

Strategic Policy Research Directorate

What Works: Effective Policies and Programs for Aboriginal Peoples of Canada

Final Report

By:

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## **Disclosure Statement**

The views expressed in papers published by the Strategic Policy Research Directorate are the authors' and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of Human Resources and Social Development Canada or of the federal government. The goal of these papers is to encourage broad participation in discussion and debate of important public policy issues.

## **Abstract**

In an increasingly competitive race for talent, organizations are recognizing the importance in recruiting, retaining and developing individuals with valued skills and abilities. One emerging group of individuals who could potentially aid in replenishing human capital within Canadian workplaces are Aboriginal people. However, in spite of demographic strengths, major challenges currently exist for Aboriginal people such as low labour force representation and low educational attainment. Turtle Island Consulting Services Inc. (TICS Inc.) was retained to identify effective human resource management strategies, practices and programs (specifically, within the areas of recruitment and career development) that impact and influence Aboriginal people within the workforce. TICS Inc. used two key research methods to collect information on Aboriginal employment—a literature review and consultations with 49 participants representing four major cohorts. Effective practices (as defined by the literature and consultations) in Aboriginal employment strategic planning, recruitment and career development were described and supplemented by organizational/jurisdictional examples. Gaps within the existing Aboriginal employment literature were noted and proposed recommendations were brought forth. This report was intended to provide public policy decision-makers and human resource management professionals with further insights in increasing awareness and promoting policy/program coordination in improving Aboriginal peoples' access to the labour market.

## **Key Words**

Aboriginal employment, Aboriginal human resource management practices, Aboriginal strategic planning

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## Glossary of Special Terms

The following is a list of key terminology that will be referenced throughout this research report:

**Aboriginal Human Resource Development Agreements (AHRDAs).** As part of the national Aboriginal Human Resources Strategy, these five-year signed agreements allow Aboriginal organizations or groups to implement and control their own human resource programs and services in their own communities. Currently, there are 81 AHRDA holders within Canada (Service Canada, 2006);

**Aboriginal People of Australia (aka. Aborigines) and Torres Strait Islanders.** This cohort represents the indigenous people of Australia (Australian Public Service Commission, 2005);

**Aboriginal People of Canada (aka. Aboriginals, Aboriginal people).** This is an inclusive term that refers to all Aboriginal people of Canada. This includes First Nations communities (Status and Non-Status Indians), Métis people and Inuit;

**Aboriginal Workforce Participation Initiative (AWPI).** This federal initiative facilitates the process of equitable participation of Aboriginal people in the Canadian workforce through enhancing awareness, capacity and partnerships between Aboriginal people and all sectors of the Canadian economy (Government of Canada—Indian Affairs and Northern Development Canada, 1998);

**Adult Basic Education (ABE).** Instruction in basic skills (i.e., reading, writing, arithmetic) and other skills required to function in society. ABE provides adults with the opportunity to upgrade their K-12 education levels;

**Beneficiary (pl. Beneficiaries).** This term specifically applies to individuals who are enrolled under the *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement* (Berger, 2006; Government of Nunavut—Department of Human Resources, 2005a; Government of Nunavut—Department of Human Resources, 2005b);

**Blueprint for the Future (BFF).** This National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation project consists of a series of one-day career fairs for Aboriginal youth (aged 13-18). BFF is intended to raise awareness of education/training requirements and employment opportunities within Canada (National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation, 2006);

**Competencies.** In general, competencies are a holistic approach to managing people resources. Competencies are typically divided into two areas—technical competencies (skills and knowledge) and behavioural competencies (attitudes and behaviours). Research has shown that focusing on both technical and behavioural competencies will produce the greatest long term return on such human resource outcomes as employee retention and productivity (Hay Group, 2006);

**Designated Groups.** Under the *Employment Equity Act*, there are provisions to protect the rights of four designated groups. The four designated groups are women, Aboriginal people, people with disabilities, and visible minorities (Government of Canada, 1995);

**Glass Ceiling Effect.** This refers to the notion of immobility to move up the corporate ranks because an individual is from an underrepresented group within the workplace (e.g., Aboriginal, female, visible minority or a person with a disability) (Thomas & Gabarro, 1999);

**Human Capital.** The investment undertaken by employees in the form of their knowledge, skills, capabilities, and experience within a given profession and/or organization (Chen, Zhu, & Xie, 2004; Kannan & Aulbur, 2004; Laing & Weir, 1999; Laursen, Mahnke, & Vejrurp-Hansen, 2005; Zsidisin, Odgen, Hendrick, & Clark, 2003);

**Human Resources & Social Development Canada (HRSDC).** This federal department is responsible for providing all Canadians with the tools they need to thrive and prosper in the workplace and community. The department supports human capital development, labour market development and is dedicated to establishing a culture of lifelong learning for Canadians (Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, 2006);

**Maori.** This term represents the indigenous people of New Zealand (Ministry of Maori Affairs, 2004);

**Micro-inequities.** Tiny, damaging behaviours and/or actions (i.e., negative comments and subtle put-downs) that impact a particular group of individuals within a given environment (e.g., workplace). Typically, micro-inequities are often difficult to prove through a grievance process or in court (Rowe, 1990);

**Native Americans (aka. American Indians) and Alaskan Natives.** This cohort refers to the indigenous people of the United States of America (Ogunwole, 2006; Toossi, 2002);

**Outcome Measures.** The intended result of carrying out a program or activity (Government of British Columbia, 2001);

**Output Measures.** The level of internal activities of a program (i.e., the services delivered) that will be provided over a period of time (Government of British Columbia, 2001);

**Performance Measures.** Indicators or metrics used to gauge program performance (Government of British Columbia, 2001);

**Professional, Technical and Scientific Occupations.** Positions that require professional level, technical or scientific skills (e.g., lawyer, accountant, engineer, computer analyst);

**Progressive Aboriginal Relations (PAR) Program.** PAR establishes a framework in which to assess organizations' performance in building employment relationships with Aboriginal people in Canada. This particular program identifies Canadian employers that are committed to: increasing Aboriginal employment; assisting business development; building individual capacity; and enhancing community relations (Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business – CCAB 2003a; CCAB, 2003b).

**Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM).** This involves gaining competitive advantage through one of a company's most important assets—its people (Barney, 1991; Nutt & Backoff, 1993);

**Succession Planning.** An organizational planning process that ensures continuity of leadership and core staff skills by identifying, developing and replacing key people (in mission-critical positions) over time (McElwain, 1991);

**Target.** A measurable characteristic that outlines how well a program must accomplish a given performance measure (Government of British Columbia, 2001);

**Trades (Occupations).** Positions that require trade-specific skills (e.g., mechanic, electrician, construction worker).

