

Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action Program

Washington State Ferries
2007 – 2011 Fiscal Years



**Washington State
Department of Transportation**

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Michael Anderson
Executive Director

Memorandum

Date: September 22, 2006
From: "Mike Anderson"
To: Departmental Direct Reports

Subject: **WSF Affirmative Action Plan Strategies**

At the Washington State Ferries we serve Washington residents and customers from around the world. One piece of ensuring that our work environment is one that will assure the best customer experience is reviewing, on an annual basis, the data and information regarding our own workforce. This year's review was based on a new design and the latest census data indicating workers with the requisite skills in our specific job groups.

When I reviewed the information I discovered that we are doing very well in many areas, reflecting the diversity in our community. There are, however, some areas where we can improve. I have reviewed and selected seven areas of focus for the next year. Several of you were part of developing the strategies for us to focus on in the coming year. I know that I can count on your support for these efforts and I am open to additional ideas that will help us address these focus areas.

Affirmative Action Plan Strategies for the Washington State Ferries 2006 - 2007

Focus Areas

- The WSF is substantively underutilized in the **Officials and Administrators** job group for Hispanics/Latinos.
- The WSF is underutilized in the **Administrative Support** job group for Hispanics/Latinos.

- The WSF is underutilized in the **Deck** job group for African Americans/Blacks and Hispanics/Latinos.
- The WSF is underutilized in the **Licensed Engine** job group for American Indians/Alaskan Natives, Asians/Pacific Islanders and Females.
- The WSF is underutilized in the **Unlicensed Engine** job group for African Americans/Blacks, American Indians/Alaskan Natives, Asians/Pacific Islanders, Hispanics/Latinos and Females.
- The WSF is underutilized in the **Eagle Harbor** job group for Females.
- The WSF is underutilized in the **Terminals** job group for African Americans/Blacks and Asians/Pacific Islanders.

I appreciate, and thank you, for your full cooperation, and that of your department, in working with the Human Resources and OEO to complete our identified action items.

The focus areas with problem analysis and our plans for the next steps are attached.

Attachment

The situation/focus area #1

The WSF is substantively underutilized in our Official and Administrator job group for Hispanics.

Problem Analysis

Applicant flow data was obtained on some of the recruitments and applications for positions in the Official and Administrator category. The analysis of that data indicated that Hispanics were applying at a rate much lower than would be expected from the data.

This initial analysis appears to indicate that the problem in this area may be a sourcing issue; Hispanics are simply not applying for the positions.

Next Steps (2007)/Action Items

- **WSF hired its first dedicated recruiter in September 2006. The recruiter is developing a recruiting plan that will have strategies for increasing the number of Hispanic applicants.**
- **Identifying and targeting professional Hispanic organizations for recruitment**
- **Track applicant flow on all official and administrator positions, including queries on how applicants heard about the job, in order to judge the effectiveness of the recruitment effort.**

The situation/focus area #2

WSF is underutilized in the Administrative Support Job Group for Hispanics.

Problem Analysis

Applicant flow data was obtained on some of the recruitments and applications for positions in the Administrative Support area. The analysis of that data indicated that Hispanics were applying at a rate much lower than would be expected from the data.

This initial analysis appears to indicate that the problem in this area may be a sourcing issue; Hispanics are simply not applying for the positions.

Next Steps (2007)/Action Items

- **WSF hired its first dedicated recruiter in September 2006. The recruiter is developing a recruiting plan that will have strategies for increasing the number of Hispanic applicants.**
- **Identifying and targeting professional Hispanic organizations for recruitment**
- **Track applicant flow on all official and administrator positions, including queries on how applicants heard about the job, in order to judge the effectiveness of the recruitment effort.**

The situation/focus area #3

WSF is underutilized in the Deck Department for African Americans and Hispanics.

Problem Analysis

Applicant flow data was tracked in 2006 for deck department applicants. Of the 242 applicants, 220 identified themselves by race and sex. Analysis of the data indicates that both Hispanics and Native Americans did not apply for positions at a rate commensurate with their population in our geographic area, which may be indicative of a sourcing problem. However the applicant flow data indicated that Hispanics who did apply did not pass the initial testing process at the same rate of other groups and that African Americans appeared to have a lower rate of passing the interview process than other groups.

There is also substantive data that the retention rate of all hires in the deck department was very low in the first year. Numerous reasons were given but the issue of a stable work location, guaranteed work hours and the inability of qualified applicants who already have their Able-Bodied Seaman (AB) ticket to work as AB's have been noted as issues.

In addition there is a question regarding the AB certification. Is the cost of the AB ticket, \$185.00 a barrier for women or minorities?

Although the Licensed Deck (LDO) officers group is not an initial focus, because employees must move up through the system, any underutilization in the deck department will adversely affect the profile of the LDO's in the future.

