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Review of the Human Resources Function

Prepared for
Canadian International Trade Tribunal

Prepared by
Consulting and Audit Canada

4 May 2005

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Executive Summary

The Canadian International Trade Tribunal's (CITT) Internal Audit Plan for 2004-05 to 2008-09 identified the requirement for a review of its Human Resources (HR) function. The objective of this review was to advise senior management on the efficiency, economy and effectiveness of the policies, procedures and controls of the CITT's Human Resources (HR) function. The study focused on HR services and issues affecting the service delivery framework. Consequently, the interests of HR clients who rely on these services were taken into account in the conduct of the review.

The review team has held interviews with representatives of the HR function, as well as CITT managers who call upon HR services. The team also reviewed key documentation and a non-representative sample of staffing files, and conducted research into other government departments' HR management frameworks, including shared services. The fieldwork was conducted between November 2004 and January 2005.

Although the priority of the Tribunal remains meeting statutory deadlines as per its mandate, senior management had identified the HR function as requiring further review to address perceived risks in this area. The hiring of a new Director of Management Services, thus recognizing the importance of management functions including HR, and the HR modernization initiative, create opportunities to position the function favorably regarding meeting clients' needs in the future. The review has found that the HR function would benefit from improvements in the following areas, which are discussed briefly below, and at length in the report: HR management framework and practices; service delivery; roles and responsibilities; and management-owned processes.

With respect to the **human resources management framework and practices**, areas for improvement include the development of an overall HR strategy, supported by more detailed planning documents to help ensure implementation, as well as simple and effective procedures for key HR areas, in line with the size of the Tribunal's operations. The other element of the framework that would benefit from attention is the creation and use of a streamlined set of key performance and organizational health indicators, that would enable more effective management of human resources.

In terms of **service delivery**, it would be beneficial for CITT management to ensure adequate support of the HR function through a review of resourcing levels, exploring options for complementing HR resources, continued monitoring of PSMA implementation, and the provision of sufficient training in support of the new HR framework. Although client interviews have indicated that HR is effective in hiring the right people given the limited visibility and size of the Tribunal, timing is said to be sometimes an issue. Our summary review of a non-representative number of staffing files has indicated that, in most cases, the file documentation would have benefited from enhancements to better demonstrate the entire staffing decision-making process and its respect of relevant legislation and public service staffing values and principles.

Other opportunities for improvement were found in the definition of **roles and responsibilities** with respect to HR matters, which would benefit from further clarification through enhanced documentation, training, and ongoing support. This effort would need to be undertaken in conjunction with the implementation of revised delegations of authority, to ensure coherence with HR modernization. Considering the nature of the business of the Tribunal, the review found that it would also be worthwhile to bring enhancements to the management of leave and overtime.

Management-owned processes relate to those areas of human resource management for which line managers have a primary responsibility, with the support of the HR function. Our review has identified opportunities for improvement in the area of learning and development, where enhanced investments would be beneficial in the areas of policy documentation, accountability framework and performance tracking perspectives. As for staff performance evaluations, they would likely benefit from more effective accountability mechanisms to ensure their timely completion. A few workplace maintenance issues, namely with respect to values and ethics, occupational health and safety, and harassment, would also benefit from increased attention in the form of training and information sessions provided to staff.

The management of human resources is, due in part to changing demographics, one of the current priority areas of the federal government. Interviews have indicated that the issues, concerns, and priorities of HR are now regularly discussed at Executive Committee meetings to ensure that HR objectives support the business objectives of the Tribunal. There is also a consensus that additional efforts are required to help provide the HR function with key elements of its management framework, to position it for enhanced levels of client service, to clarify roles and responsibilities, and to provide guidance and advisory services relating to management-owned processes.

1.0 Introduction

The Canadian International Trade Tribunal (CITT) Internal Audit Plan for 2004-05 to 2008-09 had identified the requirement for a Review of the Human Resources Function within the Tribunal. The review has sought to address management concerns as well as other issues and to develop recommendations regarding these issues.

1.1 Objectives and Scope

The objective of this review is to advise senior management on the efficiency, economy and effectiveness of the policies, procedures and controls of the CITT's Human Resources (HR) function. The study focused on HR services and issues affecting the service delivery framework. Consequently, the interests of HR clients who rely on these services were taken into account in the conduct of the review.