## Executive Summary

Within the next 5-10 years, as the baby boomer generation begins to retire and fewer skilled workers are available to replace them, organizations within the public and private sectors will be facing the realities of labour and skill shortages (Canadian Labour and Business Council, 2001; Cowan, Farquhar, & MacBridge-King, 2002; Saunders & Maxwell, 2003). The realities of emerging labour and skill shortages coupled with changes in the demographic composition of the labour force are creating an urgent need for many employers to begin a process of thinking strategically about building tomorrow's workforce. One emerging group of individuals who could potentially aid in replenishing human capital within Canadian workplaces are Aboriginal people. Aboriginal people have the potential to offer unique skills and knowledge to the labour market such as tapping into new markets and networks, and fostering continued cross-cultural awareness.

From a demographic perspective, according to the 2001 Census, 976,305 out of 29,639,030 Canadians identified themselves as Aboriginal (Statistics Canada, 2004a). This 2001 figure represents a 22.2% increase from 1996 (Statistics Canada, 2004e). The 2001 Census data reflects that the median age for individuals who identified themselves as Aboriginal was 24.7 years of age, while the median age for the total population of Canada was 37.3 years of age (Statistics Canada, 2004c). Similar to Canada, Native American and Alaskan Native populations in the United States, Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders in Australia and the Maori people of New Zealand are growing faster than their respective national averages. However, in spite of these demographic strengths, major challenges currently exist for Aboriginal people such as: unemployment and low labour force representation; socio-economic hardships; low educational attainment; micro-inequities; geographic restrictions for Aboriginal employment service delivery; and lack of adequate Aboriginal leadership.

Human Resources and Social Development Canada (HRSDC) supports Aboriginal employment programs, policies and strategies which engage Aboriginal communities in human capital development and labour market integration within Canadian workplaces. Turtle Island Consulting Services Inc. (TICS Inc.) was retained to identify effective human resource management strategies, practices, programs and policies (specifically in the areas of recruitment and career development) that impact and influence Aboriginal people within the workforce. Therefore, key objectives for this study were to:

- Identify recruitment and career development policies, programs and practices that currently exist to improve labour market access for Aboriginal people;
- Identify gaps/areas for improvement (general and gender-based) as it pertains to recruiting and developing Aboriginal people within the Canadian workforce; and
- Determine current and future needs of Aboriginal communities in the hiring and developing of Aboriginal people within the Canadian workforce.

This report was intended to provide HRSDC decision-makers and human resource management professionals with further insights in increasing awareness and promoting policy/program coordination in order to improve Aboriginal peoples' access to the labour market.

TICS Inc. used two key research methods to collect information. They included a literature review on effective recruitment and career development practices for Aboriginal people and consultations with 49 participants representing four major cohorts. By conducting a literature review and engaging in consultations with representatives from four major cohorts, the principal researcher was able to integrate both theoretical and practical perspectives on the topic of Aboriginal employment.

### *Aboriginal Employment Strategic Planning*

An Aboriginal employment strategic plan provides a framework for organizations and jurisdictions to design and implement specific initiatives that center around recruiting, training and developing Aboriginal people to work in permanent positions. In addition, an Aboriginal employment strategic plan works towards improving the economic and social conditions of Aboriginal people within their communities. This type of strategic plan is intended to assist Aboriginal people in gaining employment that (a) aligns and supports labour market needs, and (b) has not been traditionally accessible to Aboriginal people. At present, it appears that the design and implementation of Aboriginal employment strategies varies across organizations and jurisdictions. For example, organizations and jurisdictions such as the City of Edmonton, BC Hydro, and Assiniboine Community College are currently in the early stages of developing their respective Aboriginal employment strategies, while organizations and jurisdictions such as the City of Winnipeg, Government of New Zealand, Government of Australia, Syncrude and La Trobe University (Australia) have designed and commenced the implementation of their respective Aboriginal employment strategies.

Effective components and principles of Aboriginal employment strategic planning (brought forth in the literature and by respondents within the consultation portion of the research study) included:

**Evidence-based planning.** Prior to designing a strategic plan, conducting research provides organizations and jurisdictions with an opportunity to examine external environmental pressures and organizational capabilities that will guide organizational decision-making throughout the strategic planning process (Hamel & Prahalad, 1996; Porter, 1998);

**Emphasis on Fit.** When designing a strategy, some organizations place an emphasis on fit—recognition that their organization or jurisdiction is comprised of different people, structures, cultures and history. These factors will ultimately influence an organization's or jurisdiction's approach to its policy and program planning (Australian Centre for

International Business, 2001; Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, 2005; Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2005);

**Financial and Human Resources.** Dedicated financial and human resources such as establishing stand alone departments and/or creating working groups provides organizations with a sustained capacity in which to share ideas and collectively work towards designing and implementing a strategic plan;

**Partnerships.** Partnerships between government bodies, organizations and agencies encourage relationship building and sharing of financial and human resources in the creation of initiatives which support an Aboriginal employment strategic plan (Ferguson & Andrews, 2002);

**Consultations.** By having open and inclusive consultations throughout the strategic planning process, this allows organizations to genuinely let people know the status of the Aboriginal employment strategic plan as well as provide opportunities for individuals to put their views forward and have them considered. This is necessary to build trust and lay the foundation for a solid relationship (Ferguson & Andrews, 2002);

**Executive Champions.** An effective Aboriginal employment strategic plan requires the support and endorsement of the organization's or jurisdiction's senior management/ executive team. By establishing executive champions, this demonstrates leadership and recognition that Aboriginal participation and inclusion within today's workplace and broader labour market are valued and are important components of providing quality services and programs to the community at large (Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, 2005; Bank of Montreal, 2004);

**Clearly Defined Roles and Responsibilities.** Within the Aboriginal employment strategic planning process, it is important to determine who is responsible for various components/aspects of the planning process and related activities;

**Performance Measurement and Evaluation.** The monitoring and evaluation of an organization's Aboriginal employment strategic plan assists in the identification of strengths and limitations. By examining the strengths and limitations of one's Aboriginal employment strategic plan, organizations can update activities and initiatives that contribute to achieving the plan's overall goals; and

**Communications and Marketing.** Once the Aboriginal employment strategic plan has been finalized and endorsed, it is equally as important to effectively communicate the various components of the plan to key parties (i.e., employees, Aboriginal community members).

Organizations and jurisdictions who applied some or all of these above mentioned effective Aboriginal-specific strategic planning components and principles represented the Canadian public sector (e.g., City of Winnipeg, Government of Canada, Government of Nunavut, Government of Saskatchewan, Winnipeg Health Authority), Canadian

private industry (e.g., Syncrude) and international jurisdictions (e.g., Australian Public Service, La Trobe University—Australia).

