focus group respondents expressed concerns about retention in the GNWT. It was noted a number of times that turnover in the HR department was particularly high. It was also noted that retention issues were adding pressure to remaining workers who are already negatively impacted by increasing workloads due to high vacancy rates.

Selected feedback:

- Several focus groups and survey participants indicated that retention was a major concern, particularly in the HR department where turnover among HR representatives was believed to be particularly high; and
- Retention issues are adding additional strain to vacancy rates in the GNWT which have already been impacted by a shrinking pool of available labour, an aging population and increasing levels of retirement.

Wellness

Most comments related to wellness addressed the lack of available and/ or affordable housing in the NWT and the weak and/ or lack of supports required to meet day-to-day living needs in smaller communities. A number of concerns about poor morale and feelings of stress/ burnout in the workplace were also expressed.

Selected feedback:

- “We need to improve the condition and safety of housing”;
- “The quality of life in communities needs to improve - support networks are spread too thin across geography”;
- “Working within any large organization has challenges, but at times the GNWT has a pervasively negative work environment”;
- “I can't take a break from work because there is no one else that can do the type of work I do, it just accumulates until I come back. I have not had a break of longer then 1 week in over 20 years”;
- “I believe the GNWT is trying to deliver a Cadillac set of programs and services with only Model T resources. As a result, existing employees are overstressed and tend to lose their effectiveness and burn out”.

Labour Relations

The most frequent concerns related to labour relations brought up in focus groups and by survey participants were inconsistencies in the interpretation of collective agreements, a lack of communication and awareness of practices in collective agreements and difficulties in obtaining answers related to labour relations.

Selected feedback:

- “Labour relations advice is inconsistent and conflicting between regional HR and central HR in Yellowknife. Departments are caught in the middle”; and
- “There is a lack of communication and awareness about labour relations practices”.

Environment

In a few instances concerns about a lack of awareness and/ or concern for the environment were expressed.

Selected feedback:

- “The GNWT isn’t environmental, there is lots of waste, for example we don’t double side copying”.

Leadership

Comments about leadership were focused on a lack of training/ development and coaching/ mentoring opportunities for managers.

Selected feedback:

- “Lack of career advancement opportunities due to inability for senior GNWT non-managers to become Directors due to the inability to get management experience - no programs exist to assist aspiring managers”; and
- “A lot of the managers (senior and middle) have no training in public administration or management. There is no management training program in the GNWT (in comparison with the Feds). There is no career pathing”.

Lifelong Learning

Focus group and survey participants expressed widespread concern about the lack of funding and centralized support for training and development opportunities. This was in regards to providing training to address skills gaps that have been identified, on-the-job training, orientation programs, coaching/ mentoring and the introduction of new programs, processes and/ or technical applications.

Respondents commented on the lack of training opportunities, most often citing the lack of budget. From the comments provided, this applies to a range of training topics – from cultural understanding to professional development. Additionally, for employees located in remote communities, no special considerations are given for extra travel costs (and time) and the lack of availability of courses offered (e.g. Aurora College main campus is located in Ft. Smith).

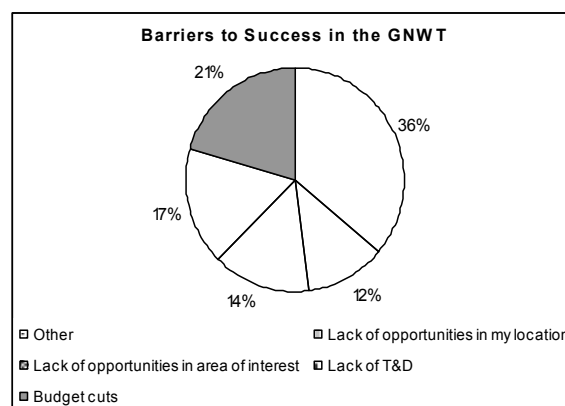
A number of concerns specifically related to the orientation programs were also expressed by focus groups and survey participants. Generally, orientation does not exist, is inadequate/ not

rigorous enough and has been pushed down onto departments/ managers who lack the resources and support to provide adequate orientation.

Selected feedback and data:

- When asked to rate the effectiveness of HR in managing training and development opportunities on a scale of 1 – 5, 1 being poor and 5 being excellent, 9.7% rated the GNWT as a 5;
- When asked to rate the effectiveness of HR in ensuring that employees are receiving coaching and/ or mentoring from within the public service on a scale of 1-5, 1 being poor and 5 being excellent, 21.2% of respondents rated the GNWT as a 1 and 3.8% rated the GNWT as a 5;
- Nearly 19% of survey participants rated the effectiveness of orientation programs as poor and 4.1% of participants indicated they were excellent;
- “Training to increase my value and skills to the GNWT have not materialized apparently because of budget cuts, or management has not authorized requested courses. Courses of value have not been readily identified. One of the reasons for this is budget cuts...”;
- “There is not priority on coaching or mentoring because there is no time for anyone to effectively do this. There needs to be some strategic thinking on what this Government can achieve within its financial restraints.”
- “Training opportunities are not provided equally. Although the training may be available there is never enough money for most people to attend. This is because of travel costs which is understandable. Bring the training to the employees”;
- “Being located so far away, I do not have opportunities to be mentored or coached. I see others being transferred with assignments to build their skills and after six years I feel that I am unrecognized and unsupported and overlooked in being given any of these opportunities.”;
- Survey participants indicated that the lack of training and development was a key barrier to their success in the GNWT (Figure 19);

FIGURE 19: BARRIERS FOR SUCCESS IN THE GNWT



- When asked about their experiences with training and coaching, 34.6% of survey respondents “strongly disagreed” or “disagreed” that they “received the necessary training and coaching required to continually improve their performance”;
- “I was very surprised on coming to the GNWT that there was no training on the local culture and how to relate to aboriginal/ Inuvialuit clients”;

- “What orientation process... years ago all new employees spent three days going through an orientation which included cross cultural awareness. Depending on where the orientation happened (YK or the Regions) it was specific to the area...”; and
- “As far as I can tell there is no orientation process, other than showing a new employee their office and introducing co-workers.”

Feedback and Rewards

Concerns about the frequency with which performance reviews are conducted, methods for ensuring managers are conducting reviews, the failure to link performance reviews to ongoing training and the limited amount of time that management has to devote to reviews were expressed by both employees and management. There was general agreement that an overall performance management system was absent from the GNWT. Furthermore, strong performance is believed to go unrecognized and there are concerns about how poor performers are managed.

Selected feedback and data:

- “Performance reviews are never given the attention they deserve. They should be a working document used to develop staff throughout the year, rather than a “report card” to be completed once a year and ignored for the rest of the year”;
- “I have never received a performance review despite working for the GNWT for several years. I don't know what checks are in place to make sure managers perform these reviews on a regular basis”;
- When asked to rate the effectiveness of performance planning on a scale of 1 – 5, 1 being poor and 5 being excellent, 23.1% of respondents rated the GNWT as 1 and 3.7% rated the GNWT as a 5;
- Over 34% of survey respondents “strongly disagree” or “disagree” that “excellent performance is recognized by the GNWT”;
- “Excellence is not rewarded, in fact often discouraged, because of the extra work new initiatives make for others, lack of clear strategic planning goals, lack of evaluation, oversight and accountability”;
- Nearly 55% of survey respondents “strongly disagree” or “disagree” that poor performers are managed; and
- “There is a sense that poor performers are here to stay and they are protected by the policy and procedures for progressive discipline”.

Succession Planning

Succession planning was noted, almost unanimously, as an area requiring improvement. Generally, it is either not done or done poorly and is often affected by budget constraints. Furthermore, this lack of planning limits opportunities for employees which creates frustration.

Selected feedback:

- “There are not succession planning or management development programs currently offered by the GNWT with the exception of a few management training courses. One cannot apply for management positions without management experience, yet one cannot gain management experience if they are a non-manager working for the GNWT. This is a very poor example of succession planning for good employees”;

- “Succession planning: we really don't have any. This is tied to (in) appropriate funding for PYs; funding and support for training; (un) timeliness of recruitment”; and
- “I am not doing myself justice by staying in a position that is not leading towards other opportunities with this government. I have a lot of transferable skills and knowledge that can be used elsewhere to possibly enhance my career”.

Talent Management

Participants commented on the lack of promotion opportunities and the resources needed to develop one's skills. Concerns were also expressed about inconsistencies in performance planning and unfairness in making promotional decisions across the GNWT.

Selected feedback:

- “I feel that more training and time should be given to the younger generation. I see that because of the stress that is on the workforce that the employees are not patient with the younger generation, and tend to hire back the retired people”;
- “Employees are hand picked instead of providing equal opportunities”;
- “Lack of promotional opportunities for aboriginal women - the percentage of aboriginal women in senior management is the lowest it's ever been. It is appalling in comparison to non-aboriginal women and men”;
- “Performance planning is minimal when almost everyone in my department is wondering if they are out of work in March”;
- “Time needs to be allowed for performance planning. As it is, the supervisor are so caught up in more serious matters, that worker performance planning get put on the bottom of the "to do list"”; and
- “Promotional opportunities are non-existent from my perspective. I am a prime candidate for management as well as an aboriginal women with almost 23 years with this government and there has not been any opportunities for advancement”.

Human Resources Service Delivery

There was consensus across focus groups and survey participants that the GNWT was experiencing significant challenges with respect to human resources service delivery. The HR department is perceived to be understaffed, unable to provide required support and consistent responses to questions, does not have a service-focused mentality and is lacking the level of knowledge required to provide the necessary services.

Since the GNWT removed human resources supports from departments and moved to a centralized model, there have been significant challenges with respect to service delivery, combined with high levels of employee frustration with respect to human resources. It was noted that the transition from a decentralized to a centralized model could have been managed more effectively. There was also the perception that the transition could have been more gradual.

Human resources related communication from the managers and the HR department is lacking. Employees do not understand HR programs/ policies and/ or are not receiving the required information about changes to Human Resources programs/ policies and service delivery. Furthermore, departments and regional employees do not feel they are being consulted about how decisions will impact them. Decisions are made by headquarters and/ or behind closed

doors and then pushed onto regions and departments meaning, departmental and regional needs are not being met.

Selected feedback:

- “Centralized human resources is not run as effectively as is could be. This is true of all aspects – benefits, pay, problem solving, employee relations, etc.”;
- “More assistance from HR would be beneficial”. Currently there are issues with PeopleSoft, pay and compensation that need to be addressed in a more timely manner.
- “Pretend you are a private sector employer. I never had any problems with my pay cheque like I have had with the GNWT. It’s almost comical. If HR can’t handle payroll, outsource it to companies that specialize in it”; and
- There is an “us versus them mentality”, employees must wait for long periods of time to receive answers to their questions and are often referred back to their managers without an answer

Communication

The level of communication between supervisors and their department staff was commented upon by many, in regards to both day-to-day work and overall departmental/divisional vision. Many respondents felt surprised that decisions were made without their consultation, and then were expected to deliver programs or deliverables.

Selected feedback:

- “More Communication! Monthly meetings to update staff on what is going on in our own Departments, and the direction we are heading in. We cannot function as a cohesive group if we are not treated as such. Even a monthly newsletter from our Department...”; and
- “Better communication when changes are made and the reasons behind them - even if they can't let us know beforehand (dept. re-orgs) to advise staff as soon as possible.”

Recruitment

Most participants commented on the length of time for the central HR office to recruit, select, and hire new employees.

Selected feedback:

- “The new system of hiring casuals creates roadblocks... it is very cumbersome to work with when you need to get a person in place immediately. Hiring a casual instructor to teach a five month course and only been able to offer them a four month contract is not feasible”; and
- “Time consuming - some competitions run for 5-18 months”.

5.3 Key Opportunities

Key opportunities for the GNWT, as identified by focus group and survey participants are presented in this section of the report. When developing the overall Human Resources Strategic Plan it was essential to consider and weigh these suggestions, however, it is important

to note that the strategy presented is broad and does not get into specific programs and/ or ideas. The opportunities are presented in this report for information purposes only.

The opportunities presented in this section of the report emerged in response to a number of questions posed to both survey and focus group participants. For reference, a sample of questions that were specifically designed to encourage focus groups to identify the GNWT's opportunities included:

- *What HR changes would you like to see in the public service?*
- *If the strategic plan is intended to be the blueprint for the public service renewal over the next ten years what should the goals be?*
- *What are some of the solutions to the challenges to Affirmative Action?⁵*

Overall, focus groups and survey participants identified a number of key opportunities for the GNWT's future human resources program. Key opportunities included:

- Training, mentoring and coaching opportunities (60%)⁶
- Recruiting and retention policies and activities (25%)
- Increases to pay and benefits (18%)
- Communications, cooperation, collaboration and partnerships – internal and external (15%)
- Leadership – leading by example (10%)

Additional details on the opportunities are as follows and specific information is presented in Appendix 6.

Affirmative Action

Suggested improvements to Affirmative Action focused on conducting a review of the policy, ensuring there were consistencies across the GNWT, increasing awareness of the policy benefits and appointing a "Watchdog" to monitor compliance with the policy.

Marketing Public Service and the GNWT

Comments related to marketing the Public Service focused on raising awareness of what the GNWT does and developing targeted campaigns based on overall objectives of the GNWT. There was also support for expanding advertising efforts across Canada and moving to on-line job advertisements versus print ads.

Compensation and Benefits

Feedback about suggested compensation and benefits improvements focused on incorporating flexibility and creative thinking. It was suggested that compensation and benefits did not always need to be monetary.

⁵ This question was only posed to participants of the Aboriginal employees focus group. Comments related to opportunities to improve the Affirmative Action Policy that emerged during this session have been included in overall opportunities to improve the Affirmative Action Policy.

⁶ Percentages refer to the combined data outcomes from the online, mail-back and focus groups.

Retention

Suggested opportunities related to retention focused on developing customized retention programs to address needs across generations and/ or cultures.

Wellness

Comments for suggested ways to improve wellness in the GNWT were primarily related to improving morale and offering support with housing.

Lifelong Learning

Suggested improvements to training and development were focused on ensuring consistent funding is available, providing non-traditional training opportunities such as transfers to other departments and web-training, creating various training, mentorship and/ or orientation programs.

Feedback and Rewards

Comments related to feedback and rewards were centered on developing a consistent performance management system, helping employees to link performance to their career progress and offering flexibility in recognition programs. It was also suggested that feedback and rewards could be linked to recognizing innovative ideas/ initiatives focused on greening the workplace.

Succession Planning

Suggestions for improving succession planning were related to putting a program in place and finding ways to keep retirees actively involved in the workforce.

Human Resources Service Delivery

Suggestions for improving Human Resources were focused on improving the quality of service via training and hiring additional resources and on improving the consistency with which service is delivered by providing managers with a dedicated HR representative and putting resources back into the communities. It was also suggested that an overall Human Resources Strategy should be created.

Recruitment

Suggested improvements to recruitment were related to recruiting for potential, thinking of other creative ways to utilize the workforce and taking a more proactive role in seeking out potential employees.

5.4 Key Threats

Key threats for the GNWT's future management of human resources identified through literature (i.e. including the emergent human resources related trends and patterns in other jurisdictions) review and by focus group and survey participants are presented in this section of the report.

When developing the overall human resources strategy was important to consider and weigh the potential impact of these threats.

The threats presented in this section of the report emerged in response to a number of questions posed to both survey and focus group participants. For reference, a sample of questions that were specifically designed to encourage focus groups to identify threats to the GNWT's Human Resources Strategic Plan included:

- *What are the barriers that are preventing things from working?*

Overall, key threats included:

- The current economic climate and associated labour market implications;
- Competition for talent with Northern Alberta and private sector companies in the NWT (particularly the mines);
- The constant scrutiny of the GNWT by members of the public and MLAs; and
- The stability of service delivery.

More specific details on the threats are as follows:

- Competition for talent in other public and private sector employers puts upward pressure on compensation and retention;
- Forward thinking and creative programs related to Affirmative Action, compensation/benefits, leadership development, rewards, training/ development, wellness, succession planning and talent management in other public and private sector employers puts pressure on the GNWT to, at a minimum, provide comparable programs;
- The state of the economy is putting further pressure on the availability of funding to improve Human Resources related programs; and
- The GNWT operates in a politically charged and sensitive environment, any major changes to human resources programs will require support from MLAs, senior leadership and potentially members of the public.

6 FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

This section of the report outlines key drivers of the GNWT's Human Resources Strategic Plan (Section 6.1) and summarizes the findings of the jurisdictional scan and SWOT analysis (Section 6.2). It is intended to provide the GNWT with a framework from which the overall Human Resources Strategic Plan emerged.

6.1 Key Drivers for Consideration in the Human Resources Strategic Plan

This section of the report outlines key drivers of the GNWT's Human Resources Strategic Plan by providing a high level analysis of the implications of the jurisdictional scan and the current economic environment on the development of the Human Resources Strategic Plan for the GNWT.

Beginning with the jurisdictional scan, it should be noted that the GNWT is experiencing human resource challenges that are similar to comparator organizations examined in the scan (see Section 4). Furthermore, a number of the governments reviewed in the jurisdictional scan have implemented programs that are similar to those that the GNWT's stakeholders recommended and/ or would like to see implemented.

For reference, a summary of the common challenges and the programs implemented to address and to respond to these challenges that emerged from the jurisdictional scan included:

- Critical environmental and workforce challenges caused by an aging population, slow population growth, changing employee expectations and not always making optimal use of all labour segments (e.g. women, persons with disabilities, etc);
- Multiple programs and strategies to address recruitment and attraction difficulties;
- Significant investments in organizational learning/ training programs;
- A focus on employee rewards and recognition;
- A focus on employee wellness; and
- Fully integrated technological tools to support both potential and current employees in all areas of the employment experience.

The information presented above has multiple implications for the Human Resources Strategic Plan. First, on a positive note, programs developed by other jurisdictions to address similar challenges provide a basis for the GNWT to inexpensively leverage the success of others while avoiding costly failures. Furthermore, citing successes of other jurisdictions provides a compelling case for the GNWT to obtain necessary funding and/ or support of leadership to implement similar programs. In contrast, the existence of similar challenges and programs in other jurisdictions raises the bar when it comes to competing for talent because if the GNWT is going to successfully compete with these jurisdictions they will, at a minimum, need to implement comparable programs. Implementing programs that have been implemented by other jurisdictions is still expected to have a positive impact on the GNWT, however, the impact may not be as profound given that these programs already exist and therefore, the financial return on the GNWT's investment may not be as high.

Shifting focus to the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats identified by focus groups and survey participants a number of key considerations related to the jurisdictional scan and the current economic climate emerged.