1.2 Lines of Inquiry

As identified in the CITT's Internal Audit Plan for 2004-05 to 2008-09, the following lines of inquiry were examined:

- The service delivery model including the definition of service standards;
- Client satisfaction with HR services and client perceptions of service delivery;
- Succession planning strategies, progression planning and corporate memory transfer mechanisms throughout the Tribunal;
- Workload issues and service delivery capacity within the HR function;
- The monitoring framework and internal controls in place in the HR function; and,
- Processes for overtime, grievances, classification, staffing, and other key HR areas.

1.3 Approach and Methodology

During the assignment, the activities undertaken by the review team included the following:

- Reviewed relevant background documentation;
- Preparation of interview guides and vetting with the CITT's Director of Management Services;
- Conducted and documented a total of 10 interviews with:
 - Members of the HR function (3 interviews);
 - Sample clients of HR services (7 interviews);

- Reviewed a small sample of staffing files in light of the lines of inquiry identified above;
- Reviewed documentation obtained from interviews;
- Conducted research into other government departments' HR management frameworks, including shared services, through review of publicly available documentation and summary discussions. Also, the benchmarking research conducted by the Immigration and Refugee Board's (IRB) Directorate of Improved Management Practices was also used for these purposes. We wish to extend our gratitude to the IRB for making this information available for the purposes of this review;
- Conducted analysis of information gathered from interviews, file and document reviews;
- Prepared observation/analysis sheets and supporting working papers;
- Prepared a Project Status Report by 17 December 2004 and discussed with the Director of Management Services; and,
- Prepared this Draft Report.

The fieldwork for this review was conducted between November 2004 and January 2005.

The review is not to be considered as an audit of human resources management at the CITT, as the approach used was designed to provide input of an advisory nature to Senior Management, as opposed to a detailed assessment of compliance.

It is important to note that the opinions of staff are not reflected in this review as interviews were limited to the executive management team and to the HR function. Some elements covered in this report should therefore be further examined in a workplace assessment.

We wish to express our appreciation to all of those who have graciously made themselves available for the conduct of this review, through their participation in interviews and/or the provision of documentation.

1.4 Background

Context of the Canadian International Trade Tribunal

The Canadian International Trade Tribunal is an administrative tribunal operating within Canada's trade remedies system. It is an independent quasi-judicial body that carries out its statutory responsibilities in an autonomous and impartial manner and reports to Parliament through the Minister of Finance.

The Tribunal has authority to:

- Conduct inquiries into whether dumped or subsidized imports have caused, or are threatening to cause, material injury to a domestic industry (dumping and subsidizing);

- Hear appeals of decisions of the Canada Border Services Agency made under the Customs Act, the Excise Tax Act and the Special Import Measures Act (appeals);
- Conduct inquiries and provide advice on such economic, trade and tariff issues referred to the Tribunal by the Governor in Council or the Minister of Finance (references);
- Conduct inquiries into complaints by potential suppliers concerning procurement by the federal government (procurement);
- Conduct safeguard inquiries into complaints by domestic producers that increased imports are causing, or threatening to cause, serious injury to domestic producers (safeguards); and,
- Conduct investigations into requests from Canadian producers for tariff relief on imported textile inputs that they use in their production operations (textiles).

The Tribunal's mission is to support a fair and open trade system. The Tribunal's main challenge is to meet statutory deadlines without compromising the quality of its findings, determinations and recommendations. The Tribunal is a key player within Canada's trade remedies system which allows the Canadian business sector to remain competitive in the global trade environment and therefore plays a key role in the government's economic agenda.

According to the CITT's Departmental Performance Report (DPR) for the period ending March 31, 2004 the Tribunal is moving forward with improved management practices. The Tribunal launched its modern comptrollership initiative by completing a capacity assessment of the Tribunal's modern management practices and by developing the resulting action plan. Another positive measure is the recent re-organization of the CITT by separating the corporate functions from the secretariat functions of the Tribunal. The CITT had total spending authorities of \$9.8 million for fiscal year 2003-04.

