



EQUITY SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

THE PROVINCIAL APPRENTICESHIP BOARD HAS PASSED THE FOLLOWING AS RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE MINISTER:

The Employment Equity Subcommittee met on March 30, 1993 and identified a number of actions that over the short and long-term could improve access to apprenticeship for women. Many of the proposals could also improve access for visible minorities, aboriginals, and would increase public awareness and respect for apprenticeship in general.

In subsequent meetings the Subcommittee will discuss specific obstacles faced by visible minorities, aboriginals and workers with disabilities and will develop recommendations that are particularly useful for increasing the participation of these workers.

The following recommendations are presented to the Provincial Apprenticeship Board for discussion and approval:

PUBLIC INFORMATION

The Minister and Ministry of Skills, Training and Labour should provide a clear and public indication of its commitment to an expanded system of apprenticeship; a commitment that includes improving access to apprenticeship for women, visible minorities, aboriginals and workers with disabilities.

This commitment to equity and expansion of apprenticeship should be actively communicated to:

- All members of the Ministry staff including: Skills Development and Universities, Colleges and Technical Programs Branch, Apprenticeship Board
- Trade Advisory Committees working with the Provincial Apprenticeship Board



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- The business community, including Chambers of Commerce and the Board of Trade
- Colleges, universities, institutes and agencies
- Unions and organized labour
- Teachers and students in the public school system (Ministry of Education)
- Crown Corporations
- Municipal governments
- The general public.

INCREASING ACCESS

The Public Sector

- A. The provincial government shall design and implement processes with stakeholders that ensures employers in the public sector accept responsibility for training apprentices. This includes the provincial government itself as an employer, crown corporations, colleges, institutes and universities, boards of education, municipalities, hospitals, employers, community agencies, representatives of designated groups and representation from workers. This process must include apprenticeship training for women, visible minorities, aboriginals and workers with disabilities, and must show measurable increases for the designated groups.
- B. Public sector employers should be made aware of the City of Toronto model for access to apprenticeship and technical training for women and be encouraged to establish similar programs.

Administration - Ministry of Skills, Training and Labour

- A. As turnover rates permit, ensure that Ministry of Skills, Training and Labour Apprenticeship Counsellors include women, visible minorities, aboriginals and workers with disabilities.

EQUITY SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

- B. Provide training for apprenticeship counsellors on employment equity issues.
- C. The Director of Apprenticeship shall ensure that employer and employee representatives on Provincial Trade Advisory Committees include, where available, women, visible minorities, aboriginals and workers with disabilities.
- D. Ministry of Skills, Training and Labour should develop materials for employers of apprentices on managing diversity.
- E. The Ministry shall adopt inclusive language in all Ministry publications, and should work with Trade Advisory Committees to make trades names gender neutral.

The Private Sector

- A. Adapt Ontario's *Access to Apprenticeship* model to create a British Columbia *Access to Apprenticeship* and set up a pilot project to begin the next fiscal year.
- B. The PAB acknowledges and supports the development of the Aboriginal Joint Training Board programs and recommends that the Ministry provide funding for Interim Coordinators.

Education

- A. The PAB recognizes the WITT National Standards and Program Development Guidelines as the basis for exploratory trades programs for women at every appropriate college in the province, on a stable basis. Explore the establishment of similar guidelines for programs targeted at visible minorities, aboriginals and workers with disabilities, tailoring the elements to address these groups.
- B. Incorporate english, math and science upgrading (to trades entry requirements) into all exploratory courses. Exploratory courses should also include an English language training component where students speak another tongue as a first language.

EQUITY SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

- C.** For apprentices, schedule classroom training to ensure, where possible, that there is more than one female in a class. The same policy should apply when training visible minorities, aboriginal people and people with disabilities.
- D.** All co-op programs should be required to have an equity component, to ensure that students include women and other equity-seeking groups.
- E.** Recommend that college instructors receive training on the integration of women, visible minorities, aboriginals and persons with disabilities in the classroom, as well as training on dealing with sexism and racism in the classroom.

Finally, the Provincial Apprenticeship Board should include equity considerations in decision-making. For example, requests for approval of co-op programs or other initiatives in the Provincial Apprenticeship Board jurisdiction should be reviewed for impact on women, visible minorities, aboriginals and workers with disabilities.

THE FOLLOWING ITEMS HAVE BEEN TABLED OR NOT YET PASSED BY THE PROVINCIAL APPRENTICESHIP BOARD

RESEARCH

Given the offer of research assistance made by Assistant Deputy Minister Fern Jeffries to the Provincial Apprenticeship Board, the subcommittee identified a number of issues that could be researched by the Ministry, and would improve understanding of the elements of improving women's access to apprenticeship. These include the following:

- A. Survey individual apprentices and employers about the factors that are creating any increases in female apprenticeship.

For example, female workers should be asked if *there were any particularly important supports, obstacles, coping strategies that have affected them. What was the impetus for their decision to become an apprentice?*

Employers should be asked, among other things, *what is the impetus for taking on a female apprentice? Were there any perceived obstacles? What has been their experience? Any rewards?* The survey should also see whether the main impetus for hiring a female apprentice is cost-savings.

- B. Develop an issue paper on the cost of establishing apprenticeship programs with an equity component in public sector workplaces. This should include a survey that will identify the amount of apprenticeship and technical training occurring at public sector workplaces including crown corporations.

INCREASING ACCESS

The Public Sector

- The provincial government shall ensure a number of contracts for public works projects include a requirement that contractors train apprentices, and that some of such apprenticeships be for women, visible minorities, aboriginals and workers with disabilities. Training must occur under adequate supervision by journeypersons. The government will establish an Equity in Construction Advisory Council to identify appropriate public works projects and implementation strategies.

The Private Sector

- Introduce a wage subsidy for employers who take on women, visible minorities, aboriginals and workers with disabilities as apprentices in trades where these groups are under-represented; i.e., have less than 33% representation in the trade. The program should include a bonus for employers who retain the apprentice on a long term basis.

Any subsidy program must be streamlined, easy to apply for and substantial, in order to make it attractive to business.

Education

- Each college running apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs for visible minorities, aboriginal people, women and/or people with disabilities, should have an advocate representing that group with trades or technical background on campus — a dedicated position that can help improve retention statistics. This should be incorporated in fiscal year 1995/96 budget for colleges.

FOLLOW-UP

If the report is adopted, it will be forwarded to the Minister, with a request that the Minister respond to the specific recommendations at his next meeting with the Provincial Apprenticeship Board.

Submitted by Marcia Braundy
Chair - Equity Subcommittee

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