First, from a strengths and opportunities perspective there are a number of strengths combined with potential opportunities for making improvements that were identified. To re-cap, key strengths included:

- A positive, dedicated, loyal and diverse workforce;
- The opportunity to be involved in interesting work;
- Excellent compensation and benefits (including the pension plan); and
- The “allure of the north” and the northern community.

Key opportunities included:

- Training, mentoring and coaching opportunities;
- Recruiting and retention policies and activities;
- Increases to pay and benefits;
- Communications, cooperation, collaboration and partnerships – internal and external; and
- Leadership – leading by example.

In reviewing this information a number of positive implications for the GNWT emerged which were used as a basis for developing the human resources strategy and will be discussed in further detail in Section 6.2.

Linking the jurisdictional scan to the strengths of the GNWT, the “allure of the north” is an important strength. This is because it does not cost anything to maintain (e.g. having the strength of a well-paying compensation program is expensive to maintain), cannot be replicated (e.g. a compensation program can be implemented by competitors) and is a benefit of working for the GNWT that differentiates it from other jurisdictions. Furthermore, while the “allure of the north” is a commonality shared with the Governments of the Yukon and Nunavut it is different from a number of other jurisdictions that were examined and therefore, provides a compelling reason to work for the GNWT. Additionally, this commonality could provide an excellent opportunity for the GNWT to collaborate with other northern governments to make the most effective use of resources and achieve mutually beneficial outcomes.

Linking the economic climate to the strengths of the GNWT, the total compensation is an important strength. While it was noted earlier that compensation programs are expensive to maintain and can be copied by other jurisdictions, information presented in the Key Strengths section of the report suggests that the GNWT’s compensation program is competitive for some positions. This is beneficial for two reasons. First, according to information available by World at Work, the average total increase to base salaries for 2006 – 2008 in Canada averaged 3.9% (2006-3.8%⁷, 2007-4.0%⁸ and 2008-3.9%⁹). Second, the current economic environment has reduced projected increases to base salary budgets for 2009. Original 2009 estimates, published by World at Work, indicated that total base salary increases in Canada would average 3.9%¹⁰, however, survey released by Culpepper¹¹ in March 2009, 38% of polled organizations in

⁷ World at Work Salary Budget Survey 2006-2007. Salary Budget Increases – Canada (data file). Retrieved from http://www.worldatwork.org/waw/research/html/sbs_toplevel0607.html

⁸ World at Work Salary Budget Survey 2008 – 2009. Total Salary Budget Increases, by Employee Category – Canada (data file). Retrieved from <http://www.worldatwork.org/waw/adminLink?id+27072&nonav=yes>

⁹ World at Work Salary Budget Survey 2008 – 2009. Total Salary Budget Increases, by Employee Category – Canada (data file). Retrieved from <http://www.worldatwork.org/waw/adminLink?id+27072&nonav=yes>

¹⁰ World at Work Salary Budget Survey 2008 – 2009. Total Salary Budget Increases, by Employee Category – Canada (data file). Retrieved from <http://www.worldatwork.org/waw/adminLink?id+27072&nonav=yes>

Canada are now planning to freeze salaries in 2009. Of the organizations still planning to grant increases in 2009, the average increase is now expected to be 2.93%.

Given that average increases are only 3.9% during times strong economic growth, it is feasible for the GNWT to continue to keep pace with average increases which will ensure that positive compensation gaps identified for some positions between competitor organizations and the GNWT are maintained. Furthermore, the negative impact of the economic downturn on salary increases means it is unlikely that competitor organizations will be able to make sizable adjustments to average salary increases. This is beneficial to the GNWT as the cost of keeping pace with average increases will likely decrease in the short-term and it is unlikely that competitor organizations will be able to narrow the gap between their compensation and that of the GNWT in the near future.

Additionally, the economic climate provides a unique opportunity for the GNWT to benefit for a few reasons. First, in general, government revenues are not subject to the same level of volatility as private sector revenues during economic downturns and as such, unlike private-sector competitors the GNWT can use the current downturn as a time to invest in Human Resources programs which will benefit the economy in the short-term, allow the GNWT's Human Resources program to "catch-up" to the private sector (who does is not necessarily able to make new investments in their programs) and will ensure the GNWT's workforce is well-positioned to meet the needs of the government once the economy recovers. Furthermore, during times of economic uncertainty, employees often postpone making changes to employment which could have a short-term positive impact on the GNWT's retention. Lastly, if competitor organizations are being forced to lay off employees and/ or are not hiring, the economic downturn could provide a unique opportunity for the GNWT to take advantage of an increase in available labour and this may also offset challenges caused by potential employees postponing their decisions to change employers.

From a threats perspective, the most common consideration was the current economic situation. While extremely important to consider, it is not believed that the state of the economy should prevent the GNWT from moving ahead with the Human Resources Strategic Plan, nor should it significantly alter the plan. Rather, the economic environment should be addressed by how the plan is implemented. The basis for this recommendation is the fact that the Human Resources Strategic Plan is intended to be longer term and therefore, should not be built solely on what is occurring in the economy today. While the amount of money available to invest in Human Resources programs may be restricted in the immediate term as a result of the economy, this does not change the importance of having a Human Resources Strategic Plan. Furthermore, as a way to address potential funding challenges in the near-term the GNWT can focus on implementing less expensive human resources initiatives, saving more costly ventures for the future when the economy is expected to recover.

6.2 Findings and Conclusions

This section of the report summarizes the findings in sections 5.1- 5.4 in order to provide a rationale for and a logical link to the recommended human resources strategy which follows in Section 7. Overall, information gathered in the jurisdictional scan and SWOT analysis identified a number of challenges facing the GNWT today and opportunities for the future. As a result, it was important that the GNWT's Human Resources strategy enables and informs the

¹¹ Culpepper Compensation & Benefits Surveys. 2009 Salary Increase Budgets to Change Significantly (data file). Retrieved from <http://www.culpepper.com/eBulletin/2009/MarchSalaryIncreaseUpdate.asp>

government to think and act strategically while leveraging their strengths and addressing their weaknesses.

Overall, based on the analysis of information presented in Sections 4 and 5 of this report it is recommended that the corporate Human Resources Strategic Plan for the GNWT focus on building a solid HR service delivery model that is capable of supporting five key Goals and fourteen supporting objectives, listed below:

1. Stabilizing Service Delivery / **Fixing the Foundation**
 - Supporting Objective 1 – Creative and Dedicated People
 - Supporting Objective 2 – Having and Using the Right Tools
2. Attraction and Recruitment / **Engage: Magnetic Attraction**
 - Supporting Objective 3 – Affirmative Action and Diversity
 - Supporting Objective 4 – Marketing Public Service
 - Supporting Objective 5 – Compensation and Benefits
3. Engagement and Retention / **Dazzle: Diverse Opportunities**
 - Supporting Objective 6 – Healthy and Respectful Workplace
 - Supporting Objective 7 – Positive Relations with Bargaining Representatives
 - Supporting Objective 8 – Greening the Workplace
4. Learning and Development / **Inspire: Expanding Horizons**
 - Supporting Objective 9 – Leadership
 - Supporting Objective 10 – Lifelong Learning
 - Supporting Objective 11 – Feedback and Rewards
5. Success and Succession / **Renew: Charting a Path for Tomorrow**
 - Supporting Objective 12 – Succession Planning and Knowledge Management
 - Supporting Objective 13 – Talent Management
 - Supporting Objective 14 – Workforce Planning

More specific rationale for these recommendations, broken down by goals and supporting objectives is as follows:

GOAL 1 – STABILIZING SERVICE DELIVERY

Creative and Dedicated People

Multiple stakeholders expressed significant concerns about the limited and inconsistent communication currently provided by the Human Resources department. In addition there were concerns about the level of technical knowledge possessed by HR professionals. In a number of instances it appeared that HR professionals were unable to respond to questions and/ or provided inconsistent/ conflicting information. In order to successfully implement the recommended HR improvements in the GWNT it will be imperative to ensure that HR professionals have the required skills and competencies to deliver on these commitments and therefore, focusing on developing creative and smart people is an important supporting objective of the strategic plan.

Having and Using the Right Tools

Concerns about the lack of “service” and inconsistencies in how human resources programs were delivered emerged in focus group and survey responses. Addressing these concerns by creating and using appropriate HR tools is important as successfully implementing the recommended Human Resources Strategic Plan will be contingent of having a solid HR foundation to deliver the program.

GOAL 2 - ATTRACTION AND RECRUITMENT

Affirmative Action and Diversity

While positive aspects of the existing Affirmative Action Policy were identified by focus group and survey participants, there are still a number of areas that require improvement. These include:

- Continuing attempts to increase the number of Aboriginal persons employed by the GNWT;
- Ensuring the policy is enforced and applied consistently across the GNWT;
- Increasing public and employee awareness/ support of the policy; and
- Reviewing and modifying the policy to improve its effectiveness.

Including Affirmative Action in the GNWT’s Human Resources Strategic Plan is important not only to address the weaknesses of the current policy but also to ensure that the GNWT is able effectively utilize persons impacted by this policy as they have been, and will continue to be important in ensuring the GNWT continues to prosper in the future.

Marketing Public Service

Capitalizing on promoting the strengths of the GNWT and the NWT as a whole is an important supporting objective of the Human Resources Strategic Plan as it will help the GNWT instill pride and improve morale of their current employees while addressing the negative perceptions that the public and potential employees currently hold towards public service. Furthermore, promoting the GNWT and its public service will address some of the current recruitment challenges by differentiating the GNWT from their competitors (discussed in Section 6.1), improving perceptions of the GNWT and/ or piquing the interest of potential employees.

Compensation and Benefits

Feedback about the monetary value of compensation and benefits at the GNWT was mixed. Compensation in a number of occupational categories was viewed by participants to be very competitive and information presented in the 2007 NWT Community Government HR Survey commissioned by the Local Government Administrators of the NWT (LGANT) appears to support this statement, specifically, in the majority of cases, salary ranges of select administrative, financial and operations positions in the GNWT were greater than or equal to those of the municipal governments and private sector employers. Additionally, both the level of compensation and the pension plan were cited as two of the top attractions to working for, and remaining with the GNWT.

Despite these successes there are several reasons why it is critical for the GNWT to continue to devote significant attention to compensation and benefits. First, when asked to rate the importance of compensation and pension/ benefits, a very high percentage of survey participants indicated they were “high” or “very high” (86.6% and 87.9% respectively). Additionally, maintaining the attraction and retention powers of compensation and benefits that were identified by survey and focus group participants is important given the difficulties the GNWT has been having with recruitment and retention as compensation and benefits were commonly cited as a reason to join and/ or remain with the GNWT. Lastly, several areas related to compensation and benefits were noted to be requiring improvement and these should be addressed in the Human Resources strategy. These include:

- The clarity and consistency of communication related to compensation;
- Human Resources staff knowledge of compensation and benefits;
- The amount of time required to receive a response to compensation/ benefits inquiries and to correct errors; and
- Addressing compensation levels for positions where it is below a competitive range.

One final point for consideration was presented in the 2007 NWT Community Government HR Survey commission by the Local Government Administrators of the NWT (LGANT). When examining the attraction and retention value of various benefit offerings this study showed that northern community governments offering pension plans and vacation travel allowances, compared to those who did not, showed no real differences in success in attracting and retaining staff.

In contrast, communities that provided a northern living allowance (NLA) had employees remain in their positions for an average of three to five years while communities that did not provide NLAs had employees remain in their positions for an average of one to three years. Findings from this report, combined with information that was gathered from focus group and survey participants suggests that a northern living allowance remains an important aspect of the GNWT’s total compensation package.

GOAL 3 – ENGAGEMENT AND RETENTION

Retention

Looking at the demographics of survey participants and assuming this is an accurate reflection of the GNWT workforce as a whole, it appears that the GNWT’s ability to retain employees is solid (68% of respondents have worked at the GNWT for over 10 years). However, retention will be an important area to focus on because there is widespread belief that is not being done well, a number of long-tenure employees will begin to retire from the GNWT and there are significant challenges recruiting replacements.

If the GNWT wishes to remain competitive it will be critical for the GNWT to focus on retaining the employees they have. Furthermore, when youth and interns, a critical source of future labour for the GNWT, were consulted about their intention to remain with the GNWT a number of them indicated they did not intend to remain with the GNWT on a permanent basis. This could in part be due to changing attitudes towards long tenure employment, however, given that youth are the workforce of the future it will be important for the GNWT to understand how to retain this group.

From a retention perspective, the shortage of workers in some occupational groups in the NWT combined with the variety of opportunities available in the GNWT should be capitalized on. This is because the shortage of workers gives employees the chance to develop at a rate they may not be available to them in other organizations. By ensuring employees can take advantage of these opportunities there is less chance they will be prompted to leave due to slow career progress. Furthermore, the variety of opportunities available in the GNWT and the multiple office locations makes it unique from other organizations. In many instances employees chose to leave organizations due to changing careers or physically moving to a new location. The breadth of positions in the GNWT and the multiple locations throughout the NWT provide a way for these employees in these situations to remain with the GNWT.

Healthy and Respectful Workplace

From a traditional health and wellness perspective serious concerns about the GNWT were not raised, however, available and affordable housing combined with supports in the community were identified as an issue by employees of the GNWT. Addressing these unique wellness needs is important not only for ensuring the overall health of their workforce but could also be an important method differentiating the GNWT from their competitors, which is key in the competition for talent. Furthermore, as referenced earlier, according to the 2007 NWT Community Government HR Survey commission by the Local Government Administrators of the NWT (LGANT) northern living allowances provided by employers (in addition to federally funded tax credits were found to improve retention. Given the positive success on retention that this unique program has had, combined with the GNWT's current challenges with retention it is in the government's best interest to consider implementing additional creative programs that address some of the unique challenges of living in isolated, northern communities.

Lastly, concerns related to morale and work-life balance were expressed by a number of focus group and survey participants. Addressing these challenges through focusing on wellness will be important not only because improved morale leads to improved productivity but also because of the challenges with recruitment and retention. Ensuring that employees are satisfied and productive should lead to improved retention and reduce the need to recruit as increases in productivity will off-set the need to hire additional labour.

While serious concerns about health and wellness were not raised it is significant to note that, 89% of survey participants indicated that working conditions were "important" or "very important", making it the most important feature of the workplace when compared to all the other options provided in the survey. Given the importance of working conditions to the GNWT's current workforce, failing to maintain wellness could have serious implications for overall workplace satisfaction.

Relations with Bargaining Representatives

Major issues with labour relations did not emerge from focus group or survey participants, however, stability from a labour relations perspective is critical to ensuing overall effectiveness of the workforce and therefore the current labour peace being experienced by the GNWT can not be taken for granted. In order to operate effectively in the future the GNWT must ensure they continue to maintain good relations with bargaining representatives.

Greening the Workplace

Discussions and comments about environmental issues were limited, however, greening the workplace should be considered as an important element of the overall strategy for the following reasons:

- MLAs and “Northerners working Together” assign a high level of importance to maintaining an awareness of the environment and taking steps to mitigate climate change. Given the “political sensitivity” attached to these groups it is important to attach significant weight to their concerns when creating a HR strategy for the GNWT;
- It is the responsibility of the government to make proactive decisions that take into consideration the future interests of the population as a whole and therefore, while it may not be a priority of current employees it is important that the GNWT take a forward looking approach towards protecting the environment for the benefit of workers and generation to come;
- The effects of global warming and climate change appear to be having a much more significant impact on the northern regions of the globe than other regions. As part of the northern community it is important for the GNWT to take these issues seriously and work towards mitigating the damage that has already been caused; and
- Increasingly, governments and private corporations around the globe are addressing environmental concerns and sustainability. The GNWT can not ignore commitments being made around them and as such should give serious consideration to including the environment in their HR strategy.
- It provides an initiative through which employees can be involved and thus may have positive impacts on employee engagement

GOAL 4 - DEVELOPMENT

Leadership

Focusing on leadership in order to develop a sustainable cadre of middle and senior managers in the GNWT is an important feature of the overall strategy for the following reasons:

- The GNWT workforce is aging and is comprised of a number of long-tenure employees. This is supported by information collected from focus group and survey participants, combined with the Employee Profile at the GNWT as at March 31, 2008 which showed that the average age of all employees was 43.6 years and average years of service was 7.6. These employees will begin to retire over the next twenty years and it will be important to ensure there are other employees who are ready to step into their place. Furthermore, hiring employees externally to replace retirees may not be feasible given the recruitment difficulties the GNWT is currently experiencing; and
- Focus groups and survey participants indicated that there is a lack of consistent leadership, an inability of some leaders to make decisions and a lack of training/ development and/ or coaching/ mentoring programs for leaders. These concerns should be addressed in the GNWT’s Human Resources Strategic Plan.

Lifelong Learning

The GNWT appears to be experiencing significant challenges and gaps related to training/ development and coaching/ mentoring. Additionally, the lack of dedicated funding for these programs was cited as a major problem and it is expected that the current economic conditions

will only exacerbate this issue. Training/ development and coaching/ mentoring need to be viewed and understood as both a 'cost' as well as an 'investment' in staff and will be important to the success of the GNWT because developing internal talent will help alleviate some of the challenges associated with recruitment, the high number of vacancies in the workforce and the anticipated retirement of a large portion of the workforce. Furthermore, given the expense of recruiting and hiring replacement employees it will be a more effective use of the increasingly limited financial resources to invest in training and development versus hiring externally. Lastly, from a retention perspective, keeping employees learning and engaged will help to ensure they remain interested in working for the GNWT.

The current shortage of workers in the NWT, while contributing to some challenges in terms of delivery of public services, can also be seen as a positive feature of the GNWT as there are a number of opportunities for employees to take on increasing levels of responsibility and benefit from on-the-job training and/ or informal coaching/ mentoring. Both these forms of development are relatively inexpensive compared to more traditional methods of training and can be capitalized on in the short-term while the economy is weak and funding for other programs is limited.

Feedback and Rewards

A number of challenges related to feedback and rewards were identified by focus groups and survey participants. These include:

- The low frequency with which performance reviews are being conducted;
- The limited amount of time that is currently spent addressing areas identified as requiring improvement;
- The lack of recognition of strong performance; and
- The lack of attention that is being paid to managing poor performers.

Given the shortage of workers, within certain occupational categories, that the GNWT is currently experiencing, which will be compounded by the retiring workforce, it will be important to develop the existing workers while ensuring these workers remain satisfied and productive. Focusing in improving the frequency with which performance reviews are conducted and addressing skills gaps will prepare employees to step into key positions that are, or will, become vacant. Furthermore, recognizing strong performance and managing poor performance creates a motivated and productive workforce. Addressing feedback and rewards will therefore be beneficial in correcting some of the morale problems that were noted by focus groups and survey participants which in turn should improve productivity and hopefully lessen the strain on employees that has resulted due to increasing vacancy levels. Lastly, given the current economic climate it will be important for the GNWT to "do more with less" from a financial perspective. While not free, feedback and rewards are a relatively inexpensive method of increasing productivity and improving morale which is beneficial in light of the current broader economic environment.

