

HIGHLIGHTS OF INITIATIVES

SERVICE DELIVERY

All new frontline workers go through Core Training, a three month training program, preparing staff to perform the essential elements of their jobs. The Core Training curriculum includes a dedicated module on diversity and inclusiveness.

The ministry has established relationships in each of the communities where treaties with First Nations have been signed (Tsawwassen, Maa-nulth and Nisga'a) and Aboriginal organizations (e.g. Friendship Centres, Aboriginal Homeless Outreach, staff and First Nations staff meet to share information on social assistance services.

SOCIAL INNOVATION

As part of government's ongoing work to build the province's capacity for social innovation, the ministry works with its business and non-profit partners to grow and strengthen B.C.'s social enterprise sector. Social enterprises — business that direct their profits toward a social purpose — are important contributors to the social and cultural life of the province. For example, the Osoyoos Indian Branch Development Corporation operates nine businesses, including the Nk'Mip Desert Cultural Centre, which highlights the Okanagan people and the area's desert landscape.

WORKFORCE DIVERSITY

The ministry is committed to supporting a diverse workforce. Based on information from the 2013 Work Environment Survey administered by the BC Public Service Agency, the ministry currently has a higher percentage of workers self-identifying as either Aboriginal (3.4%) or a visible minority (17.5%) than the BC Public Sector as a whole (BC Public Service: 3.1% Aboriginal and 13.1% Visible Minority). This is evidence of the ministry's inclusive hiring practices and embracing culture as a value.

Ministry of Technology, Innovation and Citizens' Services

MANDATE

VISION

To be recognized for excellence and innovation in technology, services and program delivery for British Columbians.

MISSION

To grow B.C.'s technology sector, champion innovation, and enable delivery of cost-effective, accessible and responsive services to citizens and the public sector.

We play a unique 'threefold' role within government, as a service delivery agent, providing services directly to citizens; an enabling agent, providing services and infrastructure to our client ministries and the broader public sector; and a change agent, leading the development and implementation of corporate strategies. Our goals are to create conditions for B.C. businesses to be successful; make it easier for citizens and business to interact with government; and deliver efficient and effective services to the Public Sector.

I live multiculturalism by...

Living in my city and embracing everything it has to offer.

EXECUTIVE COMMITMENT TO MULTICULTURALISM

We aim to provide citizens and clients of our ministry better access to services they need, more choice in how they get those services, the highest quality service experience possible, and the ability to participate in and have an impact on the design or delivery of those services. Our corporate operating principles of collaboration reflect how—we engage clients, citizens and employees in the design and delivery of our services and programs to better accommodate user needs — and responsiveness — and how we are responsive to the needs of clients and citizens. We recognize that our clients will have different preferences as to how they access our services so our infrastructure enables in-person, phone and online resources.

MTICS has an Inclusive and Respectful Workplace Group that is co-led by two employees. The group is comprised of approximately 30 representatives across each division, several geographic locations and every level of the ministry. It is a purely grass-roots movement to initiate and promote inclusive and respectful activities, and to promote the ministry's culture with the values of inclusiveness and respect in mind. This group offered training and an ongoing discussion around demonstrating respect for individual rights and differences.

EMBRACING MULTICULTURALISM IN THE WORKPLACE

Various people across the ministry speak Mandarin Chinese, Dutch, French, Russian, Malay, Hindi, Punjabi, and Cantonese, various First Nations dialects, and one of our staff understands 'Jiangxi' from the Jiangxi Province (one of approximately 56 spoken dialects in China!) Additionally, our Information Access Operations unit — whose frontline staff manage citizen information requests — maintains an inventory of languages spoken by staff to assist FOI applicants who may need service in another language.

MTICS sent two employee representatives to the Roundtable on Diversity and Inclusion hosted by Provincial Multicultural Advisory Council (MAC) in partnership with the Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria.

The discussion and exercises from that event contributed to the development of strategies on how to make government services more accessible to diverse populations. Our Queen's Printer branch prints materials in numerous languages, based on the request of their clients. (e.g. French, English, Punjabi, Braille, Simplified Chinese, Traditional Chinese and Spanish).