Structure of the Human Resources Function

The CITT's Human Resources function is part of the Management Services Division. It includes one Chief of HR, one compensation and HR services officer and one HR assistant. This team has responsibility, at least from the perspective of providing functional guidance, for the following activities: HR planning, compensation and pay administration, classification, staffing, continuous learning and career development, staff relations and grievances, employment equity, official languages, values and ethics, performance appraisals and performance management, leave and overtime, harassment in the workplace, student employment program, orientation, work well-being and work life balance, awards and recognition, security, occupational health and safety, and employee assistance. The Chief of HR reports directly to the Director of Management Services.

| Overview of the CITT's Human Resources Function (2003-04) | |
|--|------------------|
| Salaries | \$175, 106 |
| Consulting Fees | \$32,405 |
| Human Resource Information System (HRIS) | \$15,000 |
| Employee Assistance Program (EAP) | \$6,000 |
| Total | \$228,511 |

2.0 Observations and Recommendations

Although the priority of the Tribunal remains meeting statutory deadlines as per its mandate, senior management had identified the HR function as requiring further review to address perceived risks in this area. The hiring of a new Director of Management Services, thus recognizing the importance of management functions including HR, and the upcoming HR modernization, create opportunities to position the function favorably regarding meeting clients' needs in the future. The review has found that the HR function would benefit from improvements in the following areas, which are discussed in this section of the report:

- 2.1 HR management framework and practices;
- 2.2 Service delivery;
- 2.3 Roles and responsibilities; and
- 2.4 Management-owned processes.

2.1 Human Resources Management Framework and Practices

The Public Service Modernization Act (PSMA) and the Treasury Board Secretariat's Management Accountability Framework (MAF) strengthen the importance of HR planning as an integral part of business planning, of identifying current and future needs of the organization, and of improving and building the human capacity of the Public Service to ensure Results for Canadians¹. Organizations should have a management framework for HR activities and processes including an HR planning strategy based on organizational priorities and supported by work plans, documented policies and procedures, internal controls, and performance information.

HR Planning

Criteria

As per the Integrated HR and Business Planning Toolkit, human resources planning is a process that identifies current and future human resources needs for an organization to achieve its goals.

¹ Human Resource Planning in the Public Service of Canada - Rebuilding Our Capacity; available from the Public Service Human Resources Management Agency of Canada web-site.

HR planning should serve as a link between human resources management and the overall strategic plan of an organization. HR priorities, strategies and work plans should be based on the organization's goals, environmental scan and gap analysis. Integrated planning is central to the successful implementation of the PSMA. It will help align an organization's workforce to government priorities, and the organization's mission, strategic plan and budgetary resources.

Considering the size of the CITT, the review team was not expecting the Tribunal to have a full-fledged planning document, but at least a summary discussion of HR directions and priorities, and how these would support corporate priorities.

Findings

Our review has not found an HR strategy and/or plan which would have been the starting point for identifying key priorities and initiatives. However, the review team was shown a recently compiled list of staffing actions, comprised of urgent operational requirements. The list has been prioritized and approved by the Executive Committee. This document is quite useful for the HR function as it focuses staffing efforts in key areas identified by the Executive Committee. The Tribunal is in the process of developing a planning and reporting framework for the entire organization which will integrate HR Planning with business planning.

In the absence of an overall HR strategy, the priorities identified in the staffing workplan address only the short term needs of the Tribunal. Without structured and documented consideration of the future HR needs (workforce, capacity, skills) of the organization to ensure its continued success in meeting its mandate, it is not clear how the tasks identified in the staffing workplan support strategic HR objectives nor the Tribunal's strategic business plan. This is consistent with interviewees' comments which said that the HR function is more reactive than proactive, and has focused its efforts on meeting immediate operational requirements.

Recommendations

1. Management of the HR Function should:

- Develop an overall planning strategy for the Function, which would be based on input from Senior Management and be integrated with the CITT business plan; and,
- Develop an HR workplan including timeframes and responsibilities, as a way to facilitate the focusing of limited HR resources on key priorities. This regularly updated workplan should be used for ongoing management of the HR function and be linked to the overall objectives.

Policies and Procedures

Criteria

As per the People Component of the Management Accountability Framework (PCMAF), organizations should have a supporting infrastructure for HR that includes documented policies and procedures for HR processes and activities.