GOAL 5 – SUCCESS and SUCCESSION

Succession Planning and Knowledge Management

Focus group and survey participants provided information relative to the preparedness of the GNWT for successors assuming their roles. An enhanced approach to succession planning is a

significant opportunity for the GNWT. Given the aging workforce at the GNWT combined with the recruitment challenges and the overall shortage of labour in the NWT it will be critical to the long-term success of the GNWT to develop and implement rigorous succession planning as part of human resource management priorities.

It will be essential to ensure succession planning efforts integrate with overall workforce planning (to track trends and projections) as well as lifelong learning efforts to ensure qualified successors are available. In addition, it will be essential to ensure adequate communication about succession planning takes place.

The GNWT should also consider the knowledge management aspects of succession planning to provide for the appropriate transfer of institutional knowledge through the public service.

Talent Management

Focus group and survey participants indicated that workforce planning was not being done effectively. Given the constant changes to the skills required in the labour force, combined with the challenges that the GNWT has with recruitment it will be important for the human resources strategy to inform and enable the government to understand the skills their employees currently have and be aware of areas where skills need to be developed in response to evolving public service demands. This approach will assist in ensuring that skills can be developed in-house well in advance of when they will be required and in the event that in-house talent can not be developed, planning ahead to identify future workforce needs will allow the GNWT to proactively take steps (such as developing educational programs to support the development of a skill set that is in very short supply) that will take several years to pay-off.

7 PROPOSED HUMAN RESOURCES STRATEGIC PLAN

7.1 Mission, Vision and Motto for Human Resources Management in the GNWT

Mission:

To provide excellent service to the people of the Northwest Territories.

Vision:

Excellence, innovation and commitment are the touchstones of our service to the public.

Motto:

Public Service. Public Focus.

To reflect the purpose and intent of the Strategic Plan, DHR staff crafted a new motto for the public service: “Public Service. Public Focus.” This simple statement ensures that while we carry out the many activities that comprise the work of government, we never lose sight of the end game - providing excellent services to residents of the Northwest Territories.

The Strategic Plan maps out an ambitious vision to be achieved over a ten-year period, and envisions collaboration across all levels of public service in the Northwest Territories – including not only the GNWT but also community and Aboriginal governments.

There are five strategic goals which will drive the actions to implement the Strategic Plan over the next ten years. Each of these goals is made up of supporting objectives which will serve to guide the way we manage our human resources. While each has equal value and importance, there are important connections and linkages amongst them. From an action plan perspective, this means that some key initiatives must be completed early on so that we establish a good foundation for successfully implementing the full Strategic Plan.

Strategic Goal 1 – Stabilize Service Delivery / Fixing the Foundation

Supporting Objectives

- Creative and Dedicated People
- Having and Using the Right Tools

Strategic Goal 2 - Attraction and Recruitment / Engage: Magnetic Attraction

Supporting Objectives

- Affirmative Action and Diversity
- Marketing Public Service
- Compensation and Benefits

Strategic Goal 3 – Engagement and Retention / **Dazzle: Diverse Opportunities**

Supporting Objectives

- Healthy and Respectful Workplace
- Positive Relations with Bargaining Representatives
- Greening the Workplace

Strategic Goal 4 – Learning and Development / **Inspire: Expanding Horizons**

Supporting Objectives

- Leadership
- Lifelong Learning
- Feedback and Rewards

Strategic Goal 5 - Success and Succession / **Renew: Charting a Path for Tomorrow**

Supporting Objectives

- Succession Planning and Knowledge Management
- Talent Management
- Workforce Planning

The balance of the report presents in more detail, the intended outcomes and potential actions for the Vision and the Strategic Goals for Human Resources Strategic Plan for the GNWT Public Service.

7.2 Strategic Goals for the Human Resources Strategic Plan

7.3.5 STRATEGIC GOAL 1 – STABILIZE SERVICE DELIVERY SUPPORT / *FIXING THE FOUNDATION*

The Employment Life Cycle is not a simple circle. It is a web of interrelationships and dependencies for every organization. Similarly, the HR Strategic Plan is not one size fits all either for the various Departments within the GNWT or for different employee groups or individuals. While flexibility is key to success, there must be agreement and endorsement of the basic vision, values and philosophy of the plan to ensure a consistent framework for all.

Leaders are accountable for the success of the organization in attracting, retaining, developing and sustainability of the organization. Yet the organization must provide the frameworks, systems, policies, programs and tools which are aligned to the HR Strategic Plan. This is the role of the HR Department.

Since the inception of the Department of Human Resources, it has been challenged by capacity issues and scarcity of skills in human resources and, as a result, has responded in a reactive rather than proactive role. This has been exacerbated by confusion around the role of 'manager' versus the role of 'human resources' by both groups. This in turn has resulted in inconsistencies in human resources advice, direction, services and has also potentially confused the relationships with the bargaining representatives in dealing with opportunities and issues at the local level.

Management at all levels and human resources leaders and employees recognize that there are service issues which must be addressed and steps have already been initiated to address some of the service issues and progress is being made.

The goal of HR service delivery is to support the implementation of the Human Resources Strategic Plan by providing human resources frameworks, policies and tools and promoting exemplary human resources management and services to departments through two supporting objectives:

Supporting Objective – Creative and Dedicated People

To have skilled professional human resources employees to promote and support exemplary human resources management.

Intended Outcomes

- Service delivery to GNWT employees is stabilized;
- Capacity, skills, credibility and a customer service culture are developed;
- Human Resources is viewed as a valued business partner; and
- HR related program and service advice is provided in a timely, consistent and accurate manner.

Potential Actions

- Mandatory customer service skills development for the HR Department;
- Create skills inventories and create individual learning plans to guide development of HR professional skills training; and
- Conduct an organizational review to clarify roles and accountabilities (e.g. Client Service Managers) and address Department service issues.

Supporting Objective – Having and Using the Right Tools

To develop, implement and continuously improve human resources frameworks, policies, programs and tools to support managers and employees to provide great services to the people of the Northwest Territories.

Intended Outcomes

- Proactive programs to address current and future corporate and Departmental needs; and
- HR frameworks, systems and tools to promote exemplary human resources management.

Potential Actions

- Review pay and benefits business processes to streamline processes and relieve backlogs; and
- Create and implement simplified policies to provide sufficient flexibility to address Departmental needs.

7.2.1 STRATEGIC GOAL 2 - ATTRACTION AND ENGAGEMENT / *ENGAGE: MAGNETIC* ***ATTRACTION***

In the Employment Life Cycle, the ability of any employer to attract candidates is critical to success. It is through this attraction process that every organization has the opportunity to impress upon people its values and its value as an organization, the services and products it provides and its employment 'offer' and work environment. Public services are fortunate that they have a strong value proposition that appeals to many people. The services provided to the public of any jurisdiction are essential to provide the fundamental basics of living, law and order and many beneficial services. Whether it is ensuring protection of the environment, health care, education, roads, water or an extensive list of services, every person living in Canada relies on public service.

While not necessarily an employment choice for every person, every person should recognize the importance of public service on our day to day lives. For those who are committed to public service, the GNWT has a prime opportunity to blend a young, yet well established, public service with the opportunity for northerners to remain in the north. Similarly, it has proven to be attractive for other Canadians and people from other countries to have a 'northern experience'. While the GNWT may not have the allure, or the total compensation offering of a mine for that matter, of a diamond mine, it has much to offer to people who are driven by service to the public or simply who are seeking different career options and environments.

Once a person is attracted generally to potential employment with an organization or to a particular position, the actual recruitment process begins to match skills to requirements and the employment contract is established. That is, an employee has responsibilities to perform his/her responsibilities diligently, to the best of their ability, safely and honestly while the employer has legislative obligations around the work environment, safety, and provides appropriate compensation based on the nature of the work and the type of employment.

Once this agreement is reached, engaging an employee is crucial to developing a productive relationship. Engagement has many different aspects, many of which are daily interactions with managers and colleagues which are inclusive, respectful and courteous. Engagement also includes more foundational pieces such as:

- orientation to the values of the organization;
- communicating its business philosophy and priorities;
- organizational expectations of conduct and behaviours; and
- expectations of deliverables and performance at the organizational unit and individual level.

It should also include basic information sharing, such as:

- where and how to get information e.g. learning opportunities, job postings, policies, collective agreements, etc.;
- supports like Employee Assistance Programs, or; and
- simply where to find stationery supplies.

While some of this is unit or location dependent, it is important that there is consistent messaging of the organization's values, philosophy, priorities and expectations along with a common framework of policies and practices which support the values. The goals to support Attraction and Engagement are those which are deemed to provide the greatest positive impact in the short, medium and long term.

The intended outcome of this goal is specifically to create a work environment that is more inviting as a potential employer, attractive as a place to be accepted and recognized for contributions, in an environment where there is opportunity for learning, continuous improvement and striving for excellence.

There are three supporting objectives for Attraction and Engagement:

Supporting Objective - Affirmative Action and Diversity

To promote the Affirmative Action policy to create a public service which represents the diverse cultures of the Northwest Territories and promotes the development and advancement of designated groups.

Intended Outcomes

- Diverse values and perspectives are embraced by the GNWT which attracts and retains designated members within the organization; and
- HR policies and practices support designated employees to succeed throughout the employment life cycle.

Potential Actions

- Raise awareness of the value of recognizing and embracing diversity of cultures and perspectives of the designated groups identified in the Affirmative Action Policy;
- Collaboratively design and deliver targeted training programs for aboriginals at all levels within the organization to promote development and excellence;
- Increase consideration for Information Technology innovations and training programs for Persons with Disabilities; and
- Undertake an expanded and more comprehensive occupational demand and supply outlook for the NWT. It is recommended that through a collaborative effort by the NWT Bureau of Statistics, Department of Education, Culture & Employment, Department of Human Resources and the Department of Finance, and building on the 2006 *“Job Futures - Occupational Demand Model for the NWT”*, an expanded and more comprehensive evidence based assessment of labour market dynamics be completed by updating and encompassing both the labour demand and supply dimensions. The methodological approach should include giving consideration to relevant analysis work undertaken in Canada. One such completed approach is *Alberta’s Occupational Demand and Supply Outlook, 2007-2017* (Alberta Employment and Immigration,). This type of occupational demand and supply will identify potential labour imbalances (i.e. surpluses and/or shortages) for selected occupations that can be reasonable anticipated given forecast factors and assumptions. This type of outlook will inform and facilitate a range of human resource management strategies and actions, including: recruitment; retention; succession planning; training & development; and, affirmative action initiatives.

Supporting Objective - Marketing Public Service

To market the strengths, benefits and opportunities of the public in the GNWT and other levels of government in the NWT.

Intended Outcomes

- Individuals from the Northwest Territories, northern neighbours, other parts of Canada and indeed the world are attracted to work for the GNWT;

- Employees are proud to work in the public service; and
- The Government and the public respect and recognize the values, skills and abilities of its public service and the excellent services it provides.

Potential Actions

- Develop partnerships between the HR Department and other government departments such as MACA, ECE and ITI to align marketing plans to brand the GNWT as a desired employer;
- Focus marketing efforts on jurisdictions across Canada and use on-line recruitment advertising versus print;
- Form partnerships with other levels of government (federal, community and Aboriginal governments) to promote careers in public service;
- Create and deliver outreach programs to NWT high schools and northern colleges about the strength of experiences that may be obtained through public service in the north; and
- Create and implement programs to reach out to designated group members and potential employees based on an approach similar to “Ambassador” type programs in other provincial jurisdictions.

Supporting Objective - Compensation and Benefits

To provide competitive compensation and benefits in a manner which appropriately compensates employees of the public services while ensuring fiscal prudence.

Intended Outcomes

- GNWT compensation levels are appropriately placed within the NWT labour market and Canada; and
- Employees are satisfied with compensation and benefits as one component of their work experience.

Potential Actions

- Continue to regularly conduct compensation reviews and benchmarking against appropriate comparators in the NWT and relevant labour markets;
- Align organization wide reviews and benchmarking with collective bargaining; and
- Review benefits programs to ensure they support and are aligned with other goals, e.g. affirmative action, wellness, etc.

7.2.2 STRATEGIC GOAL 3 – ENGAGEMENT AND RETENTION / DAZZLE: DIVERSE OPPORTUNITIES

The goal of every organization is retain good talent, skills and attitudes which contribute to its excellence, success and sustainability. The Strategic Goal of Retention is for the GNWT to create a workplace and culture which will retain excellent service providers, professionals and leaders.

There are many different reasons employees stay with an organization. In the findings, we have already demonstrated that many current employees of the GNWT stay because they enjoy the challenging and interesting work, the work location, providing public service and/or the benefits and compensation levels.

There are an abundance of other reasons employees stay with an organization. There is no set formula as it the combination of a number of factors coming together which create the right combination for groups of individuals and individuals. While the fundamental values, goals and leadership create the foundation to sustain an organization, there are other factors which may vary in importance at an organization and individual level. The key is for each organization to have a menu of programs and offerings which will appeal to large groups of employees and contribute to their engagement and supportive, satisfying work environment.

Retention strategies are intended to encourage employees to remain with the GNWT for longer periods of time and make contributions to their full potential. It is also intended that retention strategies will result in employees who are more engaged and productive towards the achievement of the organization goals and priorities. Once this has been achieved, along with improved attraction to the GNWT, it should also result in reducing skill shortages. These strategies will need to be monitored to identify and report on turnover and retention trends and develop both corporate and Department based programs to promote retention of productive workers.

There are three supporting objectives for Retention:

Supporting Objective – Healthy and Respectful Workplace

To instill a culture which promotes and encourages individual, organization, and community wellness, respect and safety.

Intended Outcomes

- Employees are encouraged to seek a healthy lifestyle, work/life balance and contribute to a healthy work environment and community; and
- A safe workplace which promotes wellness, supports work/life balance and respects individuals, diversity, and the community.

Potential Actions

- Establish partnerships with communities and social/health agencies to provide wellness programs that build upon programs currently offered in the Employee Assistance Program. These initiatives would promote cross-cultural approaches and would include things such as: smoking cessation, conflict management, stress management, fitness and volunteerism; and
- In collaboration with WSCC and other individual employers, partner with Bargaining Representatives to promote and provide safety awareness training.

Supporting Objective – Positive Relations with Bargaining Representatives

To create a work environment that respects the role of its' employee bargaining representatives and encourages engagement to advance common goals.

Intended Outcomes

- Healthy respect between the management cadre and bargaining representatives;
- Appreciation/acceptance of differing views; and
- Collaborative approach to addressing common goals, e.g. wellness, affirmative action, problem resolution.

Potential Actions

- Revitalize existing joint labour-management committees;
- Initiate relationship building training and protocols with the assistance of a mutually agreed upon third party;
- Delegate/reinforce managers' responsibility for applying the collective agreements and resolving disputes (with advice from corporate HR);
- Develop and deliver joint training for managers and local bargaining representatives regarding collective agreement provisions and early problem resolution techniques; and
- Identify other opportunities for working towards common goals.

Supporting Objective - Greening the Workplace

To value the environment and be 'green' in the public service.

Intended Outcomes

- The GNWT will be "An environment that will sustain present and future generations".
- Employees are engaged by the environmental commitment within their workplace.

Potential Actions

- Create employee awards programs that recognize employees who contribute to reducing the GNWT's environmental footprint;
- Encourage employees to develop and implement environmental programs within their work locations; and
- Seek out partnerships with other co-located organizations and/ or communities to adopt and/ or expand greening initiatives.

7.3.3 STRATEGIC GOAL 4 – LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT / *INSPIRE: EXPANDING HORIZONS*

Development occurs at many levels within an organization. There is cultural development which is about defining and living cultural values and modeling these through behaviours; organization development which focuses on organization targeted employee groups, structures and systems; and finally, development focused on individuals. All should be striving to deliver on the ultimate vision, values and goals of the organization.

Once again, there are many facets of development which an organization may focus on. Based on the input received from all levels, three supporting objectives emerged as crucial for this strategic goal.

Supporting Objective - Leadership

To develop a sustainable cadre of middle and senior managers in the GNWT with a targeted approach to ensure that Affirmative Action designated groups develop the skills to progress and succeed in leadership roles.

Intended Outcomes

- A management team which:
 - Develops and empowers employees and innovations
 - Leads and manages change
 - Leads people and manages issues, finances and other resources

- Managers are held accountable for effective values based leadership, identifying and communicating clear objectives, and delivering measurable results which are rewarded not only for what is achieved but how it is accomplished; and
- GNWT Leaders provide vision and direction to motivate, empower and recognize employees through feedback, rewards and recognition.

Potential Actions

- Clearly define roles, accountabilities and expectations of managers. The role of a manager is not only to deliver policy/programs or services but to do so through effective leadership of people and management of resources;
- Define and communicate management competencies;
- Hold Deputy Ministers accountable for the development of their leadership teams; and
- Implement programs to facilitate the rotation/transfer of managers through a range of Departments and management perspectives e.g. HQ vs. Regional; policy vs. operations; direct service vs. corporate service. Initially pilot programs for Affirmative Action designated members as part of a targeted development program.

Supporting Objective - Lifelong Learning

To value organization and individual learning in the GNWT.

Learning may take many forms. It may be learning in a classroom or it may be learning from a project assignment or it may be learning from job shadowing and mentoring. It may be established activities or it may be self-directed – but it should always be results based.

Intended Outcomes

- Employees share responsibility for lifelong learning;
- Employees are supported to pursue learning opportunities through traditional and non-traditional learning mechanisms; and
- Training and development is considered both a non-discretionary business expense and 'investment'.

Potential Actions

- Commit investment to learning and development programs including formal (e.g. classroom/ intranet) and informal training and supports (e.g. coaching/mentoring)
- Identify value for money learning initiatives that can maximize development and participation while minimizing travel costs; and
- Develop learning plans at an organizational level for different employee cadres and functional groupings as well as individual learning plans to support the drive for excellence.

Supporting Objective - Feedback and Rewards

To create or foster a work environment where employees are valued and recognized for excellent contributions to the Public Service.

Employees need to be valued and recognized for the work they perform on a regular and on-going basis. Good performers need to know they are performing well and how they could strive for excellence. Satisfactory performers need to know what they do well and where they could improve to improve their overall performance. Poor performers need to know that there are

shortcomings and that there is support to try to address skills development but that failure to improve will have consequences.