Our Office of the Chief Information Officer held a multi-cultural themed celebration on January 29th entitled "Gung Haggis Fat Choy". They served Chinese pastries and tea to celebrate Chinese New Year and blended in Robbie Burns Day and celebrating the Scottish culture by serving Haggis and other treats. They decorated the workplace appropriately to match both themes. This was a well-received event and the group plans to continue and improve on it next year.

The Real Property Division (RPD) ensures employees are involved in multiculturalism and effective stakeholder relations. During 2013-14 a number of activities supported this commitment:

- » Hosted an Aboriginal intern through the Aboriginal Youth Internship Program (AYIP).
- » Multiple communications and presentations were made at the branch and division level about Aboriginal-related topics.
- » Contributed to increased awareness and high level documentation of Aboriginal relations activities across the branch and division.
- » Presented to Division and Ministry executives on the AYIP program and encouraged other Divisions to consider participation.
- » Received Deputy Minister approval to participate in the Canadian Council of Aboriginal Business (CCAB) Progressive Aboriginal Relations (PAR) management framework.
- » Hosted a cross-ministry Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Event, sharing information on the diversity that exists amongst Canada's Aboriginal peoples.

HIGHLIGHTS OF INITIATIVES

One of MTICS' ongoing key performance measures is the percentage of First Nations with access to broadband facilities. The ministry collaborates with First Nations organizations and the federal government on a shared goal of connectivity for 203 First Nations in support of the Transformative Change Accord. Broadband connectivity in rural and remote areas will provide access to health care information, online educational opportunities, online government services, as well as the preservation of cultures and languages that, together, will help bridge the socio-economic gap.

Government also has a responsibility to ensure all British Columbians are aware of the various services, programs and supports that serve the public – and broader discussion and questions about these matters often involve Government Communications and Public Engagement (GCPE) and media. To that end, the planning of all proactive communications opportunities and issues management-related activities are always reflective of the needs of provincial, regional and those media outlets whose primary focus is a specific ethnic population — including, where appropriate, providing translation of communications materials. GCPE also has dedicated staff that directly engages with those same media outlets to ensure we are meeting each of their respective needs.

The interns from this year's Aboriginal Youth Internship Program (AYIP) teamed together to host their second Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Event. Led by MTICS' intern, Shannon Campbell, the event was held at 4000 Seymour in Victoria on May 9, 2013. The first event was hosted by the ministry of Health's AYIP intern Annalynn Prince. Our MTICS event brought together 15 interns, where they shared information about their diverse Aboriginal backgrounds, spreading awareness of the diversity that exists among Canada's Aboriginal population. It also provided an opportunity for the interns themselves to learn more about their own cultures, since many have been detached from their culture due to residential schools and assimilation efforts.

There was a great turn out, with attendees from MTICS, Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation, and the BC Arts Council. Ministry of Environment intern Jonathan Hanuse started things off with a prayer song, and numerous stations provided information on the following nations/ language groups: Kwakwaka'wakw, Tsartlip, Tsimshian, Stó:lō, Klahoose, Secwepemc, Syilx, Dakelh, Anishinaabe, Akaitcho and Métis.

Traditional and contemporary First Nations food was also available for sampling, including moose stew, deer soup, bannock (both fried and baked), moq'wem tea and smoked salmon.

"I enjoyed listening to the stories of a potlatch and naming ceremonies. One of the presenters was doing genealogy research so she could have her own naming ceremony performed. And, let's be honest, I thoroughly enjoyed the bannock!" commented Beth Howard.

Shannon closed the event with the Musqueam Paddle Song to wish everyone well on their journey and to thank them for attending the event.

All of the interns were pleased with how well the event went and with the level of interest among attendees, who wanted to learn more about the diversity of our Aboriginal cultures.

"I was so pleased by how many people were willing to admit they knew little about the Métis and they genuinely wanted to know more about us. Acknowledging what we don't know about each other and emphasizing the true nature of our distinct societies is how we will begin to break down barriers and engrained stereotypes. It was so encouraging to see people walk away from our table with a better understanding of the Métis Nation," commented Renae Real, FLNRO intern.