Findings

As a small organization, we would not expect the CITT to develop its own policies for every HR area, but rather to refer to central agencies' policies in areas where a departmental policy is not justified. The CITT does refer to central agency policies in the majority of instances. In terms of its own specific policies and procedures, the review team was provided with internal HR documents, including the Harassment Policy, procedure in case of Harassment, and with Employment Equity and Performance Evaluation forms.

However, many procedures including checklists and templates related to essential HR activities such as staffing, were not documented. The implications of this were observed in some deficiencies in documentation, identified through our review of a small sample of staffing files, as explained further on page 9.

Recommendation

2. Management of the HR Function should develop simple and effective policies and procedures for key HR areas, which would contribute to more effective and efficient service delivery.

Performance Measurement and Risk Management

Criteria

Human resources managers are expected to implement effective internal controls and ensure that integrated performance information is available for decision-making and for proper monitoring of results. This is consistent with modern comptrollership and management principles.

Findings

Our interviews with the HR function have shown that some internal controls are in place including a BF system, the review of leave and overtime requests, and the provision of bi-weekly updates on HR activities to the Director of Management Services.

While reports and statistical information are available from the Human Resources Information System (HRIS), this information is not used by CITT managers for the management of their human resources, but simply for reporting to central agencies as required.

Recommendation

3. Management of the HR Function should develop, capture, and maintain a streamlined set of key performance and organizational health indicators, implement appropriate reporting mechanisms for internal and external use, and use the information to enable more effective management of human resources.

2.2 Service Delivery

Resourcing for Service Delivery

Criteria

As per the PCMAF, the HR function should provide the appropriate support, advice, and challenge function to managers and support to employees through the provision of strategic advice, policies and services.

Findings

The Tribunal relies on one HR generalist and two other resources, to fulfill both advisory and operational roles of the HR function.

Comments from HR clients indicate that there currently are insufficient resources dedicated to the HR function at the Tribunal. The level of resources of the HR function forces HR staff to focus on core operational work, leaving little room for investing time in HR modernization issues or developing key enablers which would help it become more efficient. The HR function has had to rely on external consulting services to meet its operational requirements and to lead the Tribunal toward Public Service Modernization Act (PSMA) readiness.

The Immigration and Refugee Board's Directorate of Improved Management Practices has undertaken a comparative study of corporate headquarters activity costs and related FTEs in 2004, as part of its Corporate Services Benchmarking Project. The objective of this exercise was to compare the cost of the corporate support functions with that of other federal government departments. In the context of this review, two measures of the HR functions' resource levels are shown in the following table.

| Key Measure | CITT ² | Average of 5 Benchmarked Departments ³ |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|---|
| HR FTEs as a % of Departmental FTEs | 3.26% | 4.74% |
| HR Budget per Departmental FTEs | \$2,484 | \$4,912 |

Although conclusions should not necessarily be drawn from such comparative analysis due to the numerous inherent organizational differences between departments, the table does confirm the perceptions expressed in our interviews that the CITT's HR function is under-resourced.

² CITT figures are based on 2003-04 total HR expenditures of \$228,511 (refer to Section 1.4 for detailed breakdown), 3 FTEs assigned to HR and a total of 92 FTEs at the CITT including 7 GICs.

³ The information is used with permission from its originators, the Immigration and Refugee Board's Directorate of Improved Management Practices. It is based on information from five federal government departments.

Interviewees have indicated that although the HR function may not possess the expertise that would be provided by a number of subject-matter specialists in all HR areas, the HR team compensates by their resourcefulness in obtaining the required knowledge and information and by their knowledge of their client environment. Interviewees have also noted that HR is accessible and helpful by providing tools and information, and by identifying options and approaches to HR actions. Interviewees have indicated that communication with HR is facilitated by the size of the organization and its approachability.

Perhaps as a result of insufficient capacity, clients felt that key HR processes and actions take more time than necessary. Clients have to get more involved than expected in the HR actions which they've requested, and have indicated the need to regularly follow-up on the progress of HR actions. HR's advisory role, which includes providing support, advice and challenge functions as required, will be increasingly accentuated with the upcoming implementation of the PSMA, and is particularly important when managers do not have expertise or training in HR areas for which they are accountable.