Intended Outcomes

- Employees receive ongoing feedback to strive/drive to excellence;
- Top performers are motivated through the rewards system; and
- Poor performance is managed to improve the contribution.

Potential Actions

- Provide education on providing feedback and create organizational supports for driving excellence;
- Research and implement innovative feedback mechanisms; and
- Design rewards (compensation and non-compensation) that can be altered to address cultural diversity and individual preferences.

7.3.4 STRATEGIC GOAL 5 – SUCCESS AND SUCCESSION / RENEW: CHARTING A PATH FOR TOMORROW

The final stage in the Employment Life Cycle is focused on the organization imperatives of being successful and having the proper succession planning in place to be sustainable. The long term sustainability of an organization is best served by having a flexible Workforce Planning process in place to be able to forecast and assess changes to the workforce based on political, economic, and/or demographic changes.

Globally, employers are facing demographics issues with an aging workforce resulting in employees at all levels leaving the workforce. Perhaps the greatest impact is at the level of more experienced workers who have progressed to the leadership levels of the organization and take with them experience and skills.

Many organizations analyse their future skills requirements based upon current skills shortages and forecast future requirements based on their business plans and demographic shifts of not only their own workforce but the customers they serve. For example, a common concern amongst public services is preparing for the continually increasing demands on the health care system as the population is aging along with employment programs to encourage an older workforce to remain engaged as a contingent workforce or in a mentorship role. Early identification of an emerging or growing requirement for a different skill set will assist organizations in creating programs or partnerships to develop this talent. One NWT example is the development of public policy capability and capacity for all governments in the NWT as the demand increases as new aboriginal governments are established.

Once the workforce planning provides direction, it allows succession planning, knowledge management and talent management frameworks and programs to be focused on the immediate and longer term requirements of the organization. It must also be recognized that various elements of succession planning and talent management must also be aligned to many other organization and HR aspects including values, Affirmative Action, rewards, feedback, etc. for it to be successful.

The goal of Success and Succession focuses on managing organizational sustainability through two supporting objectives:

Supporting Objective - Succession Planning and Knowledge Management

To effectively manage workforce stability, development, progression and risk for leadership and critical success roles.

Intended Outcomes

- Identification of critical positions for succession planning in the short and medium term;
- Candidates with developed or potential skills are identified for succession and receive targeted mentoring and development and coaching to succeed; and
- Knowledge management and business continuity are achieved.

Potential Actions

- Departments identify critical positions and candidates with requisite or potential competencies;
- Develop and implement learning plans to prepare for succession and broadening perspectives, competencies and skills;
- Design corporate and department programs to support one another and to provide a cross GNWT approach to the development of leaders and key contributors; and
- Allow successors to assume positions for up to 6 months on a double fill basis prior to current leaders exiting the organization in order to promote knowledge transfer and mentorship.

Supporting Objective - Talent Management

To anticipate and prepare for future skill requirements through the development of northerners and knowledge management capacity.

Intended Outcomes

- GNWT promotes sound management decision making through workforce planning which encourages agility, provides flexibility to respond to workforce needs and ensures organizational knowledge is maintained;
- Employees feel encouraged and supported to achieve full engagement and productivity; and

Potential Actions

- Develop a robust Talent Management Program e.g. skills inventory, forecast current and future skills requirements, gap analysis and redeployment/retraining opportunities, learning and development programs to address gaps and shortages which are aligned to Affirmative Action, rewards, and recognition goals and actions;
- Partner with other governments to identify common priorities/shortages and shared solutions for talent development; and

Supporting Objective - Workforce Planning

To make strategic decisions about GNWT business and service priorities taking into account human, financial and capital resources.

Intended Outcomes

- Training and development programs and supports are offered to develop talent and strive for excellence.

Potential Actions

- Enhance workforce planning analytics and an HR planning framework to support each Department in the development of their HR Plan which is aligned to the HR Strategic Plan and supports their three year business plan.

7.3 Action Plan

Following endorsement of the Human Resources Strategic Plan for the GNWT Public Service by the Deputy Ministers' Human Resources Committee and approval by the Minister of Human Resources and Cabinet, a three year Action Plan was developed to accompany the Strategic Plan.

The Action Plan includes consideration for the following criteria:

- Focus on areas requiring immediate attention balanced with those where foundational work is required for future investment in human resources;
- Actions that are ambitious but achievable;
- Actions that are pragmatic and demonstrate value for the organization; and
- An evaluation framework including review cycle and performance metrics recommendation to measure outcomes identified in the Human Resources Strategic Plan for the GNWT Public Service.

7.4 Implementation Considerations

A plan is only as good as the commitment to:

- Drive it by taking ownership of it;
- Resource it with money, skills, time and effort;
- Support it publicly and consistently;
- Evaluate it and adjust the plan to respond to changing conditions or emerging trends;
- Communicate it; and
- Manage it.

Throughout the research phase of the project, a number of critical success factors were frequently cited. These included:

- Public support from the Members of the Legislative Assembly;
- Ownership of the Deputy Ministers for the Human Resources Strategic Plan;
- Investment of dollars to support the Human Resources infrastructure and elements of the plan at the corporate and department levels;
- The need for skilled human resources practitioners to develop the frameworks, policies, programs and tools committed to the action plan;
- A governance structure to ensure effective governance, accountability and reporting of the plan;
- A robust and sustained internal communications plan which includes regular reporting to the Minister, leaders, employees and their representatives; and
- An external communications plan to align with reporting on the *Northerners Working Together* achievements.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 – WORK PROGRAM

Work Program

The following revised Work Program and Schedule are Based on the outcomes of Tasks 3 and 4. The Strategic Plan Advisory Group as well as the Deputy Minister's Human resources Standing Committee provided valuable and information input to the parameters, scope and level of stakeholder engagement to best position the development of the HR Strategic Plan and Action Pan for the NWT Public Service.

PHASE I: ESTABLISHING THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

1. Project Orientation Meeting
2. Review of Relevant Documents
3. Project Planning Workshop and Presentation to DM's Standing Committee
4. Develop Stakeholder Consultation and Engagement Strategy
5. Revise the Work Plan
6. Research of Public Service Best Practices
7. Develop Questionnaires and Conduct Key Informant Interviews
8. Prepare a Phase I Synthesis Report
9. Presentation to the HR Committee

PHASE II: DEVELOPING THE DRAFT HR STRATEGIC PLAN

10. Implement Phase II Communications
11. Design and Implement an On-line Survey
12. Preparation, Logistics, Facilitation and Analysis of 12 focus groups with key stakeholders
13. Strategic Planning Workshops – Strategic Plan Advisory Group, and Executives of each Union
14. Synthesis of Results
15. Draft the HR Strategic Plan
16. Presentation to the HR Committee
17. Circulation of the Draft Strategic Plan

PHASE III: DEVELOPING THE DRAFT ACTION PLAN

18. Implement Phase III Communications
19. Action Planning Sessions
20. Synthesis of Results
21. Draft the Action Plan
22. Presentation to the HR Committee
23. Circulation of the Draft Action Plan

PHASE IV: FINALIZING THE STRATEGIC PLAN AND ACTION PLAN

24. Review and Compile comments on the Draft Strategic Plan and Action Plan
25. Finalize the Strategic Plan
26. Finalize the Action Plan
27. Project Management

APPENDIX 2 – STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

DRAFT CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS PLAN (REVISED OCTOBER 30, 2008)¹²

Participant/Stakeholder	Focus of Consultation					Consultation Methods	Communication Methods ¹³
	Issues	Vision	Values	Goals	Draft Plans		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standing Committee on Priorities and Planning Cabinet 	√ √	√ √	√	√	√	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint presentation given by HR DM; and Terriplan Consultants to the Standing Committee. Through this process Standing Committee members will be offered the opportunity to be interviewed to obtain their views, opinions and attitudes as they pertain to the development of an HR Strategic Plan and Action Plan for the NWT Public Service. The Minister will brief Cabinet. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minister informs and updates Standing Committee and Legislative Assembly.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deputy Ministers' HR Steering Committee 	√	√	√	√	√	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As per above, invitations will be provided to participate in an interview with all Deputy Ministers. Present project status reports. Present and seek comment on Draft Plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human Resources Deputy Minister to provide regular project updates to the committee. HR DM to seek advice regarding key project issues.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic Plan Advisory Group 	√	√	√	√	√	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 -3 working sessions with Terriplan consultants. Also have opportunity to provide input via online survey. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meetings and regular project updates
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GNWT Senior Managers¹⁴ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Departmental Senior Management Committees Regional Management Committees/ 	√	√	√	√		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online survey will be available to all GNWT Senior Managers to provide input. HR Department will offer to meet with each SMC twice during the project and to update and receive comment. Regional Management Committee representative Focus Group¹⁵ (1). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An HR Strategic Plan web page will be established on the HR website to keep all GNWT employees informed on project status. HR Department will offer to meet with each SMC (likely twice each).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GNWT Middle Managers 	√	√	√	√		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All middle managers can participate via online survey. Middle Management Focus Groups – two headquarters and two regional, a representative cross-section. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HR Strategic Plan web page updates.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GNWT Non-Management Staff 	√	√	√			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All staff can participate via online survey. Non-Management Staff Focus Groups – 2 headquarters and 2 regions (representative cross-section). Post Secondary Youth & Interns Focus Group (1). Aboriginal Employee Focus Group (1). Employees with Disabilities Focus Group (1). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HR Strategic Plan web page updates. Update via existing communications i.e. Bear Facts.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unions 	√	√	√			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Separate working session with Executive of each Union. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HR Strategic Plan web page HR Department briefings on project progress as needed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aboriginal and Community Governments 	√					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultation on specific matters as/if needed. Minister responsible to issue a letter outlining the process and solicit information from Aboriginal and Community governments through a brief (i.e. six question) questionnaire to obtain the views, opinions and attitudes as they pertain to the development of an HR Strategic Plan and Action Plan for the NWT Public Service. Specific information collected will include what support and linkages are desired/required between Aboriginal, Community governments and the GNWT. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Letter introducing project that also solicits high-level information from these stakeholders HR Department to provide project update and key points. Updates via existing communications i.e. Bear Facts.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public 	√					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public service ads and link to website to invite participation via online survey. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update via existing communication products.

¹² Consultation and Communications for Strategic Plan Phase only.

¹³ Terriplan Communications Level of Effort directed towards support and input to HR Strategic Plan web page. The webpage will be designed and maintained by HR Dept IT staff.

¹⁴ GNWT Senior Managers – All managers not on Senior Managers Advisory Committee.

¹⁵ GNWT to provide roster of possible/likely participants for each of the targeted focus groups. Terriplan Consults will use these rosters to solicit participation for each of the scheduled focus groups.

T e r r i p l a n
CONSULTANTS

APPENDIX 3 – SURVEYS

5020 47th Street P.O. Box 2335 Yellowknife, NT X1A 2P7
Tel: (867) 873-4490 Fax: (867) 873-2402

December 2008

Dear Sir or Madam,

As Minister Bob McLeod announced on October 22, the Department of Human Resources has initiated the development of a comprehensive Corporate Human Resources Strategic Plan (referred to as the “Plan”) for the NWT public service. This plan will respond to and put into effect one of the 16th Legislative Assembly’s stated priorities – that is, “improving human resource management within the GNWT through training, career planning and encouraging innovation by employees.”

The Plan will be developed in collaboration with GNWT employees and other interested parties, will become a foundation document that will guide the work of the NWT public service over the next ten years to make the GNWT an employer of choice and a provider of the highest quality public services to the residents of the NWT.

Terriplan Consultants have been contracted to assist the Department of Human Resources and its staff with the development of the plan. At this early stage in the process we are committed to providing a range of options to enable employees to contribute, including an opportunity through this survey (online or hardcopy) to provide your direct perspective and experience into the formation of the plan. Your views will be kept **strictly confidential** and will be received and compiled by Terriplan Consultants. Individual responses will not be shared with the GNWT management. Your input today will be combined with other survey respondents, in a way that protects and ensures your privacy, and the substance of your comments will be incorporated into the draft Plan development process.

Terriplan also has the results of the 2006 and 2008 Employee Satisfaction and Engagement Surveys which are providing insight and guidance for the process. This survey is intended to gather your input to the Corporate Human Resources Strategic Plan and to address areas not previously covered by the 2006 and 2008 surveys.

For more information about the survey please contact Shena Shaw of Terriplan at 867-873-4490 ext 25. For inquiries related to the Corporate Human Resources Strategic Plan project, contact Sharilyn Alexander, Direct of Corporate Human Resources, GNWT (867) 873-7852.

Sincerely,

Joe Pittari, Project Manager
Terriplan Consultants

Section 1

The following statements are intended to gather your input on various aspects of your work environment and your employment experience, including development, performance, and communication. Your responses, in addition to input from the Employee Satisfaction Survey results, focus groups and a review of best practices in other jurisdictions, will help us determine the areas of priority for the *Corporate Human Resources Strategic Plan*.

1a. Please rate the following statements based from whether you strongly disagree rated as a '1' up to you strongly agree rated as a '5'. (NR is "no response")

		Strongly Disagree \longrightarrow Strongly Agree					
		1	2	3	4	5	NR
A	Excellent performance is recognized in my organization	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B	I receive the necessary training and coaching required to continually improve my performance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C	Employees treat each other with respect	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
D	My immediate manager ensures I am aware of the knowledge and skills I need to develop	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
E	My performance reviews are conducted on a timely basis	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
F	Poor performers are managed so their performance improves	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
G	Senior Managers in my organization clearly explain the reasons behind major decisions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
H	I am satisfied with my career progress in the NWT public service	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

1b. If you disagreed with any of the above statements – a rating of 1 or 2 - please indicate what could be done by the GNWT to make improvements. Please note, you may attach additional pages to this questionnaire, if you require additional space to write your answers.

2a. Please rate the GNWT Human Resources processes/activities on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is Poor and 5 is Excellent. (NR is "no response")

		Poor \longrightarrow Excellent					
		1	2	3	4	5	NR
A	Recruitment/Selection process	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B	Orientation process/programs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C	Availability of Training and Development opportunities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
D	Promotional opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
E	Receiving coaching and/or mentoring from within the public service	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
F	Performance Planning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2b. If you ranked any items as '1' or '2' please indicate why it was Poor and what could be done to improve it. Please note, you may attach additional pages to this questionnaire, if you require additional space to write your answers.

3. If you have ever considered leaving the NWT public service, why did you consider leaving?
(Check all that apply)

- Retirement option
- Family obligations
- Further education
- Other employment opportunities
- Health or lifestyle
- Seeking to use skills elsewhere
- End of term or contract
- Issues/conflicts with co-workers
- Conflict with manager
- Lack of direction or opportunity to perform interesting work
- Better salary with another employer
- Other reasons: (please specify)

4. Why do you stay with the GNWT? (Check all that apply)

- Job Security
- Interesting Work
- No Other Work Available
- Good Benefits
- Good Salary
- Work Life Balance
- Like my colleagues
- Like my manager
- I want a 'northern' experience
- I make a contribution
- I am recognized for my work
- Other reasons: (please specify)

5. Please rate the importance of each of the following items to you as an employee on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 means not important and 5 means very important. (NR is "no response")

		Not Important \longrightarrow Very Important					
		1	2	3	4	5	NR
A	Working conditions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B	Work location	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C	Living conditions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
D	Balance of work and family	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
E	Recognition of employees	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
F	Compensation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
G	Pension and Benefits	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
H	Training and development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I	Career opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
J	Workplace health and safety	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
K	Affirmative action programs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
L	Manager provides clear direction and support	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
M	Co-workers are supportive and respectful	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

N	Flexibility in work, e.g. flex time, vacation, etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
O	Other (please specify) _____ _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6. If I were to leave the organization, there is someone in the GNWT who could step into my job (e.g. succession planning and back-filling).

- True - on a permanent basis
- True – but only as a stop gap
- False – no one has the skills or is available in the community to perform my job
- Don't Know

7. What initially attracted you to work in the NWT public service? (check all that apply)

- Location
- Job security
- Unionized environment
- Compensation and benefits
- Good work environment
- Good leadership
- Interesting work
- Good experience
- Only job available
- Other Comments: _____

8. What barriers may exist to your success and growth as an employee of the NWT public service?

- Lack of training and development
- Lack of job opportunities in my location
- Lack of job opportunities in my area of interest
- Budget cut backs
- Work environment does not support my success
- I do not have a good sense of what opportunities are available or how to move forward
- My immediate manager or supervisor does not give me feedback or coaching
- Other Comments: _____

Section 2

The following questions are intended for you to provide frank and honest personal attitudes and opinions. This will help us determine the areas of priority for the *Corporate Human Resources Strategic Plan*. Please note, you may attach additional pages to this questionnaire, if you require additional space to write your answers.

9. As an employee looking at the NWT public service overall, what do you see as its major challenges today?

10. As an employee, what do you see as the key opportunities for the NWT public service that can be taken advantage of?

11. In your opinion, what are the most important changes you would recommend to improve the GNWT as a place to work?

12. Do you have any final comments you wish to provide that would assist in developing the Corporate Human Resources Strategic Plan for the NWT Public Service?

Section 3

The following section includes a series of general respondent questions. The results from these questions will assist us in further analyzing the compiled survey information. As noted during the introduction to the survey, all responses are strictly confidential.

13. Sex Male Female

14. How old are you?

- Less than 25 years 25 – 29 years 30 – 39 years
 40 – 49 years 50 – 59 years 60 years or older

15. What category best describes your current position with the GNWT?

- Senior Management (ADM, Directors, Superintendents)
 Management (Managers who supervise employees)
 Administrative
 Clerical
 Skilled Trade
 Labourer
 Technical or Professional – Health Care
 Technical or Professional – Social Services
 Technical or Professional - Education
 Technical or Professional – Other
 Technical or Professional - Corrections
 Other (please specify)

16. In total, how long have you worked for the GNWT?

- Less than 1 year 1-2 years 3-4 years 5-10 years
 10-15 years 15-20 years 20+ years

17. How many years have you been working in total with the GNWT AND any other employer?

- 0-5 5-10 10-20 20+

18. In which department do you currently work? _____

19. Work Location: Headquarters (Yellowknife) Regional Office Community Setting
20. Do you work? Full time Part time Seasonally
21. Do you belong to one or more of the following groups?
- Indigenous Aboriginal Persons (*Means those persons who are descendants of the Dene, Inuit or Métis people, indigenous to the present boundaries of the Northwest Territories and includes any aboriginal persons resident at birth pursuant to Section 7.1 of the Vital Statistics Act and any Canadian aboriginal persons who have lived more than half of their life in the Northwest Territories.*)
 - Resident Women (*Means Females who are living in and have lived in the Northwest Territories for at least one year immediately prior to applying on a competition.*)
 - Indigenous Non-Aboriginal (*Means non-aboriginal persons born in the Northwest Territories or who have lived more than half their life in the Northwest Territories.*)
 - Resident Disabled Persons (*Means persons who are living in and have lived in the Northwest Territories for at least one year immediately prior to applying on a competition and who are at a disadvantage because of a medically certified learning, mental, emotional, or physical disability where the disability handicaps the person in taking advantage of employment, training and career advancement opportunities. A person without such a disability would not encounter these difficulties.*)
 - Not applicable

Thank you for your responses in completing the survey.