### *Aboriginal Recruitment*

Effective Aboriginal recruitment practices that are designed and implemented within an organization strive to (a) attract Aboriginal candidates and (b) outline how employers can benefit from recruiting and retaining qualified Aboriginal employees within a given industry. Through the literature review and consultations with participants in four major cohorts, effective Aboriginal-specific recruitment practices and programs included:

**Partnerships—Relationship Building.** This involves employers showcasing their organizations to Aboriginal job seekers by participating in career fairs and attending workshops at Aboriginal employment/training agencies. Employers can maximize their recruitment efforts by building long-term proactive relationships with key groups such as Aboriginal communities, high schools, post-secondary institutions, employment agencies and job network agencies for the purpose of recruiting qualified Aboriginal candidates. Relationship building activities include, but are not limited to, identifying post-secondary institutions from which to recruit Aboriginal undergraduate, graduate students and recent alumni for various industry occupations;

**Strategic Posting of Job Opportunities.** Industry associations and Aboriginal organizations can serve as recruiters by promoting the value of Aboriginal people's skills and abilities within today's workforce;

**Legislative Adherence.** In adherence to federal and provincial/territorial legislation relating to employment equity and representative workforce provisions, some employers are utilizing preferential hiring and designating certain organizational positions for qualified Aboriginal people. Some organizations and jurisdictions are utilizing legislation to define, communicate and measure their commitment to strengthening and enforcing various equity and representative workforce-related practices and processes.

Organizations and jurisdictions who applied some or all of these above mentioned effective Aboriginal-specific recruitment practices and processes represented the Canadian public sector (e.g., Government of Nunavut, Royal Canadian Mounted Police), Canadian private sector (e.g., Royal Bank of Canada, SaskTel), partnerships/alliances (e.g., Aboriginal Human Resource Development Council of Canada); and international jurisdictions (e.g., Government of New Zealand, Government of the United States of America).

### *Aboriginal Career Development*

Despite the shift towards employee driven career planning, some employers are realizing the need to develop innovative career development programs to attract and retain employees within their given organizations. Through the literature review and

consultations with participants in four major cohorts, effective Aboriginal-specific career development practices and programs included:

**Role Models For Aboriginal Job Seekers.** This involves the publication of articles on various Aboriginal association websites, job sites, and newsletters. Articles would focus on topics such as the value of Aboriginal people within the workforce, career opportunities for Aboriginal people, personal profiles of Aboriginal employees working in various sectors and industries, and job coaching techniques which provide insights on key competencies needed in various professions. In addition, Aboriginal speakers' bureaus facilitate discussion between Aboriginal employees and Aboriginal youth;

**Work Experience Programs.** The development of Aboriginal work experience programs (e.g., internships and summer employment programs) provide Aboriginal youth, undergraduate and graduate students with opportunities to apply their skills as well as gain work experience. In addition, work experience programs expose Aboriginal people to the diversity of career avenues within a given organization;

**Management Development.** According to the 2001 Census, Aboriginal people comprised low workforce percentages in such occupations as management/administration (Statistics Canada, 2004i). Organizations such as Syncrude and Government of Nunavut have designed and implemented Aboriginal employment programs to assist Aboriginal people in developing skills within such knowledge-based fields as management, finance and science;

**Clear Career Paths and Associated Resources.** Holistic culturally-sensitive career development tools and resources such as Aboriginal Human Resource Development Council of Canada's *Guiding Circles* encourage and motivate on-going development and advancement of Aboriginal employees within the workplace;

**Aboriginal Economic Development.** Aboriginal economic development initiatives (i.e., entrepreneurship) provide Aboriginal people with key technical skills and guidance to start up or enhance their business ventures;

**Recognition of Aboriginal Educational Achievement.** In addition to guiding and developing Aboriginal people within the current workforce, it is equally important to promote the value of education to the next generation of workers (i.e., Aboriginal youth). Some employers such as Xerox Canada, SaskTel, Royal Bank of Canada, Cameco Corporation, Syncrude, BC Hydro and Nattisug Corporation provide education supports to Aboriginal students by way of scholarships and grants;

**Aboriginal Employee Networks.** Aboriginal employee networks are typically based on a collaborative and united effort by various parties to (a) identify employment opportunities for Aboriginal job seekers within a particular jurisdiction, (b) develop support systems for Aboriginal employees to meet and share experiences, and/or (c) connect Aboriginal employees and non-Aboriginal employers in order to discuss methods

and strategies for improving recruitment, training, development and promotion/ advancement opportunities.

Organizations and jurisdictions who applied some or all of these above mentioned effective Aboriginal-specific career development practices and processes represented the Canadian public sector (e.g., City of Winnipeg, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, Government of Nunavut, Government of Saskatchewan), Canadian private sector (e.g., Cameco Corporation, Ledcor Group, Nasittuq Corporation, Royal Bank of Canada, Syncrude, Xerox Canada), other partnerships/alliances or crown corporations (e.g., Aboriginal Human Resource Development Council of Canada, BC Hydro, Saskatchewan Job Futures), and international jurisdictions (e.g., National Congress of American Indians, National Center for American Indian Enterprise Development, American Indian Chamber of Commerce of New Mexico, Government of New Zealand).

#### *Other Human Resource Management Factors*

**Aboriginal Awareness Training.** Aboriginal awareness plays a major role in developing better understanding between Aboriginal communities and non-Aboriginal employers. It has the potential to build the foundation for workplace cohesion (Ferguson & Anderson, 2002). Aboriginal awareness training within organizations such as Saskatchewan Association of Health Organizations, Ledcor Group, BC Hydro and the City of Winnipeg assists these employers by (a) reducing and eliminating negative stereotyping of potential Aboriginal employees, (b) increasing knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal culture, and (c) developing culturally-sensitive skills to enhance service and program delivery to Aboriginal clientele.

**Labour Relations—Collective Bargaining.** Within unionized work settings such as the Saskatchewan Association of Health Organizations, a collective agreement serves as a key document for developing contract language that promotes a representative workforce.

#### *Gaps*

Through the literature review and consultation phases of this research study, there appeared to be relatively little information on performance measurement/evaluation as it relates to the topic of Aboriginal employment. Researchers such as Hanselmann (2003), Gaiko, Wikle and Kavanaugh (1999), James, Wolf, Lovato and Byers (1995), and Mendelson (2004) noted that only a few studies have measured long-term outcomes of employment programs and their impact on Aboriginal people. Another significant gap in the existing Aboriginal employment literature pertains to Aboriginal women within the workforce. Organizations such as the Government of New Zealand and Native Women's Association of Canada acknowledged the lack of information and research on Aboriginal, Native American, Alaskan Native, Aboriginal Australian and Maori women. Overall, Andrew and Rodgers (1997), Irving (1990), and Stout and Kipling (1998) noted that very few studies have addressed the issue of employment or employability among Aboriginal people (especially as it pertains to Aboriginal women). This lack of adequate research has

created a barrier for organizations and jurisdictions who are developing effective employment strategies, programs and practices for this particular population.

