

Government of  
Northwest Territories

**Government of the Northwest Territories Response to Committee Report 11-20(1):  
Report on the Review of the 2023-2024 Annual Report of the Northwest Territories  
Equal Pay Commissioner**

**Background**

This report is drafted in response to Standing Committee on Government Operations (Committee) Report 11-20(1): *Report on the Review of the 2023-2024 Annual Report of the Northwest Territories Equal Pay Commissioner* addressing recommendations related to advancing pay equity in the Northwest Territories.

**Recommendation 1**

*Committee recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT), in collaboration with the Pay Equity Commissioner, review the pay equity provisions of the Public Service Act and bring forward amendments to address how intersectionality impacts pay equity.*

*GNWT Response*

The pay equity provisions of the *Public Service Act* (PSA) were designed to ensure equal pay for work of equal value by addressing gender-based pay disparities. It's noted that provisions in the PSA do not fully address intersectionality which considers the overlapping and intersecting identities of individuals such as race, disability, and age; however, these provisions are addressed within the *Human Rights Act of the NWT*. The Department of Finance is currently working through legislative amendments regarding the PSA, and will consider if there are gaps in the legislation regarding pay equity, and whether recommendations can be made to address them.

Additionally, the Department of Finance will work with the Equal Pay Commissioner in identifying any legislative gaps in the *Public Service Act*.

**Recommendation 2**

Committee recommends that the GNWT, in collaboration with the Pay Equity Commissioner, review the pay equity provisions of the *Public Service Act* and bring forward amendments to require regular maintenance reviews or proactive pay equity plans.

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*GNWT Response*

The current pay equity provisions under the PSA rely on a complaint-driven model which has not received any substantiated complaints since the Equal Pay Commissioner was appointed in 2005. The current Equal Pay Commissioner has proactively and quite recently created a public website to educate both the public and public service employees with respect to the intention and scope of the Equal Pay legislation, the role of the Commissioner, and the complaints processes.

The current GNWT system of assessing the value of work is the international Hay Method of job evaluation, a worldwide system currently owned by Korn Ferry Ltd. This system is the system currently agreed with the UNW, as per the UNW Collective Agreement, and has been in place for over 20 years. The Hay Method is also used by the federal public service, as well as other jurisdictions across Canada, including but not limited to the Government of Alberta, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, as well as the Government of Nunavut. The Hay Method is considered to be a pay equity compliant and gender-neutral evaluation system that assesses a job based on skill, effort, responsibility and working conditions.

GNWT jobs are continually under review, whether individually due to changes to the job; and/or reviews of levels, or groups of jobs (i.e., departmental restructuring and/or amalgamations); and/or removal of systemic barriers to hire, such as in compliance with the GNWT Indigenous Recruitment and Retention Framework. Reviews also occur as the result of appeal by incumbents, according to applicable employment agreements, such as the UNW Collective Agreement and Excluded Employee Handbook, which can subsequently lead to reviews of job streams (i.e., similar jobs). The Job Evaluation and Organizational Design unit within the Department of Finance holds a philosophy of continuous improvement in its quality assurance processes, to maintain the accuracy and integrity of its systems.