Your views are important and will be consolidated with your GNWT colleagues to provide input into the development of the Corporate Human Resources Strategic Plan for the NWT public service.

Please submit your completed survey and any additional pages you have completed into the postage paid envelope.

APPENDIX 4 – INTERVIEW AND FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

Senior Manager Focus Group Questions

QUESTIONS

- 1 Looking at the NWT public service overall, what would you say are its unique strengths?
- 2 Looking at the NWT public service overall, what do you see as its major challenges
 - a. Today?
 - b. In the foreseeable future?
- 3 Considering just your division, what's working well in terms of HR management? e.g.
 - a. Recruitment
 - b. Employee Orientation
 - c. Compensation and Benefits
 - d. Training and development opportunities
 - e. Labour relations
 - f. Job evaluation
 - g. Performance review
 - h. Succession planning
 - i. Other_____
- 4 What is not working in HR management within the GNWT, and what are the barriers that are preventing things from working? e.g.
 - a. Recruitment
 - b. Employee Orientation
 - c. Pay and benefit administration
 - d. Training and development opportunities
 - e. Labour relations
 - f. Job evaluation
 - g. Performance review
 - h. Succession planning
 - i. Other_____
- 5 What changes would you like to see in the public service
 - a. In the near term (within 1 year)?
 - b. In 2 – 5 years?
 - c. Ten years from now?
- 6 If the strategic plan is intended to be the blueprint for public service renewal over the next ten years, then what should its goals be?

- 7 What outcomes would you like to see from the HR strategic plan?
 1. In the near term (within 1 year)?
 2. In 2 – 5 years?
 3. Ten years from now?

- 8 How should a corporate HR strategic plan link to and directly support your department's HR planning functions?

- 9 If public service renewal is aimed at making the GNWT an employer of choice, what should the top three priorities be?
 - a. Corporate branding
 - b. Marketing our strengths
 - c. Higher compensation levels
 - d. Increased benefits
 - e. Improved working conditions
 - f. Leadership
 - g. Better balance between work and family
 - h. Better employee recognition
 - i. More training and development opportunities
 - j. Improved health/safety
 - k. Expanding affirmative action programs
 - l. Other _____

- 10 In what areas does the Department of Human Resources need to improve to meet your service delivery needs?

- 11 What options or mechanisms do you suggest to formalize service delivery by the Department of Human Resources to your Department?

- 12 Are there any areas we haven't covered? Do you have any additional comments?

Middle Manager Focus Group Questions

QUESTIONS

- 1 What would you say are the strengths of the GNWT workforce?
- 2 What are major challenges you face:
 - a. Today?
 - b. In the foreseeable future?
- 3 Considering just your area, what's working well in terms of HR management?
e.g.
 - a. Recruitment
 - b. Employee Orientation
 - c. Compensation and Benefits
 - d. Training and development opportunities
 - e. Labour relations
 - f. Job evaluation
 - g. Performance review
 - h. Succession planning
 - i. Other_____
- 4 What is not working in HR management from your perspective, and what are the barriers that are preventing things from working? e.g.
 - a. Recruitment
 - b. Employee Orientation
 - c. Pay and benefit administration
 - d. Training and development opportunities
 - e. Labour relations
 - f. Job evaluation
 - g. Performance review
 - h. Succession planning
 - i. Other_____
- 5 What HR changes would you like to see in the public service?
 - a. In the near term (within 1 year)?
 - b. In 2 – 5 years?
 - c. Ten years from now?

- 6 If public service renewal is aimed at making the GNWT an employer of choice, what should the top three priorities be?
 - a. Corporate branding
 - b. Marketing our strengths
 - c. Higher compensation levels
 - d. Increased benefits
 - e. Improved working conditions
 - f. Leadership
 - g. Better balance between work and family
 - h. Better employee recognition
 - i. More training and development opportunities
 - j. Improved health/safety
 - k. Expanding affirmative action programs
 - l. Other_____

- 7 If the strategic plan is intended to be the blueprint for public service renewal over the next ten years, then what should its goals be?

- 8 How should a corporate HR strategic plan link to and directly support your department's HR planning functions?

- 9 In what areas does the Department of Human Resources need to improve to meet your service delivery needs?

- 10 Are there any areas we haven't covered? Do you have any additional comments or advice?

Focus Group Questions – Non Management GNWT Staff

QUESTIONS

- 1 What is most satisfying about working for the GNWT?
- 2 What attracted you to the GNWT originally?
- 3 What encourages/motivates you to stay with the GNWT?
- 4 If you were offered a comparable job with another employer what would your reasons be for accepting it or rejecting it?
- 5 From your perspective, what's working well in terms of HR? e.g.
 - a. Recruitment
 - b. Employee Orientation
 - c. Training and development opportunities
 - d. Labour relations
 - e. Job evaluation
 - f. Performance review
 - g. Health and Safety
 - h. Recognition
 - i. Other _____
- 6 What is not working in HR? e.g.
 - a. Recruitment
 - b. Employee Orientation
 - c. Training and development opportunities
 - d. Job evaluation
 - e. Performance review
 - f. Health and Safety
 - g. Recognition
 - h. Other _____
- 7 To attract people to the GNWT and make them want to stay (i.e. make the GNWT an employer of choice) what should the top three priorities be?

Facilitator may generate discussion based on the following potential responses:

- a. Clearer direction, setting of expectations and reasons for management decisions*
- b. Clearer communications about the GNWT*
- c. Better performance feedback*
- d. Employment Branding*
- e. Marketing our strengths*

- f. Improved working conditions, such as.....*
- g. Better balance between work and family*
- h. Better employee recognition*
- i. More training and development opportunities*
- j. Improved health/safety*
- k. Expanding affirmative action programs*

- 8 What is your experience with the Orientation process/program in the GNWT?

- 9 Is the Performance Planning and Review process effective? Does it help you improve your performance? Does it help others improve their performance?

- 10 Are there any areas we haven't covered? Do you have any additional comments or advice?

Aboriginal Focus Group Questions

QUESTIONS

1. What are the most satisfying aspects of working for the GNWT?
2. What attracted you to work for the GNWT originally?
3. If you were offered a comparable job with another employer what would your reasons be for accepting it or rejecting it?
4. From your perspective, what is working well in terms of Human Resources especially in terms of attracting and keeping you working in the GNWT? Do these processes recognize and address different needs, if there are any, of Aboriginal people e.g.
 - a. Recruitment
 - b. Employee Orientation
 - c. Training and development opportunities
 - d. Labour relations
 - e. Job evaluation
 - f. Performance review
 - g. Health and Safety
 - h. Recognition
 - i. Other _____
5. What is not working in Human Resources specifically around attracting and keeping you in the GNWT? e.g.
 - a. Recruitment
 - b. Employee Orientation
 - c. Training and development opportunities
 - d. Job evaluation
 - e. Performance review
 - f. Health and Safety
 - g. Recognition
 - h. Other _____
6. *Facilitator may generate discussion based on the following potential responses:*
 - a. *Clearer direction, setting of expectations and reasons for management decisions*
 - b. *Clearer communications about the GNWT*
 - c. *More recognition of aboriginal culture and ways in the work environment and work processes*
 - d. *Better performance feedback that respects our values*
 - e. *Employment Branding*
 - f. *Marketing our strengths*
 - g. *Improved working conditions, such as.....*

- h. Better balance between work and family*
- i. Different kinds of employee recognition*
- j. More training and development opportunities specific to developing skills of aboriginal people*
- k. Improved health/safety*
- l. Expanding affirmative action programs by*

7. What is your experience with the Orientation process/program in the GNWT?
8. Is the Performance Planning and Review process effective? Does it help you improve your performance? Does it help others improve their performance?
9. Are there any areas we haven't covered? Do you have any additional comments?

Persons with Disabilities Focus Group Questions

QUESTIONS

1. What is most satisfying about working for the GNWT?
2. What attracted you to the GNWT originally?
3. If you were offered a comparable job with another employer what would your reasons be for accepting it or rejecting it?
4. From your perspective, what's working well in terms of HR especially in terms of attracting and keeping you in the GNWT? Do these processes recognize and address different needs of this community of GNWT Public service employees? e.g.
 - a. Recruitment
 - b. Employee Orientation
 - c. Training and development opportunities
 - d. Labour relations
 - e. Job evaluation
 - f. Performance review
 - g. Health and Safety
 - h. Recognition
 - i. Other _____
5. What is not working in HR specifically around attracting and keeping you in the GNWT? e.g.
 - a. Recruitment
 - b. Employee Orientation
 - c. Training and development opportunities
 - d. Job evaluation
 - e. Performance review
 - f. Health and Safety
 - g. Recognition
 - h. Other _____

Facilitator may generate discussion based on the following potential responses:

- a. *Clearer direction, setting of expectations and reasons for management decisions*
- b. *Clearer communications about the GNWT*
- c. *More recognition of PWD adjustments needed in the work environment and work processes*
- d. *Better performance feedback*
- e. *Employment Branding*
- f. *Marketing our strengths*
- g. *Improved working conditions, such as.....*
- h. *Better balance between work and family*

- i. Different kinds of employee recognition*
 - j. More training and development opportunities specific to developing skills of PWD*
 - k. Improved health/safety*
 - l. Expanding affirmative action programs by*
-
- 6. What is your experience with the Orientation process/program in the GNWT?
 - 7. Is the Performance Planning and Review process effective? Does it help you improve your performance? Does it help others improve their performance?
 - 8. Are there any areas we haven't covered? Do you have any additional comments?

Youth and Interns Focus Group Questions

QUESTIONS

- 1 What attracted you to the GNWT originally?
- 2 What is important to you in terms of a work environment? What would make you stay in that environment?
*Facilitator may generate discussion based on the following potential responses:
Type of Work*
 - a. Level of Supervision/type of management
 - b. Coaching & Mentoring
 - c. Employee Orientation
 - d. Training and development opportunities
 - e. Pay, Pension and Benefits
 - f. Flexible work hours, time off, vacation
 - g. Job Security
 - h. Work/life balance
 - i. Performance feedback
 - j. Health and Safety
 - k. Recognition
- 3 If you were offered a comparable job with another employer what would your reasons be for accepting it or rejecting it?
- 4 For those of you who are working in the GNWT or who have been interviewed for a job within the GNWT, how did you find the recruitment process?
- 5 For those of you not working in the GNWT, would you consider applying for a position in the GNWT in the future? Why or why not?
- 6 What is important to you as part of orienting you to a new job?
- 7 What expectations do you have for your training and development?
- 8 Referring back to Question 2, let's talk about the other top priorities we haven't already covered off. (in 4,5,6,& 7)
- 9 How important is employee recognition to you? How would you like to be recognized for excellent performance? E.g. award, development, time off, Gift, etc.
- 10 How long do you see yourself staying with the GNWT? E.g.
 - a. Up to 2 years
 - b. Up to 5 years
 - c. Up to 10 years or longer
- 11 Are there any areas we haven't covered? Do you have any additional comments?

Union Executive Meetings Questions

QUESTIONS

- 1 What would you say are the strengths of the GNWT workforce?
- 2 What are major challenges you see for the GNWT:
 - a. Today?
 - b. In the foreseeable future?
- 3 From your perspective, what's working well in terms of HR management? e.g.
 - a. Recruitment
 - b. Employee Orientation
 - c. Compensation and Benefits
 - d. Training and development opportunities
 - e. Labour relations
 - f. Job evaluation
 - g. Performance review
 - h. Succession planning
 - i. Other _____
- 4 What is not working well in HR management from your perspective, and what are the barriers that are preventing things from working? e.g.
 - a. Recruitment
 - b. Employee Orientation
 - c. Pay and benefit administration
 - d. Training and development opportunities
 - e. Labour relations
 - f. Job evaluation
 - g. Performance review
 - h. Succession planning
 - i. Other _____
- 5 What HR changes would you like to see in the public service
 - a. In the near term (within 1 year)?
 - b. In 2 – 5 years?
 - c. Ten years from now?
- 6 If public service renewal is aimed at making the GNWT an employer of choice, what should the top three priorities be?

Facilitator may generate discussion based on the following potential responses:

- a. Corporate branding*
- b. Marketing our strengths*
- c. Compensation*
- d. Benefits*
- e. Leadership*
- f. Improved working conditions*
- g. Better balance between work and family*
- h. Better employee recognition*
- i. More training and development opportunities*
- j. Improved health/safety*
- k. Expanding affirmative action programs*

- 7 Are there areas where the Department of Human Resources needs to improve in terms of providing services to employees?
- 8 Are there areas where the Department of Human Resources needs to improve in terms of working with you?
- 9 Are there any areas we have not covered? Do you have any additional comments?

Deputy Minister Interview Questions

As Minister Bob McLeod announced on October 22, the Department of Human Resources has initiated the development of a comprehensive corporate human resources strategic plan for the NWT public service. This plan will respond to one of the 16th Legislative Assembly's stated priorities – that is, "improving human resource management within the GNWT through training, career planning and encouraging innovation by employees." The plan will become a foundation document that will guide the work of the NWT public service over the next ten years, and will be aimed at achieving public service renewal, making the GNWT an employer of choice and a provider of the highest quality public services to the residents of the NWT.

Terriplan Consultants have been contracted to assist the Department of Human Resources with the development of the plan. At this early stage in the process we are interviewing Deputy Ministers to seek your input into the formation of the plan. We have 16 questions for you today. Your answers will be kept confidential. Your input today will be combined with those of your colleagues, in a way that protects your privacy, and the substance of your comments will be incorporated into the draft plan.

Any questions before we begin?]

- 1 Looking at the NWT public service overall, what would you say are its unique strengths?
- 2 Looking at the NWT public service overall, what do you see as its major challenges
 - a. Today?
 - b. In the foreseeable future?
- 3 Considering just your department, could you rate the following aspects of HR management in terms of what's working well (1 = working best; 5 = least well)
 - a. Recruitment()
 - b. Employee Orientation()
 - c. Pay and benefit administration()
 - d. Training and development opportunities()
 - e. Labour relations()
 - f. Job evaluation()
 - g. Performance review()
 - h. Succession planning()
 - i. Other_____ ()
- 4 Considering just your department, could you rate the following aspects of HR management in terms of presenting the most pressing HR issues (1 = most pressing; 5 = least)
 - a. Recruitment()
 - b. Employee Orientation()
 - c. Pay and benefit administration()
 - d. Training and development opportunities()
 - e. Labour relations()
 - f. Job evaluation()
 - g. Performance review()
 - h. Succession planning()

- i. Other _____ ()
- 5 What is not working in HR management within the GNWT, and what are the barriers that are preventing things from working?
- 6 What changes would you like to see in the public service
- Immediately?
 - In 3 – 5 years?
 - Ten years from now
- 7 What do you see as the driving force underlying the need for a corporate HR strategic plan?
- 8 If the strategic plan is intended to be the blueprint for public service renewal over the next ten years, then what should its goals be?
- 9 What outcomes would you like to see
- In 3 years?
 - In 10 years?
- 10 How should a corporate HR strategic plan link to your department's HR planning functions?
- 11 If public service renewal is aimed at making the GNWT an employer of choice, could you rate the following in terms of where the priorities should be (1 = top priority; 5 = bottom)
- Corporate branding()
 - Marketing our strengths()
 - Higher compensation levels()
 - Increased benefits()
 - Improved working conditions()
 - Better balance between work and family()
 - Better employee recognition()
 - More training and development opportunities()
 - Improved health/safety()
 - Expanding affirmative action programs()
 - Other _____ ()
- 12 Are there specific issues with respect to the Department of Human Resources that need to be addressed in the context of a strategic plan for the public service (as opposed to being resolved operationally)
- 13 In what areas does the Department of Human Resources need to improve to meet your service delivery needs?
- 14 What in your view will be the greatest challenge
- To creating the strategic plan?
 - To having it approved by Cabinet?
 - To getting employee buy-in?
 - To implementing it?

- 15 Do you have any additional comments or advice?

MLA Interview Questions

As Minister Bob McLeod announced on October 22, the Department of Human Resources has initiated the development of a comprehensive corporate human resources strategic plan for the NWT public service. This plan will respond to one of the 16th Legislative Assembly's stated priorities – that is, "improving human resource management within the GNWT through training, career planning and encouraging innovation by employees." The plan will become a foundation document that will guide the work of the NWT public service over the next ten years, and will be aimed at achieving public service renewal, making the GNWT an employer of choice and a provider of the highest quality public services to the residents of the NWT.

Terriplan Consultants have been contracted to assist the Department of Human Resources with the development of the plan. At this early stage in the process we are interviewing Members of the Legislative Assembly to seek their input into the formation of the plan. We have 13 questions for you today. Your answers will be kept confidential. Your input today will be combined with that of your colleagues in the Assembly, in a way that protects your privacy, and the substance of everyone's comments will be incorporated into the draft plan.

- 1 On a scale of 1 to 5, how important is the public service to your work as an MLA? (1 = not very important; 5 = extremely important) _____
- 2 What is its most important role for you?
- 3 On a scale of 1 to 5, how well does the public service meet that role? (1 = not very well; 5 = extremely well) _____
- 4 How could it improve?
- 5 In the past year, how many of your constituents have raised issues with you about the public service? _____
- 6 Generally speaking, what were the issues about?
- 7 Generally speaking, were the issues resolved to your satisfaction?
- 8 On a scale of 1 to 5, how important is it to have a strategic plan for the public service? (1 = not very important; 5 = extremely important) _____
- 9 What should the goals of a strategic plan be?
- 10 What changes would you like to see in the public service
 - a. Immediately?
 - b. In 3 – 5 years?
 - c. Ten years from now?
- 11 What will the biggest challenges be
 - a. In creating the plan?
 - b. In implementing the plan?

- 12 If public service renewal is aimed at making the GNWT an employer of choice, could you rate the following in terms of where the priorities should be (1 = top priority; 5 = bottom)
- c. Corporate branding()
 - d. Marketing our strengths()
 - e. Higher compensation levels()
 - f. Increased benefits()
 - g. Improved working conditions()
 - h. Better balance between work and family()
 - i. Better employee recognition()
 - j. More training and development opportunities()
 - k. Improved health/safety()
 - l. Expanding affirmative action programs()
 - m. Other _____()
- 13 Do you have any additional comments or advice?