### ***Recommendations***

Based on the literature review and consultation sessions, the following proposed recommendations were brought forth to improve Aboriginal people's access to the labour market:

**Need for future research.** It would be advantageous for researchers within the areas of public policy and administration, human resource management and organizational behaviour to conduct further research on the topic of Aboriginal employment in order to contribute to the broader literature and aid in future policy discussions and action;

**Enhanced data collection on Aboriginal issues.** James et al. (1995) brought forth the need for enhanced data collection on Native American issues such as collecting extensive (national-wide) information on Native American and Alaskan Native education and employment. In addition, James et al. (1995) suggested the creation of national databases that house research studies, demographic data<sup>1</sup> and related information on Aboriginal employment. This U.S. concept could be applied to Canada so as to aid researchers in analyzing and examining labour and economic factors/outcomes that impact and influence Aboriginal people;

**Creation of a national interdisciplinary consortium on Aboriginal employment.** The purpose of this national interdisciplinary consortium would be to provide a holistic approach towards addressing various issues related to Aboriginal employment. The Canada-wide consortium could be comprised of employers, labour, researchers, government (municipal, provincial, and federal public service representatives), educators, and human resource management professionals;

**Shared responsibility.** Berger (2006) and Hanselmann (2003) suggested the use of a Memoranda of Agreement or multipartite agreement to formalize the responsibilities of all parties (Aboriginal organizations, municipal, provincial and federal levels of government) involved in the funding, resource sharing, coordination and delivery of services related to Aboriginal employment;

**Creation of Aboriginal Liaison Officer positions.** There is a need for building relations and partnerships between non-Aboriginal organizations and Aboriginal communities. Some respondents from the Canadian Aboriginal association and Aboriginal labour-related department cohorts suggested the creation of Aboriginal Liaison Officer positions that would be housed within Aboriginal communities. Aboriginal Liaison Officers would work towards coordinating and building partnerships between government, business and

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<sup>1</sup> This would include general demographic information about Aboriginal people as well as data on sub-populations such as Aboriginal women, Aboriginal people with disabilities, and Aboriginal people in rural/remote communities.

Aboriginal communities, specifically as it applies to improving employment and economic development opportunities for Aboriginal people;

**Increase the number of “Aboriginal Career Development Advisor” positions (community-based).** In addition to Aboriginal Liaison Officer positions, some respondents from Canadian Aboriginal association and federal Aboriginal employment program cohorts suggested that “Aboriginal Career Development Advisor” positions be increased in Aboriginal communities. These advisor positions would assist Aboriginal people to provide career guidance for Aboriginal job seekers as well as for their family members (i.e., parents) utilizing a blend of contemporary career guidance strategies with traditional Aboriginal practices;

**Design and implementation of Aboriginal employment strategies.** In order to raise the profile of the need to improve labour market access to Aboriginal people, organizations and jurisdictions need to adopt long-term Aboriginal employment strategies to (a) set aside appropriate funding and resources for Aboriginal human resource management programs and practices (i.e., recruitment and career development activities), (b) align and support labour market needs, and (c) provide Aboriginal people with access to employment opportunities within the knowledge-based economy;

**Design of a targeted recruitment strategy.** In order to tap into the pool of Aboriginal candidates, a comprehensive targeted recruitment strategy that specifically focuses on attracting members of the Aboriginal community can assist employers in recruiting talent. One main component of a targeted Aboriginal recruitment strategy would be to identify where Aboriginal job seekers go to find job postings and career information (e.g., Aboriginal radio, Aboriginal television, local newspapers, magazines, community newsletters);

**Improve access to career information.** The creation of on-line Aboriginal Skills Inventories that can provide Aboriginal people with job matching services (matching Aboriginal people’s skills with employer job opportunities), personalized education/training plans and related career planning information to prepare Aboriginal people to work in the Canadian labour force;

**Identify succession planning needs.** There is a need for Aboriginal communities to understand succession planning issues facing today’s employers. By understanding employers’ succession planning needs, Aboriginal communities can begin the process of identifying and implementing enhanced employment, education and training programs which support key skills needed to meet current and future labour market demands within the public and private sectors (i.e., management, science and technology); thus, providing opportunities for Aboriginal people to fully engage in the knowledge economy;

**Increase the use of Aboriginal awareness training.** By building opportunities for non-Aboriginal people and employers to learn about Aboriginal culture, tradition and history, this presents avenues for Aboriginal people and non-Aboriginal employers to learn more

about one another, discover ways to effectively communicate and work together within their organizations and the broader community;

**Coordinate municipal, provincial/territorial and national employer/employment forums.** The purpose of these employer/employment forums would be to create collaborative relationships between Aboriginal communities, government, and private business in improving Aboriginal people's participation in the labour market;

**Labour relations.** Within unionized work environments, it would be advantageous for the employer and union(s) to negotiate culturally appropriate language in their collective agreements;

**Leadership.** Hanselmann (2003), Lamontagne (2004), Papillon and Cosentino (2004) as well as comments from some respondents in Canadian Aboriginal association and federal Aboriginal employment program cohorts recognized that if changes are to be made about Aboriginal employment needs, it would be advantageous to encourage members of the Aboriginal community to serve as change agents and champions within organizations or within the broader Canadian political arena;

**Additional funding and resources.** Additional money and resources are needed in order to provide access to employment and training opportunities for Aboriginal people. Some respondents within the Canadian Aboriginal association and federal Aboriginal employment program cohorts mentioned that limited financial resources exist to fully design and implement Aboriginal-specific recruitment and career development programs/practices. They also suggested that funding and resources could take the form of scholarship and internship programs for Aboriginal people as well as dedicated work units within organizations that address the topic of attracting and retaining Aboriginal people in the workplace;

**Design of an education strategy and campaign for Aboriginal people.** There is a need to launch a targeted education strategy and campaign to (a) promote the value of learning/training (K-12 as well as post-secondary) especially as it relates to improving Aboriginal people's access to the labour market, and (b) promote the value of higher education in relation to career success in various industries. Gaiko et al. (1999) felt that education promotion not only needs to be directed towards Aboriginal youth but also their families (e.g., parents and extended family members). In addition, Gaiko et al. (1999) acknowledged that family provides a key support mechanism for Aboriginal youth in achieving success in school;

**Develop a suite of Aboriginal employment performance measures.** There is a need for the development of a suite of Aboriginal employment performance measures that can be utilized by organizations and jurisdictions in measuring the success/effectiveness of their respective Aboriginal human resource management programs and practices (e.g., recruitment and career development). In terms of operationalizing the term "effectiveness", it may be advantageous to partner with the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business and the National Quality Institute to design and implement national

performance measures to consistently assess Aboriginal-specific human resource management initiatives;

**Use of consistent program evaluation approaches for Aboriginal employment.** In order to effectively design, deliver and manage employment strategies, programs and practices, it will be necessary for employers and Aboriginal employment program providers to monitor the effectiveness of their initiatives by adopting and implementing consistent program evaluation approaches. Examples of program evaluation approaches include: cost-benefit analysis; Kirkpatrick Four Level Approach; Phillips' Return on Investment (ROI) framework.