Recommendations

4. CITT management should ensure adequate support for the management of human resources across the organization, through:
 - Reviewing the HR function's resourcing situation;
 - Exploring options for complementing the HR function with shared services;
 - Continued monitoring of the planning and implementation of the PSMA to ensure readiness at coming into force; and,
 - Ensuring that training is provided to those concerned to ensure consistent understanding of the new HR framework.

Compensation, Classification, and Staff Relations

Criteria

As per the PCMAF, the HR function should "support managers and employees through the provision of strategic advice, policies and services" and should have an HR supporting infrastructure that includes documented policies and instruments for HR related activities including compensation, classification, and labour relations.

Findings

With respect to compensation and pay administration, client interviews have demonstrated a high level of satisfaction with this service. The HR function has indicated that they have access to all the tools and information required to provide effective, efficient, and high quality services to its clients.

Classification, however, is perceived by senior management as an irritant for staff given that the classification levels are not seen as competitive with other government departments. Other concerns raised by the management team regarding classification include the need for clarification as to the authority and accountability for decision making of the Executive Committee and that of the classification committees.

Interviews did not reveal any significant issues surrounding staff relations other than the process being lengthy and time consuming for the HR chief and the manager involved.

Recommendation

5. CITT management should conduct a workplace assessment, as per its Internal Audit Plan for 2004-05 to 2008-09, to obtain feedback from all staff on various matters including compensation, classification and staff relations.

Staffing

Criteria

Staffing transactions must comply with legislation and policy, the assessment methods must be appropriate and applied properly, and there must be appropriate documentation on staffing files to demonstrate compliance with the PSEA and to demonstrate respect of staffing values and principles.

Findings

Client interviews have indicated that the service is effective in hiring the right people given the limited visibility and size of the Tribunal, although timing is sometimes an issue.

In the context of this review, we have selected a non-representative sample of eight staffing files for the purposes of conducting a cursory examination. This examination is not to be considered as a staffing audit or a detailed examination, since the objective was merely to gather additional information on the HR function's management control framework.

Our review has found that, in most cases, the file documentation was generally insufficient to clearly demonstrate the entire staffing decision-making process and its respect of relevant legislation and public service staffing values and principles. Some of the more detailed observations from our review include the following:

- The rationale for assessment was not fully documented as it did not include results for all candidates stemming from the screening process, written exams, oral interviews, and reference checks;
- There was no rating guide on file which would provide for a set of objective criteria for decision-making, nor supporting instruments such as written exams, interview guides, and guides in support of conducting reference checks, with their respective marking grids and candidate results;

- In one instance, there was documentation on file indicating that the successful candidate to a competition may have been pre-determined;
- In most cases, files lacked adequate documentation relating to communications with applicants (i.e. written confirmation of withdrawals), managers (i.e. written staffing requests) and the Public Service Commission (i.e. for the eligibility lists) at all steps of the competitions; and,
- In some cases, there was no evidence on file to demonstrate that the linguistic profile of the candidate was in line with that of the position.

Recommendation

6. Management of the HR Function should revise the staffing approach and process to ensure full compliance with relevant legislation and public service staffing values and principles, as well as adequate documentation of staffing decisions.

2.3 Roles and Responsibilities

To ensure efficiency and effectiveness of HR activities and processes for the implementation of the PSMA and its sustained success, managers must understand the values, the related policies and procedures, their increased accountability, as well as their roles and responsibilities.

Roles and Responsibilities

Criteria

The organization must adequately support HR activities, by ensuring that HR specialists and managers understand their roles and responsibilities with respect to staffing. As per the PSMA, delegated managers must understand their new responsibilities and accountabilities to implement the new HR management framework.

Findings

The review has identified opportunities for improvement in the definition of roles and responsibilities as they relate to the management of human resources. Essentially, this definition needs to be clarified as there seems to be confusion in this respect for managers and, given the absence of relevant documentation, interviewees have reported fluctuations in the roles they have been expected to play. Better management of expectations through definition of respective roles could position the HR function to more fully leverage the contribution that managers could make to HR processes.

Recommendations

7. Management of the HR Function should:

- Document key HR policies and procedures to ensure a common understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the HR function and that of its clients, in light of HR modernization and the resulting new responsibilities and accountability of managers as per the revised Public Service Employment Act and the Public Service Labour Relations Act; and,
- Provide training and ongoing support to CITT managers relating to roles and responsibilities, accountabilities, and HR values and principles.