Appendix 5 – Detailed Jurisdictional Scan



Government of the Northwest Territories

**Supporting Document for the Development of a
Corporate Human Resources Strategic Plan**

**DRAFT Research Paper:
Public Sector Best Practices in Human Resources Management
In Other Jurisdictions**

Project Work Plan Task 2

Submitted by: Terriplan Consultants & PSTG Consulting

Date: February 2009

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1.0 REVIEW PURPOSE AND SCOPE

1.1 Review Purpose

The Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) has embarked on a project to develop a comprehensive corporate human resources strategic plan for the NWT public service. This plan will respond to one of the 16th Legislative Assembly's stated priorities – that is, “improving human resource management within the GNWT through training, career planning and encouraging innovation by employees.” The plan will become a foundation document that will guide the work of the NWT public service over the next ten years, and will be aimed at achieving public service renewal, making the GNWT an employer of choice and a provider of the highest quality public services to the residents of the NWT.

A deliverable within the project is a review of jurisdictions beyond the NWT. This review will support and inform key discussions and decisions on the content, format and approach to the strategic plan. In order to conduct the review, jurisdictions within Canada and internationally were identified for review based on both similarities with the GNWT and the availability of strategy documentation.

The reviews of each jurisdiction are presented in this report.

The following public sector jurisdictions are reviewed:

1. Government of Yukon
2. Government of Alberta
3. Government of Nova Scotia
4. Government of Ontario
5. Government of Australia

Through research, and wherever available, we accessed current government strategies relating specifically to Human Resource management, or more broad government strategies which contained a Human Resource Management component. Where possible Human resource/workforce plans, business plans, annual reports, and other related public documents provided the source documentation for this review.

Based on a review of information within each jurisdiction, the strategy was analyzed and information has been compiled as follows, in order to present a consistent view for the reader:

- Summary of strategy focus
- Summary of key strategy priorities

1.2 Review Scope

As above, the review was focused on identifying Human Resource strategies and approaches within a number of jurisdictions, in order to inform and support the development of the Human Resource Strategy for the Government of the Northwest Territories. As a best practice in strategy development, a review and consideration of the approaches of others provides a necessary and informative base of information. In this project, the combination of information gathered from

stakeholders, executives and others during the engagement phase, and the information contained in this report, will provide a very good base of knowledge and information to develop a comprehensive strategic plan.

In terms of jurisdictions reviewed, we limited our scope to public sector organizations within Canada primarily. Based on our experience, this will provide the government with some excellent relevant organizations, many who share similar workforce traits and trends. In the case of the international jurisdiction reviewed, we felt there was an interesting synergy with the Government of the Northwest Territories, and set out to pursue information about the strategic approach to human resource management.

In terms of content, we have distilled the information to the extent possible, in order to provide an illustration of true strategic elements of the jurisdiction, along with as much information about programs and activities the jurisdictions have chosen to pursue in order to support and deliver the strategy.

1.3 Relevance to the Human Resources Strategic Plan

The jurisdictional review will provide significant perspective and input to the Human Resources Strategic Plan and will provide opportunities for the GNWT to consider similar approaches and strategies as other jurisdictions, if feasible.

This review also provides the GNWT with an opportunity to understand current strategic directions, priorities, and the types of programs and actions being taken to achieve the priorities within other jurisdictions. In addition, the ways and means other jurisdictions have architected and presented their plans will provide a variety of options for the GNWT to consider. This includes term, scope, and applicability.

One of the cautions to adopting and considering other strategies and activities is effectiveness and impact. Based on a review of the strategies, as published, it is difficult to consider their effect against their intended goals.

The next section of the report provides an individual review of the jurisdictions.

2.0 JURISDICTIONAL REVIEW

Each of the jurisdictions considered are reviewed in the following section. To the extent possible, based on information accessed, the reviews are presented consistently for ease of review and consideration.

2.1 The Yukon Government

2.1.1 Introduction

The Labour Market Framework covers both public and private sector employees and is targeted at the whole of Yukon. The IPS document from the Yukon Public Service Commission covers all 4,405+ territorial government employees in 14 Ministries/Departments.

2.1.2 Strategy Focus

Investing in Public Service (IPS) – serving Yukon people” supports the goals in the Corporate Human Resource Plan that builds on successes and provides a strategy to implement initiatives to address the following:

- Succession planning
- Safe and healthy workplaces
- Recognizing public sector excellence
- Communicating with employees
- Establishing an organizational cultural framework

Emphasis on developing the Yukon Government as an “employer of choice” – building on the Yukon Training Strategy developed in 1998.

The Advanced Education branch of the Government led an interdepartmental planning process to prepare a framework which will help address Yukon’s labour market development on a variety of fronts. This initiative touches on all sectors (private and public), and interests groups.

Source: 1) Investing in Public Service (IPS) – serving Yukon people, Yukon Public Service Commission; 2) Yukon Government Employee Engagement Survey, Employee Report 2008; 3) A Labour Market Framework for Yukon, Yukon Government 2008

Succession Planning

- Employee Developmental Assignment Program – employees learn and then apply newly attained knowledge in new situations.
- Internship Program – eligible individuals are recent Yukon post-secondary graduates. Valuable work experience that will improve their employment possibilities within the Yukon government.
- First-line training for supervisors and managers – includes management and leadership assessments, theory, supervisory technique practice, coaching, and a practicum project.
- Employee Career Assessment Program – self-assessment to better identify development opportunities.

- Knowledge Transfer of Experienced Workers – includes addressing pension and benefits issues of phased-in retirements, and promoting coaching and mentoring arrangements.
- Professional Development and Technical Training – develops organizational capability and source of talent attraction of younger workers who are interested in ongoing development.

Safe and Healthy Workplaces

- Safe and Healthy Workplaces Program – utilizes the Canadian Healthy Workplace Criteria.
- Work Placements for Employees with Disabilities – emphasis on workplace accommodation to better enable employees with disabling conditions to develop new skills and abilities so that they can return to work and contribute.

Recognizing Public Sector Excellence

- Will reward and recognize employees whose efforts promote excellence in public service.
- Program criteria may include goals, objectives and values, quality service, leadership, and innovation.

Communicating with Employees

- Ensuring that the IPS initiative is transparent, relevant, and easy to understand.
- Development of an interactive website that provides information such as pay and benefits, human resources programs, and other employment related information.
- Effective mechanism of communicating with employee groups is used.

Establishing an Organizational Cultural Framework

Key Corporate Human Resource Plan projects are:

- Develop a comprehensive orientation system.
- Modernize the recruitment process.
- Promote flexible work options.
- Review, reduce, and revitalize HR policies.
- Review and improve the classification system.

2.2 The Government of Alberta

2.2.1 Introduction

The Workforce Plan is a 3-year plan (2008 – 2011) that covers all 30,000+ provincial government employees in 27 Ministries, and all Agencies, Boards, and Commissions.

2.2.2 Strategy Focus

Note: the Government of Alberta has rolled out workforce strategy documents for specific industries (e.g. retail, tourism and hospitality, energy, manufacturing, construction, and non-profit and voluntary sectors) and strategies for the forest, logistics, and health sectors are pending).

The Government of Alberta strategy addresses key HR challenges by focusing on 3 priority areas:

- Attracting
- Developing
- Engaging

Attracting - *Marketing the GOA as an attractive employment option, effective business processes to support recruitment, compensation and benefits package that encourages people to join and stay.*

- Television Recruitment – videos created to promote the GOA: “Map Out Your Career” (aired on GlobalTV and CityTV), and “Your Internship: Turning Education Into Careers” (aired on the ACCESS TV show Tune into: Building Alberta’s Workforce).
- Ambassador Program (www.chr.alberta.ca/ambassador) – 412 GOA employee Ambassadors reached 49,500 individuals through event participation to promote the GOA as an employer of choice (class presentations and career fairs).
- GOA Promotional Material – “Planning your future” and “Discover your future with the GOA” posters and postcards distributed to all ministry HR offices, 48 labour market information centres, and 800+ high schools and 27 post secondary schools).
- Advertising – information on career opportunities in the GOA through the Edmonton Journal, Calgary Herald, and student “jobpostings” magazine and website (www.jobpostings.ca).
- Internship Program (www.chr.alberta.ca/interns) – 264 interns hired in 19 Ministries in 2006/07).
- GOA Intern Network (www.chr.alberta.ca/gain) – GAIN offers professional development and networking opportunities to interns.
- Cross-Ministry Common Pay Zone Initiative – foster a 1-employer approach to compensation.
- Collective Bargaining – new provisions to annual vacation leave earnings for new employees, enhanced special leave, and a retention program for employees working in northern regions.
- Enhanced Employee Benefits –new benefit program “MyCHOICE” for bargaining unit employees; attraction bonus for locations north of the 57th parallel and Fort McMurray,

and northern leave and trips out pilot; inter-Ministry review of the Fort McMurray allowance for all public sector employers.

- Pension Enhancements – broader portability of pensions through reciprocal agreements with other governments; employee-paid post-employment benefits program for retirees (offered through Alberta Retired Teachers’ Association); GOA Jobs Website (www.jobs.alberta.ca) – enhancing the GOA jobs website to be more interactive, user-friendly, and informative job search experience (email a friend functionality, student summer employer registration, enhanced job search, virtual job search agent, “ask our employees” portal, and Premier’s welcome message).

Developing - Promoting continuous learning/ development, strengthening leadership at all levels, and improving career growth opportunities.

- Orientation to Government Program (www.chr.alberta.ca/orientation) – 1,137 employees attended in 2007/08 (80% satisfaction rate).
- Common Orientation Project – employee led initiative to focuses on fundamental information and processes that new employees need to know in their first month of work.
- Deputy Minister/Assistant Deputy Minister Orientation (www.chr.alberta.ca/dm-adm-orientation) – tailored to new DM/ADM’s.
- Policy Capacity Initiative – plan to build policy capacity in GOA through launch of policy internship program, targeting post-secondary students, and offering policy development courses to employees.
- Deputy Minister Quarterly Forum – forums to discuss Canadian labour market and human resource trends (Alberta focus).
- Corporate Development Programs – Senior & Executive Managers’ Development Program (SEMDP) and Management Development Program (MDP) offer customized leadership skills development based on job level within management ranks.
- Leading In Learning Series (www.chr.alberta.ca/LLS) – theme-based learning opportunities on business topics (e.g. leading change).
- Employee Development, GOA Learning Centre (www.goalearningcentre.gov.ab.ca) – in 2007/08, 806 courses offered through the “Learning Opportunities Calendar” and 23,200 total registrations.
- Career Management (www.chr.alberta.ca/careerportal) – interactive GOA employee self-directed portal to determine career paths.
- Succession Management (www.chr.alberta.ca/succession) – approach to ensure a continuous talent supply by developing employee potential.
- Executive and Senior Manager Mobility Program (www.chr.alberta.ca/mobility) – coordinated and corporate approach to facilitate mobility through developmental secondments between Ministries.
- Assessment Services (www.chr.alberta.ca/assessment) – provides multi-rater feedback tools and support for competency development.
- Management Essentials in the Alberta Public Service (www.chr.alberta.ca/essentials) – program to provide new managers with an overview of the practices, policies, and information specific to managing in the GOA.
- Supervisor Certificate Program (www.chr.alberta.ca/scp) – structured learning path for developing supervisors in the required knowledge, skills, and competencies to lead (e.g.

key GOA processes, performance management framework, GOA competency model, and service excellence principles). As of March 2008, 599 employees have enrolled.

- Online resources to provide employees with interactive, relevant, and useful tools and resources (www.chr.alberta.ca/learning).

Engaging - *Enabling managers to support engagement and retention, focusing on recognition and performance management, increasing use of flexible work options, and enhancing programs/supports to ensure healthy and safe work practices.*

- Proudly Working Together Events (www.chr.alberta.ca/proudlyworkingtogether) – highly interactive events to celebrate the GOA’s accomplishments and highlight how the GOA proudly works together as one big team. 3,800 GOA employees participated in 8 sessions across the province between September and October 2007.
- Vision and Values (www.chr.alberta.ca/apsvisionandvalues) – website enhanced to better showcase employees living the values.
- Deputy Minister of Executive Council Service Excellent Program (www.chr.alberta.ca/servexcellence/recognition) – recognition of teams.
- Premier’s Award of Excellence (www.chr.alberta.ca/premier) – recognizes superior client service and business excellence practices.
- Common Performance Assessment – implementing common performance assessments across the GOA, which is supported by an online guidebook, sample evaluations, “how to” video and voice-over PowerPoint presentation.
- Enhanced Employee and Family Assistance Program (www.shepellfgiservices.com) – expanded services offered (e.g. childcare and eldercare consultations, parenting and personal resources, and health and wellness information).

2.3 The Government of Nova Scotia

2.3.1 Introduction

The Corporate Human Resource Plan is a 5-year plan (2005 – 2010) that covers all provincial government employees in 19 Ministries/Departments, and all Agencies.

2.3.2 Strategy Focus

Strategy addresses key HR challenges by focusing on 5 key goals:

- Skilled, committed, and accountable public service
- Employer of choice
- Safe/supportive workplace
- Diverse workplace
- Be a learning organization

Emphasis on developing and implementing a Corporate Attraction and Retention Framework.

Service Excellence

- Organizational Effectiveness strategies

- Performance Management
- Public Consultation

Human Resource (Workforce) Planning

- Human Resource (Workforce) Planning Model and Toolkit – common template/model to guide on workforce analysis and talent management across the organization.
- Human Resource Planning for Professional Groups – focused workforce planning for key groups including finance, information technology, and human resources management.
- Talent Pools (internal organization focus) – program to pre-assess employees' qualifications, skills, and abilities to allow for more timely completion of hiring and career advancement processing.
- Career Path Program – models designed for leadership, finance, human resources, policy, IT, and communications functions (will include self-directed career-path planning).

Strategic Leadership & Professional Development Programs

- Internal Assignments and Exchange Programs for Professional Growth – inter-Ministry temporary work opportunities to support career development, and exchange work programs with other government funded agencies, other levels of government, and private sector.
- Leadership and Mentorship Program – more experienced employees to contribute to the growth and development of peers through job shadowing and/or mentoring.
- Leadership Continuity Program (LCP) – accelerates development for employees with potential for leadership roles through training, projects, and work experience.

Recruitment (Attraction) Strategies

- Careers That Make a Difference! Toolkit – tailored marketing to post-secondary and high schools that highlights the variety of public service careers and opportunities available.
- Career Connect – employees to speak to interested groups (schools, professional groups, job fairs) to generate interest in public service careers. Includes employees working in difficult-to-fill or non-traditional roles, or self-identified as representing one of the designated affirmative action groups.
- Career Starts Program – provides work-term and internship opportunities for students and recent graduates. Program will focus on diversity, hard-to-fill roles, and women in non-traditional roles.
- New Professional Talent Pools (external to organization focus) – potential candidates interested in working for the government, which includes diversity and Nova Scotia ex-pat talent pools.
- Managers Recruitment Toolkit – support managers and HR professionals to improve timeliness, convenience, and fairness in recruitment (diversity, repatriation, and immigration initiatives).

Retention Strategies

- Orientation and Mentorship Programs – orientation of government and a “buddy system” with existing employees for new hires.
- Employee Recognition Programs – informal and formal recognition customized for each department
 - Minister’s Outstanding Service Award – departmental recognition of outstanding achievement (individual or team).
 - Premier’s Award of Excellence – individual or team recognition of a noteworthy contribution to the health, prosperity, and self-sufficiency of Nova Scotians through public service.
 - Citizenship/Volunteer Award – recognition of employees giving back to communities.
 - Long Service Awards – corporate-wide recognition of service beyond 25 years.
- Continuous monitoring of the relationship between public-sector and private-sector total compensation packages.
- Internal (employee) Communications Initiatives – ongoing review and strengthening of existing internal communications mechanisms.
- Exit Interviews/Surveys – corporate-wide program to fully understand the reasons why people leave the organization.

Healthy Workplace Program - *Creation of an Office of Health Promotion: first provincial jurisdiction to do this*

- Promoting Good Individual Health Practices – fitness, nutrition, and healthy habits.
- Psycho-Social Work Environment – promotion of work/life balance (flexible work hours, job sharing, reduction in workplace stress, zero tolerance for workplace violence)
- Physical Work Environment – injury/illness prevention (regular ergonomic assessments, safety inspections, and air quality testing).

Employee Support

- Employee Support and Workplace Accommodation – expediting the safe return to work of injured employees (modified/early return to work, telework options, providing a welcoming environment, and enhanced short-term illness and long-term disability program).
- Employee/Family Assistance Program (EAP).
- Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Programs and Policies – establishment of a “beyond compliance” strategy to ensure all legislative requirements surpasses full compliance, and recognition through the “safety always” award for workplaces that meet criteria.
- Corporate Citizenship – strategy to recognize volunteer involvement of employees that contribute to the environmental, social, and cultural well-being of Nova Scotia’s communities.

Valuing Diversity

- Diversity Partnerships – relationships with organized labour, key community-based groups, professional associations, private sector, and other Atlantic provinces to promote a diverse and inclusive workplace, and inequities and perceived racism experienced by minority groups will be addressed through partnerships with other government agencies.
- Promoting and Strengthening the Affirmative Action Inventory for Casual Employment – pre-assessed talent pool for permanent roles.
- Diversity Education – focus on affirmative action, including diversity issues such as repatriation, immigration, and multiculturalism.
- Nova Scotia as an Immigrant Employer – leader in recognizing international credentials, and hiring designated groups and immigrants.
- Diversity Management Toolkit – available to managers and employees.
- Affirmative Action/Diversity Plans and Progress Reports – reporting essential to ensure accountability and results.
- Acadian/French Language Services Strategies – increase in the number of services available in both languages.

Learning Organization Strategy

- Corporate Employee and Organizational Learning Statement – corporate-wide commitment statement based on the review, revision, and consolidation of existing corporate and departmental training and development policies and practices, in line with best practices.
- Corporate Core Learning Curriculum (Calendar) – annual calendar of opportunities to employee build skills, knowledge, and behaviours.
- Knowledge Management Strategies – to prevent “corporate memory loss” (or brain drain), the knowledge retention strategy involves HR processes/practices, knowledge transfer practices, knowledge recovery initiatives and IT applications to capture, store, and share knowledge.
- Leadership and Management Development Program – professional development of current and future leaders.
- E-Learning – real-time access to training and development (significant barrier reduction to geography and costs realized).