In closing, organizations and jurisdictions who want to take a proactive approach to recruiting, retaining and developing Aboriginal people can utilize and learn from the strategies, practices and programs brought forth in this report to build an Aboriginal employment strategic plan and accompanying set of initiatives that are flexible and acknowledge the specific needs of both Aboriginal communities and employers within today's labour market.

## **Introduction**

Due to an increasing retirement rate and skill shortage in the labour force, the realities of today's labour market indicate that organizations within the public and private sectors will be facing recruitment and retention pressures over the next 5-10 years (Canadian Labour and Business Council, 2001; Cowan, Farquhar, & MacBridge-King, 2002; Saunders & Maxwell, 2003). At the same time, the demographic makeup of Canada is shifting. As a result, organizations are recognizing that there is an ever increasing need to access the pool of human capital which exists within Canada (Canadian Labour and Business Council, 2001; Cowan et al., 2002; Saunders & Maxwell, 2003). One emerging group of individuals who could potentially aid in replenishing human capital within Canadian workplaces are Aboriginal people.

Human Resources and Social Development Canada (HRSDC) seeks to better understand what types of policies and practices can support the labour market integration of Aboriginal people. As part of HRSDC's mandate, this federal government department provides Canadians with the tools they need to thrive and prosper in the workplace and community (HRSDC, 2006). Furthermore, HRSDC supports Aboriginal employment programs, policies and strategies which engage Aboriginal communities in human capital development and labour market integration within Canadian workplaces. Turtle Island Consulting Services Inc. (TICS Inc.) was retained to conduct a literature review which supports HRSDC's mandate and scope of responsibilities as it pertains to the Aboriginal Peoples of Canada. Based on a literature review and consultations with 49 participants representing four major cohorts, this report presents key findings related to effective Aboriginal-specific practices for hiring and developing Aboriginal people within the workforce. A series of proposed recommendations for policy decision-makers and human resource management practitioners are also presented.

### ***Statement of the Problem***

The statement of the problem can best be expressed by the following question: What effective human resource management strategies, policies, practices and programs exist in recruiting and developing Aboriginal people within the workforce?

### ***Purpose of the Study***

The purpose of this study was to identify effective human resource management strategies, practices, programs and policies (specifically in the areas of recruitment and career development) that impact and influence Aboriginal people within the workforce. Therefore, key objectives for this study were to:

- Identify recruitment and career development policies, programs and practices that currently exist to improve labour market access for Aboriginal people;

- Identify gaps/areas for improvement (general and gender-based) as it pertains to recruiting and developing Aboriginal people within the Canadian workforce; and
- Determine current and future needs of Aboriginal communities in the hiring and developing of Aboriginal people within the Canadian workforce.

This report is intended to provide HRSDC decision-makers and human resource management practitioners with further insights in increasing awareness and promoting policy/program coordination in order to improve Aboriginal peoples' access to the labour market.

### *Limitations*

The following are key limitations of this research study:

1. The principal researcher acknowledges the reality that “effective” practices, programs and policies within the areas of Aboriginal recruitment and career development are based on diverse definitions of this term (e.g., criteria-based definitions of “effective” or anecdotal/self-reported perspectives based on an individual’s professional knowledge and expertise);
2. Though respondents shared their knowledge and expertise on the topic of Aboriginal employment, these qualitative findings do not lend themselves to being generalized to a larger population. Therefore, the thoughts expressed by participants in the consultation portion of the study are not intended to reflect the opinions of the entire Aboriginal population of Canada; and
3. Though this research report describes various organizational-based recruitment and career development practices pertaining to Aboriginal employment, the principal researcher acknowledges that there may be examples of additional “effective” recruitment and career development initiatives for Aboriginal people that are currently undocumented and unacknowledged within the broader literature. Therefore, they were not cited within this report.

## **Methodology**

### *Overview*

In conducting this study, TICS Inc. used two key research methods to collect information. They included:

- A literature review focused on recruitment and career development practices for Aboriginal people; and
- Consultations with four major cohorts
  - Canadian Aboriginal associations

- Federal Aboriginal employment programs
- Aboriginal-related labour departments
- Private and public sector organizations (human resource/personnel departments)

By conducting a literature review and engaging in consultations with representatives from four major cohorts, the principal researcher was able to integrate both theoretical and practical perspectives on the topic of Aboriginal employment.

### ***Literature Review***

The main component of this research study was conducting a literature review on human resource management practices (e.g., recruitment, career development) that impact and influence Aboriginal employment. TICS Inc. searched for relevant literature through major journal databases such as Emerald Insight, Elton B. Stephens Company (EBSCO), Journal Storage (JSTOR), Education Resources Information Center (ERIC) and Dissertation Abstracts. Based on the journal database search, TICS Inc. examined journal articles, texts and research reports within the fields of workplace diversity, human resource management (e.g., recruitment and career development) and training. Examples of key journals that were reviewed included: *Academy of Management*; *Innovations in Education & Training International*; *Journal of Management Development*; *Journal of Organizational Behavior*; and *Training & Development*.

TICS Inc. conducted an internet search and reviewed on-line materials from various policy, statistical and research institutions such as the Canada West Foundation, Canadian Labour and Business Council (CLBC), Canadian Policy Research Network (CPRN), Conference Board of Canada, and Statistics Canada. In addition, TICS Inc. reviewed archival data—organizational documentation (e.g., annual reports, strategic plans, workforce statistics) provided by respondents or retrieved on organizational websites within Canada, the United States of America, Australia and New Zealand. Through a review of major journal databases, texts, and on-line searches, TICS Inc. tapped into existing literature on human resource management, organizational behaviour, workplace diversity, strategic planning, and labour market statistics (e.g., Aboriginal labour and employment statistics).

### ***Consultations***

In addition to reviewing literature on the topic of Aboriginal employment, recruitment and career development, TICS Inc. wanted to gain front-line perspectives from representatives who are currently involved in developing Aboriginal employment-related programs, policies and/or strategies within their given organizations or jurisdictions. Consultations were held with 49 representatives from four major cohorts.

## *Participants*

A Request for Participation e-mail invitation was sent to potential participants for the consultation portion of the study. Please refer to Appendices C, E, G, and I for a copy of the Request for Participation e-mail invitations. TICS Inc. selected participants to contact on the basis of two techniques:

- **Criterion sample technique.** Identification of representatives based on a set of pre-determined conditions (i.e., Aboriginal labour-related department cohort—representatives from provincial/territorial, sub-provincial and international Aboriginal Affairs, Labour and/or Employment departments who are responsible for Aboriginal employment, training and/or development); and
- **Snowball sample technique.** Selection based on referrals from representatives in the four major cohorts.

