

## MANAGEMENT BOARD

### DIVERSITY: GOALS FOR REPRESENTATION

#### Note by the Director General of Resources

#### Purpose

This note considers the case for setting goals for improving the representation of under-represented groups in the House Service.

#### Action

2. If the Board is content with the proposal to develop aspirational goals for increasing representation of key groups, particularly at senior levels, no further action is needed at present: the work will then be incorporated into the equality Scheme which will be submitted to the Board shortly.

#### Background

3. At our July meeting, we agreed that the Board should consider in September information about targets for representation in other organisations, and the possible scope and nature of any goals or targets we might set ourselves.

#### Representation in the House Service

4. Some key current indicators in the House Service are:

<i>Gender</i>	Overall:	54.6% male	45.4% female
	SCS:	72.7% male	27.3% female
	Band A:	55.8% male	44.2% female
	Band E:	29.7% male	70.3% female
<i>Ethnicity</i>	Overall:	82.1% white	17.9% minority
	SCS:	100% white	0% minority
	Band A	96.5% white	4.5% minority
	Band E	43.75% white	56.25% minority

More detailed historical statistics are attached.

5. The issues on disability are slightly different. We have disability information for only 16 per cent of staff, so the figure of 26 staff (1.3 per cent) with a disability may well be under-reported. There are also different issues in relation to age, religion and sexual orientation, which are not addressed here.

## Representation outside the House Service

6. Nationally, 46 per cent of the economically active population are female, and 9.1 per cent are from ethnic minorities. In Westminster Borough, there are over 30 per cent of ethnic minority people in the economically-active population. The Civil Service statistics are:

<i>Gender</i>	Overall:	47.1% male	52.1% female
	SCS:	67.9% male	32.1% female
<i>Ethnicity</i>	Overall:	91.7% white	8.3% minority
	SCS:	95.8% white	4.2% minority

A local authority example (Westminster City Council) is:

<i>Gender</i>	Senior staff:	71% male	29% female
<i>Ethnicity</i>	Senior staff:	93.1% white	6.9% minority

## The business case for equality goals

7. Over the years, work has been done on the effectiveness of workforces which has shown that more diverse workforces are more effective. Organisations often therefore set themselves goals to achieve greater representation of under-represented groups in order to secure a more balanced workforce. The Civil Service has, for example, set the following goals:

- The Civil Service aims to reach, within five years (and with a stretch objective of three years):
  - 34% of staff in top management posts to be women (26.6% at October 2007).
  - 39% of the Senior Civil Service to be women (32.1% at October 2007).
  - 5% of the Senior Civil Service to be people from minority ethnic backgrounds (3.4% at October 2007).
  - 5% of the Senior Civil Service to be disabled people (3% at October 2007).

8. In the House, the data in paragraph 4 suggests that we have an imbalance, with under-representation particularly at senior levels. We are also out of kilter with the national and local workforces and with the Civil Service. There may be good reasons for this, such as our generally lower turnover, and the fact that we have two significant semi-industrial groups in

our workforce. Even so, the lack of any ethnic minority staff at senior levels is difficult to defend.

### Correcting the imbalance

9. The case for seeking to correct the imbalance is:
  - the business benefits of a more diverse workforce;
  - the appropriateness of a representative institution such as Parliament having a workforce that better represents the population at large;
  - managing the risk of criticism – we are vulnerable to challenge for being out of line with comparable employers, and our staff profile may be adduced as evidence of indirect discrimination.
10. What actions could or should we take? The attached statistics show an improving picture on both gender and ethnicity, and the positive trend is likely to continue. But the shift is relatively slow. On ethnicity in particular the imbalance by band may not ever correct itself without intervention.
11. Positive discrimination (favouring someone from a minority group regardless of merit) is unlawful and can be counter-productive. But there are positive steps which can be taken lawfully, given the will to improve the picture. These include:
  - outreach work to encourage under-represented groups to apply to work here, particularly for higher-level jobs, and support to help them compete successfully;
  - work to remove barriers to internal career progress and/or education to help staff compete more effectively
12. A key factor will be the Board's will to make a difference, and this can be signalled by adopting and publicising tangible goals for increased levels of representation and by investing in outreach and support activities needed to back up that commitment. I am not personally in favour of rigid targets.
13. As for the quantum of possible goals, further work is needed to model where the current trends will take us anyway, and what further improvement we could achieve with concerted action. The Civil Service goals give a useful steer, and a natural comparator.

**Conclusion**

14. I propose that in the context of the forthcoming Equality Scheme we evaluate what would be needed to achieve goals of the order set by the Civil Service. I should be grateful for the Board's support for this approach.

**A J Walker**  
**Director General of Resources**

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## ANNEX A

**HOUSE OF COMMONS**  
**Staff by ethnicity and gender at 31 March each year**

Year	Total number of staff	White	Asian	Black	Other (mixed race and Chinese)	Male	% male	Female	% female
1997	1405	90%	3%	6%	1%	791	56.30	614	43.70
1998	1392	90.13%	2.38%	6.58%	0.91%	755	54.24	637	45.76
1999	1394	90%	3%	7%	0%	744	53.37	650	46.63
2000	1421	86%	4%	9%	1%	760	53.48	661	46.52
2001	1485	86.50%	3.73%	8.74%	1.03%	836	56.30	649	43.70
2002	1443	87.74%	3.25%	7.71%	1.30%	762	52.81	681	47.19
2003	1497	85.58%	3.70%	9.54%	1.18%	797	53.24	700	46.76
2004	1520	81.09%	5.90%	10.31%	2.69%	811	53.36	709	46.64
2005	1571	81.66%	6.11%	10.01%	2.21%	861	54.81	710	45.19
2006	1627	81%	6%	10%	3%	866	53.23	761	46.77
2007	1916	81.66%	6.11%	10.01%	2.21%	1040	54.17	876	45.63
2008	1959	78%	5.4%	9.6%	2.9%	1066	54.4	893	45.6

(Ethnicity figures based on known returns)

**SCS staff by ethnicity and gender at 31 March each year**

Year	Total	Male	Female	Non-white
2005	79	58	21	1 (Asian)
2006	81	58	23	1 (Asian)
2007	85	61	24	0
2008	88	64	24	0

## ANNEX B

**Diversity statistics - sample of public sector organisations**

From various websites accessed 24.9.08

Organisation	% women in senior management/SCS	% minority ethnic staff in senior management/SCS	% disabled
National Audit Office (director level and above)	30%	4%	N/A*
Department for International Development (SCS)	36.8%	11.7%	2.1%
Office of Fair Trading (SCS)	26.2%	4.8%	0%
Westminster City Council (senior management profile)	29%	6.8%	6%

*\*The figure for disabled staff in senior management does not appear to be in the NAO report, although they do provide a figure of 6.2% disabled staff in the whole of the Office.*