2.4 The Government of Ontario

2.4.1 Introduction

The HR Plan is a 3-year plan (2008 – 2011) that covers all 68,000+ provincial government employees in 30 Ministries, and many Agencies, Boards, and Commissions.

2.4.2 Strategy Focus

The Strategy addresses key HR challenges by focusing on 3 key strategic priorities:

- Attracting and retaining diverse talent

- Building capacity to sustain a world-class organization
- Engaging all employees to achieve results

Attract and Retain Diverse Talent

Continuing Focus Areas:

Recruitment and Modernization Strategies:

- June 2007, launch of talent attraction website OPSCareers (11.3 million hits per month).
- HROntario's Regional Recruitment Centres launched in June 2008 to provide hiring managers with advice and support to ensure quality hiring outcomes.
- Creation of a new executive talent search service.
- Expanded recruitment that are supported by Talent Management and OPS competitions.
- Top Managers targeted – ensures retention of top talent and achievement of OPS priorities.
- Future enhancements will include improving the regional recruitment service delivery, increased emphasis eliminating barriers, exploration of pool hiring for specific positions.

Youth and New Professionals – builds on initiatives to facilitate the attraction, recruitment, development, and retention of professionals through internships, co-op placements, and summer experience programs. 2007-08: 4,400 secured work placements through 6 employment programs:

- Ontario Internship Program – recruits recent college/university graduates into key areas (business planning, communications, electronic service delivery, HR/LR, IT, and policy development). 75% of interns successfully transition to OPS employment opportunities.
- Internship Program for Internationally Trained Individuals – provides opportunities to gain Canadian work experience – 72% of interns have found related work in OPS.
- Aboriginal Youth Work Exchange Program – offers community-based employment opportunities for up to 60 aboriginal youth from First Nations communities in N. Ontario.
- Learn and Work Program re-engages at-risk youth to complete their high school diploma through work experience placements – since February 2006, average success rate of 80%.

New Focus Areas

OPS Employment Branding:

- Emphasis on differentiating the OPS from other employers to attract and retain talented and diverse individuals.
- Launch of an Ambassadors Program – enterprise-wide employee volunteer program to participate in outreach activities to promote the organization to potential employees.
- Testing of “entry surveys” to new employees to determine if OPS is delivering on its marketed employment brand.

Diversity of Candidate Pools:

- Expansion of outreach activities to identify and reach more diverse groups.
- Barrier-free recruitment processes and diverse and inclusive selection panels.
- Partnership building with diverse communities to improve access to OPS jobs.

- Implementation of a partnership with Ability Edge (www.abilityedge.ca) to create opportunities for people with disabilities to be trained as Recruitment Consultants.
- Roll out of pilot programs – OPS Mentoring Partnership Program with Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council (TRIEC), for new Canadians, and an OPS Career Exchange Program.

Building Capacity

Continuing Focus Areas

Talent Management Program:

- Launched in July 2006 (now in its 3rd annual cycle) – currently 10,000 senior management and MCP specialist talent profiles are housed in the system with 7,400 managers currently participating in the talent assessment module.
- Uses 4 leader-manager competencies: delivers, transforms, inspires, and connects, and 2 personal attributes: self-awareness and integrity to determine readiness to take on a new and/or more complex responsibilities.
- Plans to expand the TM program to all employees with an emphasis on career development.
- Future enhancements will include pay-for-performance programs, recruitment and succession planning.

Performance Management:

- Continued emphasis on providing tools and support to improve the performance management process and ensure staff and managers are having frank and meaningful conversations.

Learning and Development:

- Created to provide enterprise learning to all employees.
- Target new content development to address priorities such as diversity and inclusion awareness, policy and political acuity, leader-manager development, communications skills, and service leadership.
- Additional career coaching resources/supports to employees.
- Updating of behaviour competency dictionary to include diversity and inclusion.

Role of the Manager:

- As a result of the recent enterprise learning needs assessment, building leadership capacity will be a key priority.
- E-Learning supports for managers will be added to enhance the current Management Foundations curriculum.
- New targeted leadership programs in coaching, transformational leadership, diversity, and accessibility per the implementation of the Accessibility of Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA).

New Focus Areas:

Career Mobility:

- 2006 and 2007 employee surveys demonstrated desire for more growth and advancement as the highest priority area.
- Integration of best practice research across ministries and regions to identify existing successful and innovative approaches to career development (e.g. mentorship, job rotation, job shadowing).
- Exploration of expanding the Talent Management program emphasizing career development.
- Expansion of the Diversity Mentorship Program to include a more participants and involve more senior leaders.

Engage Employees

Continuing Focus Areas:

Employee Engagement:

- 2006 and 2007 employee surveys demonstrated desire to improve opportunities for growth and advancement, leadership practices, learning and development, and organizational communications – focus will continue on these 4 areas.
- Employee surveys planned for 2009 and 2011 to measure progress.
- Continuation of the “OPS Ideas Campaign” – employee solicited ideas about new ways to deliver public services.

Health and Wellness:

- Establishment of the Centre for Employee Health, Safety and Wellness (CEHSW) in June 2008 – centralization of health and safety expertise in one branch.
- New wellness strategy – enhance existing programs and introduce new initiatives (e.g. SafeSmart: interactive e-learning tool to support managers provide a safe working environment, and delivery of health, safety, and wellness training).

New Focus Areas:

Cultivating an Inclusive Environment:

- Review of human resources policies such as Workplace Discrimination and Harassment Prevention policy, and equal opportunity policy to support a respectful and inclusive work environment.
- Develop and/or refresh policies to support the implementation of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA).

Flexible Work Arrangements:

- Acknowledgement of increasing number of workers with family care responsibilities, child care requirements, generational differences in workplace expectations, growing awareness of environmental issues.

- Strategy to be developed to consider and test a variety of working arrangements to respond to challenges in telecommuting, flexible working hours, compressed work-week, and job sharing.
- Strategy to target mature workers to explore part-time work, gradual decrease in work assignments, or modified work weeks.

Front-Line Service Delivery Staff:

- Emphasized focus on developing strategies to increase engagement of staff who perform public facing roles.

2.5 The Government of Australia

2.5.1 Introduction

The Management Advisory Committee report provides an overview of the key issues facing the Australian Public Service, and specific actions to respond. The Corporate Plan identifies the key strategic priorities for the 2008-09 year. Both documents cover all public service employees in 20 Portfolios/Departments, and all Agencies.

2.5.2 Strategy Focus

The Strategy addresses key HR challenges by focusing heavily on the following:

- Graduate recruitment
- Career development

Systemic Workforce Planning - Agencies that do workforce planning are only in the early stages of developing their systems

- APS agencies will continue to work to establish processes to enable workforce planning.
- APS Commission will provide advice on best practices.
- Integration of workforce planning into policy and program development.
- Particular attention to trends in Indigenous people, people with disabilities – identify underlying causes of trends.
- Integrate information technology to enhance data capturing, sharing, and reporting.

Attracting and Recruiting New Employees

- Improved accessibility and attractiveness of recruitment processes to potential recruits.
- Corporate streamlining of recruitment processes.
- Redesign current online job site into a highly interactive employment and recruitment portal.
- Increased marketing activities.
- Increased exploration of “base level recruitment pathways” to recruit new employees who do not possess formal post-school training – focus on increasing employment of Indigenous people and people with disabilities.

Recruiting and Retaining Specialist Skills in High Demand

- Development of corporate “communities” based on specific function/skill (e.g. Accountants, ICT Professionals, Statisticians, Economists, Scientists, and others).
- Customized recruitment strategies for targeted professions.

Smarter Approaches to Graduate Recruitment and Development

- Review overall effectiveness of current graduate programs – emphasis on strategic agreement making to recruit/retain graduates.
- Integrate best practices in workforce planning into graduate programs.
- Maintaining ongoing relationships with quality unsuccessful applicants for future vacancies.
- Building partnerships with tertiary institutions about specific programs relevant to the APS (e.g. public policy).

Ensuring that New Employees have the skills to work effectively in the APS

- Appropriate induction and orientation upon commencing employment with the APS.
- Development of APS-wide online and other learning materials to be used and incorporated into induction and orientation programs.
- Development and offering of short APS-wide induction courses.

Interagency Mobility

- Systematic career planning discussions will be arranged and completed for SES Bands 2 and 3 senior-level employees, and where deemed appropriate, mobility opportunities will be created.
- Integrating mobility opportunities into regular performance management processes.
- APS and external organizations will be able to advertise rotation and mobility opportunities on the new APS employment portal.
- Through the new APS employment portal, employees will be able to express interest in rotation and mobility opportunities.

Investing in Identifying and Developing Future Leaders

- Development of systematic approaches to developing potential future leaders – making use of the emerging APS-wide menu of career development options.
- The Management Advisory Committee will issue an APS-wide statement on expectations that will help achieve the target of 70% SES and 55% EL 2 classifications aged 45 and over can be adequately replaced over the next 5 to 10 years.

Responding to the Employment Needs and Career Aspirations of the Changing APS Workforce

- Greater ability for Agency Heads to engage non-ongoing (temporary/casual employment) staff for ongoing (permanent) employment opportunities.

- Review of classification structures used to ensure they match required skills and capability profiles.
- Development of mature workforce strategies.
- The new APS employment portal will feature an online registration capability for former APS and other mature employees interested in accessing APS employment.
- Ensuring performance management and feedback processes address employee longer-term career and skills development needs.
- Initiatives developed and implemented that provide positive employment outcomes in the APS for Indigenous people – linkage to the APS Employment and Capability Strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.
- Strategies review of attraction, recruitment, and retention of persons with disabilities.

3.0 COMMON THEMES ACROSS JURISDICTIONS

Common themes (workforce challenges and HR strategy developments) across jurisdictions were noted during the course of the review. This section will summarize these common themes.

1. The critical environmental and workforce challenges currently being faced by each jurisdiction are similar – aging population, population is growing slowly, labour demand is projected to exceed labour supply, changing employee expectations, and labour segments (e.g. women, persons with disabilities) are not optimally utilized.
2. Recruitment and Attraction: multiple strategies to target different potential candidate groups to increase streams of potential recruits (e.g. persons with disabilities, younger workers, aboriginals, women, mature workers, internationally trained professionals, and at-risk individuals).
3. Significant Investments in Organizational Learning/Training Programs: emphasis on leadership skills, and alignment of learning with talent management.
4. Rewards and Recognition: both formal and informal recognition to better meet the needs of diverse workforces.
5. Workplace Health and Safety: focus on employee wellness – at work and at home.
6. Developing fully integrated technological tools to support both potential and current employees in all areas of the employment experience – attraction, recruitment, orientation, performance planning, rewards and recognition, training/learning, retention, talent management, succession planning, workforce planning, knowledge transferring (full transparency).

4.0 JURISDICTIONAL DIFFERENTIATORS

This section will describe the key differentiators of each jurisdiction. The emphasis is on the interesting and unique elements within the respective strategies, plans, and documents. The GNWT strategy may consider similar points of differentiation.

Government of Yukon

- “Investing in Public Service (IPS) – serving Yukon people” supports and builds on the Corporate Human Resource Plan – focused, relevant, and actionable strategy document.
- The “Labour Market Framework for Yukon” led by the Yukon Government is a cross-sector initiative that addresses all critical workforce challenges currently being faced by Yukon employers.
- Emphasis on work placements for employees with disabilities, and workplace accommodation.
- Strategies to transfer knowledge of experienced workers includes addressing pension and benefits issues of phased-in retirements.

Government of Alberta

- Highly effective multi-faceted marketing strategy (attraction) that has matured over time, which has primarily focused on students and young professionals in Alberta.
- Intern Network provides networking and skills development opportunities for interns across the organization.
- Additional compensation provides to contribute to retaining employees who work in certain locations in Alberta (e.g. Fort McMurray).
- Employee-paid post-employment benefit programs for retirees.
- Executive and Senior Manager Mobility Program has strengthened the “One Employer” concept
- Multiple highly effective, popular, and credible supervisor/manager skills development programs (e.g. Supervisor Certificate Program).
- Rolled out customized workforce strategy documents for specific industries.

Government of Nova Scotia

- Commitment to providing a healthy workplace for its employees.
- Leadership in recognizing credentials/skills of foreign trained workers.
- Creating internal (Nova Scotia public service employees) talent pools that will more expeditiously respond to staffing needs.
- Targeted workforce planning and career path programs for specific professional groups.
- Targeted creation of diverse talent pools – diversity and ex-pat talent pools.
- Professional growth opportunities through exchange work programs with other government funded agencies, other levels of government, and private sector.
- Creation of an Office of Health Promotion to champion the Healthy Workplace Program.

- Establishment of a “beyond compliance” occupational health & safety strategy to surpass full compliance of legislative requirements.
- Nova Scotia as an Immigrant Employer – leader in recognizing international credentials, and hiring designated groups and immigrants.
- Affirmative Action focus – promoting and strengthening the Affirmative Action Inventory for Casual Employment, annual accountability reporting, and education.
- Acadian/French Language Services Strategies.

Government of Ontario

- Multiple talent attraction programs that target specific groups, and provides additional talent pool streams – Youth and New Professionals Strategy (Ontario Internship Program, Learn and Work Program, Internship Program for Internationally Trained Individuals, and the Aboriginal Youth Work Exchange Program).
- Canada’s Top 100 Employers for 2009
- Canada’s Best Diversity Employers 2008
- Greater Toronto Area’s Top 75 Employers 2009
- Testing of “entry surveys” for new employees regarding the employment brand.
- Partnership with Ability Edge (www.abilityedge.ca) to train persons with disabilities to become Recruitment Consultants.
- Partnership with Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council (TRIEC) for new Canadians.
- OPS Ideas Campaign (ideas and innovation) engages employee improving public service delivery.
- Strategy to target mature workers to explore part-time work, gradual decrease in work assignments, or modified work weeks.

Government of Australia

- Development of corporate “communities”.
- Focus is on graduate (new workers entering job markets) recruitment and development.
- Engaging in strategic agreement making to recruit and retain graduates.
- Maintaining ongoing relationships with quality unsuccessful applicants for future vacancies.
- Integrating mobility opportunities into regular performance management processes.
- Initiatives that provide positive employment outcomes for Indigenous people – initiatives link to targeted government strategies.

5.0 BEST PRACTICES

Based on this review and based on current human resource management approaches, we offer the following as best practices for consideration when architecting Human Resource Strategies, both from the perspective of the Strategy (structure and approach) and from the perspective of content:

To be effective, and as a best practice, the structure and approach for a Human Resource Strategy in the public sector must:

- 1) **Consider and address all elements of the workforce, the demographics of the jurisdiction** – strategies that apply to a dispersed and diverse workforce (as in the GNWT), must not limit their intent or application to a particular portion or group within the workforce. To limit will cause a mal-adjustment and loss of symmetry for the entire workforce. The strategy must be, and must be seen to be, integrated and inclusive to all employees
- 2) **Reflect the economic feasibility and implications of the Strategy** – The Strategy must be developed in a manner which reflects current and projected economic realities of the jurisdiction. The Strategy itself should be architected in a manner which considers a reasonable investment, and must be clear as to the necessary investment required.
- 3) **Ensure an appropriate investment in marketing and communicating the strategy** – A Strategy is a necessary point of departure for excellent Human Resource Management and vision for the future. For leaders, it should be seen as an opportunity to announce and celebrate the vision and demonstrate leadership and commitment. For employees (current or prospective) it should serve to instill confidence in the employer. A marketing and communication plan to support the plan is a necessary practice that should serve an employer well through the course of the strategy.
- 4) **Be developed and implemented in an inclusive manner** - including the involvement of leaders, employees, bargaining agents, and other stakeholders is very common at all points of the Strategy development, implementation, and feedback phases
- 5) **Have clear metrics and means of measuring outcomes and achievements** – As with organization-wide business and strategic plans, it is critical to establish a means of measuring the progress, outcomes and achievements of a Strategic Plan.
- 6) **Have dedicated leadership to create, implement, monitor and report on the progress or challenges of the strategy** – many organizations underestimate the effort to implement an approved Human Resource Strategy. Many organizations now dedicate a function (often part of the Human Resources organization) to supporting leaders in the management and monitoring of a Human Resources Strategy. Typically the “hard work” begins at the point a strategy being approved. This may include the creation of new programs, the evolution of existing programs, or the “wind down” of existing programs.

Often the Action Plan for the human resource function is to support a Human Resource strategy

Best practices in Human Resource Strategic Plans, indicate the inclusion of some or all of the following content components:

- 1) **Focus on Employee Wellness** – Often included with Health and Safety or Healthy Workplace strategies, employers are focusing significant effort on ensuring the workplace, and the “employment experience” recognizes the stresses an employee may experience at work, at home, and in the community. In many cases, programming and activities are developed in a manner which includes employees and bargaining representatives
- 2) **Focus on efficient and effective recruitment practices** – Many employers do not wait for a “true vacancy” to begin a recruitment action. Given the dearth of talent in many occupations, employers are considering more aggressive, constant, and focused recruitment strategies – to ensure there is a constant availability of talent in the workplace. Recruitment processes are also being significantly streamlined
- 3) **Focus on Retention** – A focus on retaining employees continues to be a key best practice for employers in the public and private sector. Employers are deploying concerted efforts through both compensation and non-compensation based initiatives and interventions to compel employees to remain with the employer. Human Resource Strategies consistently address retention as a primary pillar with supporting actions and programs to increase retention rates
- 4) **Focus on Marketing and Communicating the Strategy** – Employers are placing a significant priority on ensuring employees are aware of the presence of a Human Resource strategy and the various components of the chosen strategy. Employers are realizing that engaging employees early through the development and implementation of a strategic plan provides necessary assurance that the employer places a significant emphasis on the effective management of human resources.
- 5) **Leadership Development (including commitment and accountability for the success of the Strategy)** – Employers continue to rely on their executive and management teams to support human resource management efforts, to support the implementation of key strategic components, and to support the communication to employees.

6.0 HR TRENDS AND INNOVATIONS

In addition to the Best Practices noted above, we offer the following as noted trends and evolving innovations in Human Resource Management:

- 1) **Empowerment and streamlined decision-making** – Ensuring leaders are empowered to effectively manage their human resources, including decision-making and participating actively in the development and implementation of Human Resource strategic plans and the accompanying programs and activities to enable the plans.
- 2) **Effective Human Resource Service Delivery** – Employers are focusing efforts on streamlining the delivery of human resource services, both strategic and operational (transactional) and are relying on quality technology solutions to enable and inform effective delivery
- 3) **Focus on Workforce Information Management as a mandatory management tool** – As performance measurement continues to evolve relative to the management of human resources, the collection, analysis, and reporting of workforce information continues to become a critical element and tool
- 4) **Self Serve access to information for employees** – Through the use of web-based tools (including workforce information, learning, performance planning, etc.) employees are able to better access information, learning programs (development, orientation, etc.) to support their employment. This continues to be a significant trend and enabler for employers and employees
- 5) **Human Resource Program “simplicity” (including web-enabled support)** – Employers are evolving away from cumbersome program documentation, toward providing more user-friendly program information for leaders and managers. This is consistent with external trends, particularly internet-based communication and information

7.0 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

This section describes the environmental considerations present within each jurisdiction that impact respective HR strategies – workforce demographics, geographic challenges.