Participants were from four major cohorts. They included:

**Canadian Aboriginal Associations.** Representatives from nationally-recognized Aboriginal associations who support and/or participate in Aboriginal employment initiatives. In total, 12 representatives participated in the consultation sessions. Seven of the representatives worked for Aboriginal Human Resource Development Agreement (AHRDA) holders. Participants typically were employed as training coordinators, career counsellors and/or facilitators for their respective organizations. Within their scope of responsibilities, participants within this cohort provided employment programs and services to Aboriginal people. Their duties ranged from obtaining training funds, coordinating/managing Aboriginal employment programs (i.e., facilitating resume and interview workshops for members of their respective Aboriginal communities) to providing direct career counselling/guidance to Aboriginal people;

**Federal Aboriginal Employment Programs.** Representatives from nationally-recognized employment programs or employee networks which support the recruitment and professional development of Aboriginal employees. In total, six federal Aboriginal employment program representatives participated in the consultation sessions. Participants represented either Aboriginal employment-related initiatives (i.e., Aboriginal Workforce Participation Initiative) or belonged to a federally-based Aboriginal employee committee/network (e.g., National Council of Aboriginal Employees). Overall, representatives within this cohort provided direct guidance and input on federal employment and human resource management practices that impact and influence Aboriginal employees;

**Aboriginal Labour-Related Departments.** Representatives from provincial/territorial, sub-provincial and international Aboriginal Affairs, Labour and/or Employment departments who were responsible for Aboriginal employment, training and development. Within the Aboriginal labour-related department cohort, 13 participants

comprised this particular group<sup>2</sup>. In their various roles, participants generally developed Aboriginal training programs (i.e., personal career development and computer skills training), coordinated cross-cultural/Aboriginal awareness training for schools and businesses, organized Aboriginal employment forums, and/or implemented policies and practices that foster a diverse and inclusive workplace;

### **Private and Public Sector Human Resource Management Professionals.**

Representatives from the private and public sectors who directly provided and/or managed human resource management services for their given organization. In total, 18 respondents participated in this cohort<sup>3</sup>. In general, participants were members of their respective organization's human resources/personnel department. Specifically, respondents were responsible for leading and coordinating corporate-wide employment equity and diversity activities, developing and implementing staffing and/or career planning initiatives that were intended to increase representation of designated groups within their given workplaces (i.e., Aboriginal people).

Overall, 49 individuals participated in this portion of the study. Please refer to Appendix B for a listing of participating organizations by key cohort. Furthermore, detailed information about specific methodology components such as: assumptions; general approach; instrumentation; data collection; and procedure for data analysis are located in Appendix A.

## **Today's Labour Market**

Within the next 5-10 years, as the baby boomer generation begins to retire and fewer skilled workers are available to replace them, organizations within the public and private sectors will be facing the realities of labour and skill shortages (Canadian Labour and Business Council, 2001; Cowan et al., 2002; Saunders & Maxwell, 2003). The realities of emerging labour and skill shortages coupled with changes in the demographic composition of the labour force are creating an urgent need for many employers to begin a process of thinking strategically about building tomorrow's workforce. Employment programs must be ready to respond to the changes in today's labour market through the design and delivery of employment services that (a) assist in the transition from school to the workplace and (b) prepare future workers to proactively respond to employers' needs (e.g., skilled resilient employees who have the necessary skills and experience to work within a knowledge-based economy).

### ***Implications for Aboriginal People***

From a demographic perspective, according to the 2001 Census, 976,305 out of 29,639,030 Canadians identified themselves as Aboriginal (Statistics Canada, 2004a). This 2001 figure represents a 22.2% increase from 1996 (Statistics Canada, 2004e). The

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<sup>2</sup> Twelve representatives participated in the full consultation process while one respondent provided partial information.

<sup>3</sup> Ten representatives participated in the full consultation process while eight respondents provided partial information.

2001 Census data reflects that the median age for individuals who identified themselves as Aboriginal was 24.7 years of age, while the median age for the total population of Canada was 37.3 years of age (Statistics Canada, 2004c). In addition, there is also a slow but steady growth among Aboriginal people residing in urban areas. In 2001, 49% of Aboriginal people lived in urban areas, compared to 47% in 1996 (Statistics Canada, 2004e). The Aboriginal population in Canadian cities such as Edmonton (Alberta), Winnipeg (Manitoba), Calgary (Alberta), and Saskatoon (Saskatchewan) tend to be much younger and are the fastest growing sector of the Canadian population (Statistics Canada, 2005d; Statistics Canada, 2005f). For example, Winnipeg's Aboriginal population has grown by 21.9% since 1996 (Statistics Canada, 2005f). Projections indicate that this upward trend will continue into the future so that by 2020, Winnipeg's Aboriginal population may well exceed 100,000 people (City of Winnipeg, 2006).

Similar findings can be found at the provincial level as well. For example, according to the 2001 Census, 130,185 of Saskatchewan's 963,155 people identified themselves as Aboriginal (Statistics Canada, 2004a). This means that 13.5 percent of Saskatchewan's population are Aboriginal, the second highest percentage among provincial jurisdictions (Statistics Canada, 2004g). The median age of the Aboriginal population in the province is 20.1 years, compared to the median age for the non-Aboriginal population of 38.8 years (Statistics Canada, 2004c). Table 1 outlines key highlights of the Canadian Aboriginal population within select metropolitan areas (in alphabetical order), while Table 2 provides a series of key highlights of the Canadian Aboriginal population within select provinces/territories (in alphabetical order).

**Table 1. Demographic snapshot of the Canadian Aboriginal population within select metropolitan areas<sup>4</sup> (in alphabetical order)**

Census Metropolitan Area <sup>5</sup>	Aboriginal Population	Total Population (Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal)	Aboriginal population (%)	Aboriginal - Median Age (in years)	Non-Aboriginal – Median Age (in years)
Calgary, Alberta	21, 915	943,310	2.3	25.7	34.9
Edmonton, Alberta	40,930	927,020	4.4	24.2	35.7
Prince Albert, Saskatchewan	11,640	39,885	29.2	20.8	39.3
Regina, Saskatchewan	15,685	190,015	8.3	20.7	37.0
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan	20,280	222,630	9.1	20.8	35.6
Winnipeg, Manitoba	55,760	661,730	8.4	24.7	38.1
Yellowknife, Northwest Territories	3,635	16,455	22.1	22.4	33.3

<sup>4</sup> Based on data from the 2001 Census (Statistics Canada, 2004b; Statistics Canada, 2004d, Statistics Canada, 2004f; Statistics Canada, 2004h)

<sup>5</sup> Census metropolitan area includes a major city and adjacent municipalities (census subdivisions) (Statistics Canada, 2004b)

**Table 2. Demographic snapshot of the Canadian Aboriginal population within select provinces/ territories<sup>6</sup> (in alphabetical order)**

Province/Territory	Aboriginal Population	Total Population (Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal)	Percentage of Aboriginal population (%)	Aboriginal - Median Age (in years)	Non-Aboriginal – Median Age (in years)
Manitoba	150,045	1,103,700	13.6	22.8	38.5
Northwest Territories	18,730	37,100	50.5	24.0	34.5
Nunavut	22,720	26,665	85.2	19.1	35.2
Saskatchewan	130,185	963,155	13.5	20.1	38.8
Yu kon	6,540	28,520	22.9	28.6	37.7

Based on these demographic findings from select metropolitan areas and provinces/ territories, it appears that Aboriginal people represent a significant potential workforce available to replace Canadian workers who will be retiring in the near future.