Delegation of Authorities

Criteria

As per the PSEA, delegation instruments must provide authorities to managers to the lowest level possible to meet the specific business needs of the organization. Managers with delegated authority must understand the requirements of these responsibilities.

Findings

The Tribunal was, at the time of the review, in the process of taking action to update the delegation instrument itself, to reflect the recent reorganization and the upcoming PSMA.

Delegations was a concern expressed by interviewees. This is an area of opportunity for improvement, as many interviewees indicated not having seen the delegation instrument, nor having received appropriate information as to their responsibilities and authorities given the existing delegations at the Tribunal.

Recommendation

8. CITT management should pursue implementation of the new delegations in human resource management, while ensuring that they are in line with HR modernization and that their integrity is preserved through appropriate monitoring and control mechanisms. To ensure success of the PSMA and ensuing increased HR delegations, managers will need to be adequately supported by continued access to HR expertise, revised policies and guidelines, and training.

Management of Leave and Overtime

Criteria

That the CITT would benefit from the information and processes required for its effective and efficient management of leave and overtime.

Findings

With respect to the management of overtime, the interviews have indicated that there is some overtime required due to the nature of the work at the Tribunal, but that this is not administered in a consistent manner across the organization.

Recent initiatives, such as the formal recording of overtime and the new overtime policy, will provide valuable monitoring information, ensure consistency throughout the Tribunal, while at the same time recognizing employee value and commitment to the organization.

In terms of leave management, the Tribunal is still reliant on a paper-system for leave approval, at a time when many departments have moved to an electronic system. The CITT is considering implementing a “self-leave package”, available as an HRIS module. This would facilitate the managers’ responsibility to manage their staff’s leave and overtime, and would facilitate tracking and monitoring by ease of access to information.

Recommendation

9. CITT management should enhance its capacity to manage leave and overtime, and continue the progressive implementation of the HRIS leave and overtime management module.

2.4 Management-Owned Processes

Some processes are the primary responsibility of management, with support from the HR function. Those include continuous learning and career development, employment equity, official languages, values and ethics, performance appraisals and performance management, harassment in the workplace, work well-being and work life balance, awards and recognition, and occupational health and safety.

Learning and Development

Criteria

One of the goals of the PSMA is to provide more focused and better integrated learning and development opportunities for employees at all levels. The TBS Policy for Continuous Learning in the Public Service of Canada (May 2002) states that Deputy Heads of organizations must ensure that “employees are provided with the training, development, and learning opportunities to fulfill the organization’s mission and job requirements, within the wider context of Public Service values while ensuring responsible spending”.

Findings

Some learning initiatives are underway at the CITT such as coaching for new employees in the Research Division, and the upcoming implementation of personal learning plans for all employees in the Management Services and the Secretariat Divisions.

The 2002 Public Service Employee Survey results indicated that 58% of CITT staff did not feel supported in their professional development. The interviews supported this finding by indicating that employees have little or no time for training given the statutory deadlines which are an integral part of the Tribunal's business but make learning and career development a challenge. We have found no evidence of reporting information and statistics being used for management purposes; of monitoring and follow-up of completion of personal learning plans; of a training policy; of a documented learning and development budget per employee; or of accountability mechanisms to ensure completion of learning plans. It was indicated to the review team that training forms are not always completed by staff to document training taken, which impedes the CITT's ability to fully document the extent of training activities. The interviews also revealed that there were limited funds budgeted for training other than language training.

Recommendation

10. CITT management should enhance its investment in learning and development through the development and implementation of a learning policy including mechanisms for more consistent tracking of training activity, the creation of training budgets, and making directors accountable for the achievement of training targets.

Employment Equity

Criteria

That the organization respect the spirit of, and comply with, the Employment Equity Act.

Findings

The following positive measures were identified in the course of our review: there are two Employment Equity champions in place at the Tribunal, the HR function maintains complete and up-to-date records on representation, and information is available to all employees through the Intranet. The HR function has provided the self-identification form to all existing CITT employees and it is now included in the information package for all new employees. The Employment Equity Compliance Review initiated in October 2002 and completed in June 2004 by the Human Rights Commission indicates that the Tribunal is in compliance with the twelve statutory requirements of the Employment Equity Act.