Data is current as of Dec. 31, 2008 – does not take into account economic downturn.

Government of Yukon

- Low unemployment rate – 5% as of June 2008 (was 12.9% in 1998). Common trend among western provinces experiencing unemployment rates far lower than national average (range from 3.3% in Alberta to 4.5% in B.C.).
- One-third (approx. 33%) of Yukon private sector organizations reporting job vacancies – between 2006 and 2007, the percentage increased from 18% to 33%.
- Significant activity in the mining sector in Yukon – result is an additional 14 operational mines in the next 10 years, which would require 14,000 workers to build and 7,700 to operate mines.
- The public sector is experiencing similar challenges to the private sector – 38.9% of Yukon public sector is older than 50 years of age (all levels of organization at risk).
- In 2007, aboriginal people represented 23.4% of the labour force, up from 21.7% in 2001.
- Critical differences in the needs of employers and employees between Whitehorse and rural communities – greater variety of training opportunities in Whitehorse, more costly for rural residents to travel or relocate to Whitehorse for training/education, and more employment opportunities in Whitehorse.
- Changes in the labour market have a disproportionate effect on the overall Yukon economy.

Government of Alberta

- Increased competition for labour.
- Changing demographics – aging workforce, increased urbanization, low unemployment rate (3.5% in 2007)
- Increased number of inexperienced workers.
- Employee retention.
- Difficulties finding suitable candidates for apprenticeship training.
- Competition with the private sector (particularly oil and gas companies) for talent in specific regions within the province (particularly Fort McMurray and Grande Prairie).
- Rapid expansion of the Alberta economy.
- Significant influx of both tradespeople and post-secondary school graduates coming to Alberta to work and live.
- Inability of the workforce to proportionately represent the First Nations population – lack of required skills.

Government of Nova Scotia

- Low-birth rates, out-migration of younger workers, and high retirement rates is resulting in a shortage of workers of different skills levels (skilled and knowledge workers) across provincial economy.
- Changing nature of work in the province: adoption of new processes and technology; emergence of new businesses in provincial economy, which require new skills: workers displaced from business closures who need to be re-skilled.
- Province shifting from a goods-based to a service-based economy.
- Low literacy levels among working age Nova Scotians.
- Workforce desires better work/life balance and meaningful and rewarding work.

Government of Ontario

- Population is growing more slowly and aging.
- Projected in 2014 that labour demand will exceed labour supply (by 2025, Ontario is estimated to face a shortfall of 364,000 workers).
- Significant untapped labour in populations such as youth (drop outs and at-risk), women, mature workers, immigrants (Ontario has the highest proportion of people born outside of Canada, 54% of Canada's total number of new immigrants settled in Ontario), Aboriginal Canadians (Ontario has largest density than any other province, and 1.8% accelerated growth rate to occur), and persons with disabilities.

Government of Australia

- Several years of sustained growth since 2000 (as of June 2007, 155.482 employees) – constant decline in the APS workforce between 1988 and 2000.
- The total number of people employed in Australia has risen by 25% since 1996 (increase in both labour demand and supply) – projected for the next 2 decades is a steady decline, particularly the rate of new labour force entrants (school leavers and younger graduates).
- Higher levels of female employment (as of June 2007, women represented 57% of the APS workforce) – women employment in the APS has grown faster than men since 1999, and are increasing in numbers in higher classification levels.
- Aging workforce – in 2004, more than 40% of new recruits aged >35, compared to less than 20% two decades ago.
- Rising levels of Indigenous employment until the mid-1990's – currently, difficult to sustain or increase.
- Sustained decline in employment of persons with disabilities.
- Younger workers have significantly diverse career expectations, paths – pursuing a “portfolio career” that focuses on attaining a wider variety of skills, and increased work/life balance (disinterest in advancing through ranks).

8.0 SOURCE DOCUMENTATION REFERENCES

Government of Yukon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investing in the Public Service (IPS) – serving Yukon people, Yukon Public Service Commission • Yukon Government Employee Engagement Survey, Employee Report 2008 • A Labour Market Framework for Yukon, Yukon Government 2008
Government of Alberta	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alberta Public Service Workforce Plan 2008 – 2011 • Alberta Public Service Workforce Plan Final Report 2008 – 2008 • Alberta Public Service Corporate Human Resources website: www.chr.alberta.ca
Government of Nova Scotia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nova Scotia’s Corporate Human Resource Plan 2005 – 2010 • Nova Scotia Labour and Workforce Development Business Plan 2008 – 2009 • Nova Scotia Public Service Commission Accountability Report 2006-2007
Government of Ontario	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ontario Public Service HR Plan 2008 – 2011 • Ontario Civil Service Commission Annual Report 2004 – 2005 • Ontario’s Looming Labour Shortage Challenges – The Conference Board of Canada 2007 • Ontario Ministry of Government Services Results-Based Plan 2008 – 2009
Government of Australia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing and Sustaining the Australian Public Service Workforce – Management Advisory Committee 2005 • Australian Public Service Commission Corporate Plan 2008 – 2009 • Employment and Strategy Capability for Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islander Employment, Australian Public Service Commission 2005

APPENDIX 6 – SUPPLEMENTAL SWOT ANALYSIS FINDINGS

This is a summary of general comments extracted from Focus Group session notes, and considered in the compilation of Section 4 – SWOT analysis. These comments may be considered in addition to those found in the body of the report.

STRENGTHS

Affirmative Action

- A sensitivity and tolerance towards cultural differences. Support for the affirmative action program was expressed during focus groups with aboriginal employees, senior management, MLAs and deputy ministers.
- A number of participants in the aboriginal session indicated that the affirmative action program had and continued to have a positive impact on their career

Marketing Public Service and the GNWT

- The NWT is an interesting society/ part of the country and the pace of life can be more relaxed than in the south. In addition, employees have an opportunity to be part of the fabric of the north and a chance to be exposed to a unique northern and local experience.
- The work/ projects carried out by the GNWT are meaningful and provide opportunities for employees to participate in work/ projects that “make a difference”.
- The size and relative flatness of the GNWT provides employees with opportunities to form relationships with colleagues in other regions, allows for enterprise-wide work to be carried out, means that things “get done”, provides opportunities to be creative and means there is an ability to affect change.
- Employees of the GNWT are continually exposed to diverse and interesting work/ projects and have flexibility within their job descriptions and duties to take advantage of these opportunities. Data collected from the survey also supports this finding, with “interesting work” being selected as the most common reason for being initially attracted to work for the GNWT.

Compensation and Benefits

- The pension plan, job security, student financial assistance, education benefits, fixed term contracts and flexible hours were all cited as strengths of the GNWT. Furthermore, several focus groups and survey participants indicated “good benefits” were one of their primary reasons for remaining with the GNWT.

Lifelong Learning

- There are a number of opportunities for employees to gain exposure to diverse kinds of work/ projects that may not be available to them and/ or are not available to someone with their level of experience in other settings.
- Opportunities for advancement, personal and professional growth, continuous challenge and career pathing are available.

WEAKNESSES

Affirmative Action

- Participants indicated that the affirmative action program benefits are not clear and believe there are differences in how the program is being applied in the regions versus headquarters.
- Putting people in jobs they are not qualified to do, pushing Aboriginal leaders too fast without support and only focusing on ensuring that applicants possesses the minimum requirements is not working.
- Perceptions of “entitlement” by Aboriginal persons were expressed in some focus groups.
- Several Aboriginal employees do not believe there is accountability for enforcing the affirmative action program.
- The current interview process and methods for self-identifying as an Aboriginal person are believed, by Aboriginal persons, to be having a negative impact on the ability of Aboriginal persons to secure jobs in the GNWT.
- “This government tries to assimilate us: policies all from white perspective”.
- “Interview process does not work for us – many qualified people have never passed an interview”.
- “I didn’t want to get the job because of priority status”

Compensation and Benefits

- Several employees indicated that information on compensation and benefits was not clear, that they had been provided with conflicting information by Human Resources and that they often had difficulty finding someone who could answer inquiries related to pay and benefits. The “PeopleSoft disaster” was also brought up repeatedly.
- Concern about the lack of responsiveness to pay and benefit inquiries and “a slowness” in correcting errors was also expressed by numerous focus group and survey participants.
- Compensation in some positions is not competitive and has not always kept up with the cost of living. It is believed that this has resulted in numerous vacancies in the GNWT due to difficulties attracting and retaining employees.
- There is limited flexibility in the current compensation and benefits programs to incent and reward desired behaviors and recognize hard work/ strong performance.
- Some employees believe that the current job evaluation system is inefficient and suffers from inequalities.
- There is widespread belief that the GNWT is losing employees to the south, the federal government and the private sector due to compensation.
- Poor experience with compensation and benefits, specifically the lack of responsiveness to questions and the number of errors is believed to be impacting retention.

Retention

- Participants in the youth and interns session view a career with the GNWT as a foot in the door, a way of saving money and an opportunity to get experience, however, a

number of participants in this group do not see themselves remaining with the GNWT for an extended period of time.

Wellness

- The lack of available and/ or affordable housing and the high cost of living was a concern shared by a number of focus groups and survey participants.
- The lack of support necessary to meet day-to-day living needs in the smaller communities, including childcare and facilities, was brought up by a number of participants. Supports are either unavailable or spread too thin.
- Safety and social issues such as crime and addiction were brought up as issues that are having a negative impact on the smaller communities.
- Stress resulting from the work environment and increasing workloads due to resource shortages and a lack of support from management and/ or HR were identified as areas of concern by some focus groups and survey participants.
- Morale among some employees and employee groups is not good.
- Employees are under constant pressure/ scrutiny from members of the public and MLAs. They feel they are always being watched and/ or forced to defend themselves which in some instances is impacting their well-being and creating unnecessary stress.

Labour Relations

- Inconsistencies in interpretation were noted between regional offices and head office and/ or across HR representatives located in both the Yellowknife and regional offices.
- Some survey and focus group participants noted that managing labour relations could be challenging at times due to their inability to get the necessary answers and/ or support and the need to go through corporate on everything. It was mentioned it was sometimes possible to get things done “depending on who you knew”.
- A lack of communication and awareness of practices in the collective agreement was brought up.
- It was mentioned that the collective agreements were at times inflexible and prohibitive.

Lifelong Learning

- The responsibility for training, development and coaching/ mentoring has been pushed onto departments and/ or managers who lack time, departmental Resources a support from HR to handle these responsibilities.
- Participants in the disabilities focus group felt that training they received had not and/ or could not be adjusted to meet their accommodation requirements.
- Inconsistencies in the delivery and/ or availability of training and development programs were noted.
- Regional focus groups expressed concerns about the lack of training and development programs in the regions. Most training is conducted in Yellowknife and the remoteness and/ or lack of support for travel costs make travelling to Yellowknife prohibitive or impossible.

Feedback and Rewards

- It was noted that performance appraisals conducted at the GNWT are not always professional and do not consider other type of rating tools such as 360 degree feedback.
- Consistency in how performance reviews are conducted and how performance is rated across regions, departments and individual managers is a concern for some participants.
- There is uncertainty about what happens to performance reviews once they are completed.
- Once reviews are complete they are not given the attention they deserve, nor are areas identified as requiring improvement addressed.
- When performance reviews are completed they are not given the attention they deserve and are not used as the basis for addressing future workforce requirements and/ or addressing skills gaps.
- Some participants believe it is challenging to remove bad leadership and/ or employees from the GNWT.

Succession Planning

- Knowledge is being lost due to retirement. Often ample notice of a pending retirement is given, yet limited efforts are made to retain and/ or transfer knowledge of retiring staff.
- Centralized and/ or regional level supports to enable succession planning and knowledge transfer are not non-existent or insufficient.

Human Resources Service Delivery

- There appears to be a very high level of employee turnover in the Human Resources department which has created high levels of instability and inconsistencies in service delivery.
- The HR department does not have enough staff to meet the needs of the GNWT. Staff members appear to be overworked and do not have someone to cover them while there are sick/ on vacation. The problem is exacerbated by the high levels of turnover.
- Concerns about the level of required knowledge, education and experience possessed by employees in the GNWT Human Resources department were noted by a number of focus group and survey participants. A consequence is that incorrect and/ or poor Human Resources advice is provided which then compounds existing Human Resources related problems.
- Employees do not believe they can trust Human Resources. This stems from the HR department's inability to respond to needs in a timely manner, the prevailing mentality of control and enforcement versus collaboration and creative problem solving combined with the provision of poor, incorrect and/ or conflicting information.
- There is limited flexibility to adapt Human Resources programs and/ or policies to meet the diverse needs of the GNWT workforce. It was noted that there are a number of strains as the result of a 'rigid and inflexible bureaucracy' and there is a perception that HR believes that to be "fair means to be equal".
- The Human Resources department does not appear to have a service focused mentality and is not responsive to employee needs.
- The Human Resources department is not providing managers with the required Human Resources supports, examples include tools to help with the administration of compensation, succession planning and training. Managers are often left to implement

HR programs on their own, need to correct mistakes made by HR and/ or are forced to develop their own methods for meeting the HR needs of their department.

- An overall strategy and vision to address the Human Resources needs of the GNWT is missing. This has resulted in a disconnect across individual HR departments and means that efforts to meet the HR needs of the GNWT are duplicated and/ or are conflicting. Furthermore, the lack of an overall strategy makes it difficult for departments across the GNWT to work with HR departments to meet the needs of their employees.

Recruitment

- Serious concerns about the length of time it took to recruit were expressed. There appears to be a lack of urgency in hiring people and the long process results in potential candidates losing interest or being hired by competitors.
- The GNWT has difficulty hiring experience and qualified professionals which has resulted in a number of vacancies.
- Recruiting is spread out across the NWT and was much more effective when it was handled by individual departments.
- Human Resources representatives responsible for recruitment don't always understand the jobs they are recruiting for.

OPPORTUNITIES

Affirmative Action

- Conduct a review of the affirmative action policy.
- Review how the affirmative action policy is interpreted in headquarters versus the regional offices to identify and correct differences in interpretation.
- Improve programs designed to qualify Aboriginal employees for employment and promotional opportunities.
- Increase awareness of the affirmative action program and the benefits it offers.
- Appoint a "watchdog" to monitor compliance with affirmative action programs.
- Create a skills inventory of Aboriginal employees that can be used to match them with promotional opportunities that they are qualified for.
- Use the affirmative action programs in the "mines" as model for creating the GNWT's affirmative action program.
- Promote equity in the workplace.

Marketing Public Service and the GNWT

- Promote the GNWT as an employer of choice by marketing the benefits of working for small communities in a northern location and emphasizing the opportunities that exist to perform interesting work.
- Launch a public relations campaign aimed at raising awareness of the GNWT's objectives and improve perceptions and trust in the GNWT.
- Design a marketing campaign to inspire and attract youth to work for the GNWT.
- Develop programs focused on attracting "northern graduates" back to the north.

Compensation and Benefits

- Think outside the box with respect to compensation. Consider offering wellness days, a smorgasbord of benefits and flexibility in benefits to meet the unique and diverse personal and cultural needs of the GNWT's workforce.
- Offer non-monetary benefits such as on-the-job training, mentoring and job shadowing.
- Review the competitiveness of compensation for certain jobs in the GNWT. Provide enhancements to compensation and overall remuneration for positions where current compensation is below a competitive level.

Retention

- Keep the older workforce actively involved in the GNWT.
- Focus on recruiting and retaining northerners.
- Develop customized retention programs that address differences in generational and cultural values.

Wellness

- Train Managers on improving morale and treating employees with respect.
- Conduct exit interviews to determine why people are leaving the GNWT.
- Use the internship and summer student programs as a way to keep youth interested in working with the GNWT.
- Offer housing supports and programs, especially in smaller communities.
- Provide opportunities for GNWT employees to get involved in their communities by promoting volunteer and community service opportunities.
- Introduce work-life balance and wellness programs. For example, gym memberships.
- Be innovative in offering supports to GNWT employees who work in smaller communities.

Lifelong Learning

- Link training and development programs to recognition.
- Dedicate a portion of the budget to training and development opportunities.
- Expand developmental programs including, internships and summer student/ apprenticeship programs.
- Use web seminars and other forms of technology to deliver training in the regions.
- Grow staff via distance learning and online training.
- Become more innovative in planning training.
- Create an orientation manual and video.
- Provide an orientation "booster" for long tenure employees.
- Have a dedicated resource available to answer employee questions related to orientation.
- Have managers set up a short meeting (under 10 minutes) with new employees during their first week.
- Cater orientation programs to different groups of employees. For example, students/ interns, engineers, northerners/ southerners.
- Provide departments with more opportunities to manage training and development.
- Develop a training database to inform employees of opportunities and manage the program.

- Share knowledge and information across programs.

Feedback and Rewards

- Put a system in place that helps employees connect the dots between their career aspirations and the succession needs of the GNWT.
- Develop recognition programs that give people credit for what they do. The programs do not have to be fancy; they can be as simple as a “thank you”.
- Look at how performance reviews are currently conducted and determine ways for improving employee goal/ objective setting and the frequency in which appraisals are conducted.
- Have Human Resources track performance reviews more rigorously to ensure consistency across departments.
- Ensure that recognition programs allow for flexibility in their methods for recognizing employees.

Succession Planning

- Have one person in Human Resources who can act as a resource to managers who need help with succession planning. This resource should also be involved in steering the overall program.
- Develop a mentorship program that allows GNWT workers who are close to retirement to groom and develop their successor.
- Develop a sound succession planning strategy.
- Develop programs to keep retirees actively involved in the GNWT once they retire.

Human Resources Service Delivery

- Provide on-site Human Resources supports to the communities. Keep the centralized model for overall HR program development and management.
- Provide managers and the communities with a dedicated Human Resources representative they can rely on.
- Provide HR representatives with training to address gaps in their skill sets.
- Hire more HR representatives.
- Streamline HR processes to improve operational efficiencies.
- Create an HR strategy that links to the strategy of the GNWT as a whole.

Recruitment

- Allow for more flexibility in programs, provide more opportunities to “share employees”.
- Take on more of a headhunting role in recruitment.
- Recruit for potential.
- Consider utilizing former employees, summer students, interns and co-ops to fill gaps created during the recruitment process.