An increasing number of organizations (within the public and private sectors) are recognizing that a commitment to employing Aboriginal people makes good economic sense in terms of ensuring that their respective workplaces remain competitive within the international marketplace. The current skill shortages in most industries and the growth in the number of young working age people who are Aboriginal makes the Aboriginal people in Canada a valuable untapped and underutilized labour source. Aboriginal people have the potential to offer unique skills and knowledge to the labour market. Examples of key areas where Aboriginal people can provide value-added skills, abilities and experience may include:

- Tapping into New Markets and Networks.** There may be current and future opportunities for Aboriginal people to enhance collaborative partnerships between local Aboriginal communities (both in urban and rural settings) and employers. This could take the form of providing insights into niche market opportunities (for goods and services) that have not been fully realized within the broader marketplace (Hanselmann, 2003; Lamontagne, 2004); and

<sup>6</sup> Based on data from the 2001 Census (Statistics Canada, 2004a; Statistics Canada, 2004c; Statistics Canada, 2004e; Statistics Canada, 2004e; Statistics Canada, 2004g)

- **Fostering Continued Cross-Cultural Awareness.** By building cross-cultural relations between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal employees, there is an opportunity to increase the level of interaction between these populations and to increase employee appreciation for diversity—not only in the form of increased workforce representation but in developing new ventures, improving decision-making, and fostering creativity/innovation (Cox, 1994; McLeod, Lobel & Cox, 1996; James, Wolf, Lovato & Byers, 1995; Richard, 2000). In addition, researchers such as Dwyer (2003) acknowledge the benefits of an Aboriginal leadership style within the workplace. A leadership style that values collectivism, cooperation, group cohesiveness and consensus-based decision-making—all of which are becoming key organizational competencies within team-based work environments.

Similar to Canada, Native American and Alaskan Native populations in the United States, Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders in Australia and the Maori people of New Zealand are growing faster than their respective national averages. As a collective, these populations are significantly younger than their country's total population. For example, the 2001 Census showed that the Maori population of New Zealand was relatively younger than the non-Maori population, with a median age of 22.1 years, compared to the non-Maori median age of 36.1 years (Ministry of Maori Affairs, 2004). As of 2001, the Maori population made up 14.7% of the New Zealand population. It is projected that the Maori will make up 22% of the New Zealand population by 2051 (Ministry of Maori Affairs, 2004). Based on data from the 2000 Census, the American Indian and Alaskan Native population was younger than the total U.S. population. The median age for American Indians and Alaskan Natives was 29 years, while the national median age was 35 years—a six year differential (Ogunwole, 2006; Toossi, 2002).

Overall, improved Aboriginal employment within today's labour market can serve as a pathway towards building a sustainable, local, and dedicated workforce. In addition, it can also assist in addressing current skill and labour shortages which will ultimately impact the country's economy (Canadian Labour and Business Council, 2001; Lamontagne, 2004). Specifically for Aboriginal communities, improved employment prospects not only builds increased income within local communities but promotes greater independence and improved quality of life (Hanselmann, 2003; Mendelson, 2004; Papillon & Cosentino, 2004).

### **Societal and Organizational Challenges**

In spite of the above mentioned demographic strengths, major challenges currently exist for the Aboriginal people in Canada. These challenges can take the form of societal or organizational barriers that prevent Aboriginal people from actively engaging and participating in the labour force; for example, entering the workplace or securing career advancement and developmental opportunities. Key challenges brought forth within the literature and through consultations with representatives from four major cohorts included:

### *Unemployment and Labour Force Representation*

**High Unemployment Rates.** In 2001, the unemployment rate for the total Aboriginal population was 22.2 percent. This compares to an unemployment rate for all Canadians of only 7.4 percent (Mendelson, 2004). For specific Aboriginal heritage groups such as the Inuit population, in 2001, the unemployment rates for Inuit were three times higher than those of all Canadians (22.2 percent)—unemployment was identified as the biggest problem facing Inuit communities in the north (V. Pilgrim, personal communication, April 10, 2006);

**Low Labour Force Representation.** The employment record of Aboriginal people continues to fall behind that of non-Aboriginal people. During the 1991-2001 period, the unemployment rate of Aboriginal people relative to that of the non-Aboriginal labour force increased (Lamontagne, 2004). For example, Inuit make up 85 percent of Nunavut's total population but only hold 45 percent of territorial jobs (1,440 out of 3,200 jobs) and approximately 33 percent of federal jobs (Berger, 2006; Weber, 2006);

**Human Capital Disconnect.** Fifteen respondents from the Canadian Aboriginal association and federal Aboriginal employment program cohorts noted that Aboriginal communities need to expand their horizons by implementing employment programs that enhance Aboriginal peoples' skills in key areas above and beyond trades and natural resources such as finance/insurance, management, media/communications, and professional, technical and scientific services. According to the 2001 Census, Aboriginal people comprised low workforce percentages in management, professional/scientific and technical services, and finance/insurance (Statistics Canada, 2005i). In addition, Dwyer (2003) acknowledges that Aboriginal people are the furthest from reaching proportional executive category representation within the Canadian federal public service.

### *Socio-Economic Hardships*

**Low Wage Earners.** In 2001, employed Aboriginal people earned an average of \$19,132.00 per year compared to the Canadian average income of \$29,769.00 per year (Mendelson, 2004). The overall incidence of low income in 2000 was much higher for Aboriginal people (31.2 percent) than the Canadian average incidence of low income (12.9 percent) (Lamontagne, 2004; Mendelson, 2004);

**Additional Socio-Economic Hardships.** Papillon and Cosentino (2004) and 16 respondents from the Canadian Aboriginal association, federal Aboriginal employment program, and Aboriginal labour-related department cohorts felt that, in addition to experiencing challenges centered around employment, lack of affordable housing, poverty, health problems, and substance abuse are additional determinants of Aboriginal people's overall labour market success.

## *Education*

**Low Educational Attainment.** Seventeen respondents from the Canadian Aboriginal association, federal Aboriginal employment program, and Aboriginal labour-related department cohorts felt that low educational attainment was a major barrier for Aboriginal people within the labour market. Education levels for Aboriginal people remains below that of non-Aboriginal people, particularly for higher knowledge and skilled-based occupations<sup>7</sup>. Within the 2004 report by R.A. Malatest and Associates Ltd. entitled *Aboriginal Peoples and Post-Secondary Education: What Educators Have Learned*, researchers acknowledged that "...Canada's economy demands ever-higher levels of formal education for employment; the correlation between educational attainment and employment, economic well being and health has been well established" (R. A. Malatest and Associates Ltd., 2004, p. 5). According to BC Stats (2005), more than 70 percent of Aboriginal people, aged 15 to 24 years of age, have less than a high school diploma. Though a substantial number of Aboriginal people are returning to the education system as mature students, many Aboriginal adults are taking Adult Basic Education (ABE) courses at post-secondary institutions as opposed to directly entering degree or diploma-granting programs (BC Stats, 2005).