Right now we are not sure about the %'s of minorities and females in the "pipeline" to move to LDO positions. We need to track who is in the pipeline and if there are any barriers within that system. We need to know who is pursuing schooling for certification.

Under current labor agreements deck applicants are primarily referred by the union hiring hall, this will change during the 07-09 contract year and we need to be prepared.

Next Steps (2007)/Action Items

- **Analysis of certification. Who is in the pipeline; what may potential barriers be to upward mobility? If the cost is a barrier, is there a way we can eliminate the barrier?**

- **Review of training applications and completion.**
- **Take initial steps or informal discussions with the Inland Boatman's Union (IBU) regarding the identified retention barriers (turnover problems) for new hires, if there are labor agreement constraints to adding _____ issues.**
- **Regarding turnover, how can we better inform potential applicants of the real job requirements?**
- **Analyze the screening process in more depth. Are there testing or interviewing barriers?**
- **Look into Summer hires or interns as a source for candidates, perhaps college or high school students internship programs (like the Engine room has with SMS)**
- **Explore the issues and options of 24 hour day care.**

The situation/focus area #4

WSF is underutilized in the Licensed Engine Job group for American Indian/Alaska Natives, Asian/Pacific Islanders and Females.

Problem Analysis

It is worthy of note that the Licensed Engine group, in a review of traditional EEO categories has underutilizations. There is a wide range of international diversity in this job group from other parts of the world including Russia and Eastern Europe.

In order to complete an initial problem analysis the WSF needs to initiate discussions with the Union Marine Employees Beneficiaries Association, the union for this area of the organization.

This job group is fed 2/3 from the unlicensed group and 1/3 from the Union Hall.

Next Steps (2007)/Action Items

- **Initiate talks with the MEBA regarding their data or information on Union membership and composition. We need a profile of union licensed individuals.**

The situation/focus area #5

WSF is underutilized in the Unlicensed Engine job group for African Americans, American Indians, Asian, Hispanics and Females Hispanics.

Problem Analysis

All hires in this job group are one to one hires from the Union hall. There is no selection process on the part of WSF. One job is called for and one applicant is sent. There is no “applicant flow” on the part of the WSF to analyze.

Steps must be taken to obtain data for problem analysis.

Next Steps (2007)/Action Items

- **Initiate talks with the Union (MEBA) regarding their data or information on Union membership and composition. We need a profile of union unlicensed individuals with cards.**
- **Continue with the internship program with Seattle Maritime Academy and obtain data from the SMA on the profile of their students**

The situation/focus area #6

WSF is underutilized at the Eagle Harbor facility in the area of females.

Problem Analysis

Eagle Harbor is hiring minorities at the rate they are available, the only area that needs focus is the hiring of females in the trade categories. Hires at Eagle Harbor are referrals from the appropriate Union Halls of the appropriate trade union.

Next Steps (2007)/Action Items

- **Initiate discussions with the Metal Trades unions regarding the profile in the individual Union Halls and the availability of females in the Marine trades.**
- **Explore the options for expanding the apprenticeship program at Eagle Harbor and assure the employer control of the selections.**

The situation/focus area #7

WSF is underutilized in the terminal job group for African Americans and Asian/Pacific Islanders.

Problem Analysis

In 2006 there was an initial analysis of the applicant flow for terminals. Although the hires are Union Hall referrals there is the capacity to do some recruitment (this past year) and some selection process involved on the part of the WSF. Of 252 applications reviewed, 219 identified their race/ethnicity and sex. An analysis of those applications indicated that Asian Pacific Islanders and Hispanics were not applying at the rate that would be expected statistically. It is not clear if these were Union Hall referrals or not. In addition it appears that African Americans and Asian Pacific Islanders do not make it through the entire hiring process at the same rate as other groups. In addition, the turnover rate in the first year for all groups was extremely high.

There was a query of employees regarding how they heard about the job. The largest response was “from relatives or current WSF employees”. Very few applicants identified newspaper ads as a source of referral. A questionnaire to employees who did not complete their first year indicated that the #1 reason for leaving was “lack of transportation”. A secondary and related factor was lack of guaranteed hours.

Current job requirements demand that new employees be available on call at any terminal in the region on short notice. Many of our facilities are not serviced by public transportation in a reliable fashion. Lack of promotional opportunities and lack of transferability has also been identified as a barrier.

Next Steps (2007)/Action Items

- Discuss and explore the options for guaranteed hours.
- Discuss and explore options to assist employees in getting reliable transportation.
- Explore options of stabilizing the work location.
- Obtain further detail on the hiring processes and potential barriers for African Americans and Asian Pacific Islanders.
- Research 24 hour day care options for employees.
- Emphasize sourcing and recruitment with the new recruiter particularly for Asian Pacific Islanders and Hispanics. Identify community groups and sources where we can tell the story of our jobs and opportunities.