The following concerns were raised during the Compliance Review: the rate of participation for self-identification is at 60%, accommodation is based on the manager's discretion, and there are no mechanisms in place to ensure management accountability for Employment Equity.

Recommendation

11. Management of the HR function should address remaining gaps in performance by communicating employment equity objectives and approaches for staffing to management, and by ensuring the employment equity advisory committee remains active.

Official Languages

Criteria

That the organization respect the spirit of, and comply with, the Official Languages Act and hence serve Canadians in the official language of choice and enable employees, in designated bilingual areas, to work in their official language of choice.

Findings

Interviews have indicated positive results in regard to official languages indicating that the CITT is a very bilingual environment and that there is an official language champion in place at the Tribunal. A best practice found in the Legal Services Division is worth highlighting: they alternate their work language from French to English on a weekly basis thus providing on-the-job language training for all employees.

However, the 2002 Public Service Employee Survey results indicated that 40% of staff did not feel that they could use the official language of their choice when writing e-mails. Also, as noted in the CITT's Annual Management Report for 2003-2004 submitted to TB for reporting on Official Languages, 6 employees and 1 director did not meet the language requirements of their positions.

Recommendation

12. CITT management should continue its efforts towards meeting requirements of the Official Languages Act.

Performance Evaluations

Criteria

Public Service managers are expected to establish performance standards for employees, to manage performance and provide ongoing feedback.

Findings

Notwithstanding the CITT policy that performance appraisals be completed annually for every employee and recent pressure from the Chairman to have performance appraisals completed on a more timely basis, the interviews indicated that this is not a priority for managers given the focus on the mandate and on respecting statutory deadlines. However, the completion of performance appraisals has been followed up on at the Executive Committee meetings. We have not found evidence of accountability mechanisms to ensure timely completion of performance appraisals for all CITT employees.

Interviews have also indicated that CITT management is aiming to have completed 100% of all its staff's performance appraisals by June 2005, for the fiscal year 2004/05. This would be a significant improvement over past years, as interviews have indicated that not all appraisals have been completed for 2003/04.

Recommendation

13. CITT management should implement more effective accountability mechanisms for managers to ensure the timely completion of staff's Performance Review Reports on an annual basis, and provide the necessary support.

Workplace Maintenance

Criteria

We have regrouped in this section, a number of enablers related to a healthy workplace, that are either required by law or central agency policies. The Values and Ethics Code for the Public Service applies to all public servants working in departments and agencies; government activities should be undertaken consistently with the Code. As per the PCMAF, one of the HR outcomes is to provide a workplace that is healthy and provide a safe physical and psychological environment. In terms of health and safety, federal departments are expected to respect and comply with the Canada Labour Code.

Findings

With respect to values and ethics, the Tribunal has distributed the TB policy and manual to all employees and the policy is posted on the CITT intranet site. Interviews have noted that no training has been given to Tribunal employees.

No issues were identified for harassment in the workplace and interviews highlighted the following positive measures: there were two harassment coordinators, the policy was posted on the Intranet, and that training was provided to all employees.

The 2002 Public Service Employee Survey results indicated that 56% of CITT staff did not feel that senior management supported flexible working arrangements. The interviews supported this finding by indicating once again that the Tribunal does not have control over its caseload, the timing of cases and the statutory deadlines, thus making work-life balance very difficult to achieve. Given the size of the workforce, there is no back-up complement in place to allow sharing of responsibilities and to provide flexibility. The focus on operations and on meeting statutory deadlines was identified as the reason the awards and recognition committee is not active and that all-staff meetings are not feasible. Note that awards are given to employees recognizing their years of service and that there are reportedly some informal recognition activities at the completion of significant projects.

With respect to occupational health and safety, interviewees perceive that the Tribunal follows central agency policies and guidelines, although no training has been given to Tribunal employees. It should be noted that verification of compliance was not part of the mandate of this review.

It is important to note that the opinions of staff are not reflected above as interviews were limited to the executive management team and to the HR function. Many of these elements, such as official languages, work-life balance, awards and recognition, and other relevant areas should be further examined in a workplace assessment, as identified in the CITT Internal Audit Plan for 2004-05 to 2008-09.

Recommendation

14. CITT management should provide training and information sessions to all Tribunal employees on the topics of values and ethics, occupational health and safety, and harassment in the workplace.

3.0 Conclusion

The management of human resources is, due in part to changing demographics, one of the current priority areas of the federal government. Interviews have shown that the issues, concerns, and priorities of HR are now regularly discussed at Executive Committee meetings to ensure that HR objectives support the business objectives of the Tribunal. There is also a consensus that additional efforts are required to help provide the HR function with key elements of its management framework, to position it for enhanced levels of client service, to clarify roles and responsibilities, and to provide guidance and advisory services relating to management-owned processes.

4.0 Management Response and Action Plan

| Recommendations | Management Response and Action Plan |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| Human Resources Management Framework and Practices | |
| <p>1. <i>Management of the HR Function should:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Develop an overall planning strategy for the Function, which would be based on input from Senior Management and be integrated with the CITT business plan; and,</i> • <i>Develop an HR workplan including timeframes and responsibilities, as a way to facilitate the focusing of limited HR resources on key priorities. This regularly updated workplan should be used for ongoing management of the HR function and be linked to the overall objectives.</i> | |
| <p>2. <i>Management of the HR Function should develop simple and effective policies and procedures for key HR areas, which would contribute to more effective and efficient service delivery.</i></p> | |
| <p>3. <i>Management of the HR Function should develop, capture, and maintain a streamlined set of key performance and organizational health indicators, implement appropriate reporting mechanisms for internal and external use, and use the information to enable more effective management of human resources.</i></p> | |
| Service Delivery | |
| <p>4. <i>CITT management should ensure adequate support for the management of human resources across the organization, through:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Reviewing the HR function's resourcing situation;</i> • <i>Exploring options for complementing the HR function with shared services;</i> • <i>Continued monitoring of the planning and implementation of the PSMA to ensure readiness at coming into force; and,</i> • <i>Ensuring that training is provided to those concerned to ensure consistent understanding of the new HR framework.</i> | |

| Recommendations | Management Response and Action Plan |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| 5. <i>CITT management should conduct a workplace assessment, as per its Internal Audit Plan for 2004-05 to 2008-09, to obtain feedback from all staff on various matters including compensation, classification and staff relations.</i> | |
| 6. <i>Management of the HR Function should revise the staffing approach and process to ensure full compliance with relevant legislation and public service staffing values and principles, as well as adequate documentation of staffing decisions.</i> | |
| Roles and Responsibilities | |
| 7. <i>Management of the HR Function should:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Document key HR policies and procedures to ensure a common understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the HR function and that of its clients, in light of HR modernization and the resulting new responsibilities and accountability of managers as per the revised Public Service Employment Act and the Public Service Labour Relations Act; and,</i> • <i>Provide training and ongoing support to CITT managers relating to roles and responsibilities, accountabilities, and HR values and principles.</i> | |
| 8. <i>CITT management should pursue implementation of the new delegations in human resource management, while ensuring that they are in line with HR modernization and that their integrity is preserved through appropriate monitoring and control mechanisms. To ensure success of the PSMA and ensuing increased HR delegations, managers will need to be adequately supported by continued access to HR expertise, revised policies and guidelines, and training.</i> | |
| 9. <i>CITT management should enhance its capacity to manage leave and overtime, and continue the progressive implementation of the HRIS leave and overtime management module.</i> | |
| Management-Owned Processes | |
| 10. <i>CITT management should enhance its investment in learning and development through the development and implementation of a learning policy including mechanisms for more consistent tracking of training activity, the creation of training budgets, and making directors accountable for the achievement of training targets.</i> | |

| Recommendations | Management Response and Action Plan |
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| <i>11. Management of the HR function should address remaining gaps in performance by communicating employment equity objectives and approaches for staffing to management, and by ensuring the employment equity advisory committee remains active.</i> | |
| <i>12. CITT management should continue its efforts towards meeting requirements of the Official Languages Act.</i> | |
| <i>13. CITT management should implement more effective accountability mechanisms for managers to ensure the timely completion of staff's Performance Review Reports on an annual basis, and provide the necessary support.</i> | |
| <i>14. CITT management should provide training and information sessions to all Tribunal employees on the topics of values and ethics, occupational health and safety, and harassment in the workplace.</i> | |