## *Organizational Development*

**Need for Improved "Aboriginal-Friendly" Human Resource Management Practices, Policies and Procedures.** In general, 11 respondents from the Canadian Aboriginal association, federal Aboriginal employment program, and human resource management professional cohorts commented that some employers are having difficulty attracting and retaining Aboriginal people because their workplaces and human resource management practices (i.e., recruitment and career development practices) are not "Aboriginal-friendly" (acknowledge and respect Aboriginal culture and tradition). For example, these same respondents mentioned that some employers (within the private and public sectors) lack adequate support systems to make Aboriginal employees feel supported and welcomed into the workplace;

**Lack of Sufficient Access to Career Information.** Twelve participants within the Canadian Aboriginal association and Aboriginal-related labour department cohorts outlined that, in general, Aboriginal people lack adequate access to career information (e.g., types of careers available in the public and private sectors, current job vacancies, and key skills needed within today's labour market) in order to make more informed decisions regarding their career planning. Ballardin and O'Donnell (2006) noted similar thoughts based on key findings from the 2001 *Aboriginal Peoples Survey* which outlined that a lack of information about jobs was a major obstacle for Aboriginal job seekers;

**Perceived Restrictions to Organizational Positions.** Due to the nature of certain organizational positions, some Aboriginal-based employment programs offer only seasonal and/or entry level positions within their respective organizations as opposed to offering full-time career opportunities at the professional or management level.

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<sup>7</sup> Occupations that require a post-secondary degree/designation.

Furthermore, in some workplaces, 11 respondents within the Canadian Aboriginal association, federal Aboriginal employment program, and Aboriginal-related labour department cohorts recognized there is often not an opportunity to hire Aboriginal people externally because the recruitment source/talent pool is actually the internal or existing workforce within an organization. As a result, respondents felt that this creates limitations for Aboriginal people who desire to work in certain occupations or levels within a given workplace (e.g., executive/senior management).

### *Public Policy*

**Lack of Clear Roles and Responsibilities—Accountability for Performance.** Jurisdictions such as the Government of Nunavut continue to grapple with determining who is ultimately responsible for achieving various performance targets relating to the increase of Aboriginal representation within the workforce. Berger (2006) indicated that no level of government appears to be willing to assume primary responsibility for urban Aboriginal policy issues (e.g., Aboriginal employment). As a result of the continued lack of clear roles and responsibilities on the public policy front, Aboriginal employment initiatives and associated activities often are not fully designed and implemented.

### *Cross-Cultural Relations*

**Discrimination—Micro-inequities.** Ten respondents within the Canadian Aboriginal association and federal Aboriginal employment program cohorts acknowledged the realities of subtle discrimination and racism that occurs in some workplaces. One representative from the Native Women's Association of Canada also noted gender-specific discrimination as a barrier for Aboriginal women within the workplace (i.e., workplace harassment and limited access to daycare/childcare resources for working Aboriginal mothers). Roe (1990) described subtle discrimination and racism as micro-inequities. These same respondents also noted that at some organizations, there is no perceived organizational priority to guide employees and managers in re-thinking their attitudes about Aboriginal people (which may be uninformed or stereotypical in nature). In general, respondents felt that acts of discrimination, bias and stereotyping (i.e., displaying cultural insensitivity) create an unwelcoming work environment for Aboriginal people; thus, increasing the risk of high turnover, distrust, and a perceived glass ceiling effect for promotion/advancement opportunities;

**Perceived Lack of Acceptance that the Aboriginal Population Can Serve as Productive Members of Canada's Workforce.** Six respondents from Canadian Aboriginal association and federal Aboriginal employment program cohorts mentioned that they were somewhat dismayed that current public policy discussions and related business discussions appear to place a greater emphasis on the strong human capital potential of non-Aboriginal populations as it relates to mitigating future skill shortages in Canada (i.e., perceived stronger emphasis on immigrant employment strategies and associated initiatives—immigration regulations and procedures to permit Canadian employers to recruit key skills internationally). For example, in the 2002 Canadian Labour and Business Council (CLBC) Viewpoints survey, the CLBC asked business and

labour leaders whether hiring more Aboriginal people can help them meet skill and labour shortages. In general, business and labour leaders felt that hiring Aboriginal employees is “generally not considered an important solution to solving their skill needs” (Lamontagne, 2004, p.5). Only 13% of business leaders and 21% of labour leaders surveyed mentioned that it is a very important solution (Canadian Labour and Business Council, 2001; Lamontagne, 2004). These national findings appear to reflect a potential lack of awareness regarding Aboriginal people’s skills and employers’ perceived value of Aboriginal people’s workforce capabilities (Canadian Labour and Business Council, 2001; Lamontagne, 2004). The six respondents from Canadian Aboriginal association and federal Aboriginal employment program cohorts felt that a “balanced” approach is needed—one that recognizes the human capital potential of non-Aboriginal people (e.g., immigrants) and Aboriginal people who can both serve as productive members of Canada’s total workforce.

### *Funding and Resources*

**Lack of Funding.** Twelve participants within Canadian Aboriginal association and federal Aboriginal employment program cohorts mentioned that limited financial resources to fully design and implement specific recruitment and career development programs and practices is evident within organizations. This was particularly noted by AHRDA holders who participated in the consultation portion of this research study;

**Geographic Restrictions.** Nine respondents from Canadian Aboriginal association and Aboriginal labour-related department cohorts noted that Aboriginal people in remote locations and reserves often experience difficulty in obtaining adequate employment, training and education services. For example, representatives from Inuit Tapirisat of Canada mentioned that limited employment services are available to Inuit who live in the Arctic regions of Northern Labrador, Northern Quebec, Northwestern Northwest Territories. In addition, six respondents from the human resource management professional cohort noted that it is often difficult to recruit and distribute career information to Aboriginal candidates who reside in remote areas of Canada.

### *Leadership*

**Lack of Adequate Aboriginal Leadership.** Six respondents from Canadian Aboriginal associations and Aboriginal labour-related department cohorts expressed disappointment with some Aboriginal leaders (particularly at the local levels—Chief and Council). These same respondents felt that the topic of Aboriginal employment has not been given top priority within local Aboriginal communities. Though these respondents recognized the hardships endured by some Aboriginal leaders (e.g., Residential School experience, substance abuse), they felt that “now is the time for healing and empowerment of Aboriginal people”—particularly as it relates to advancement in Aboriginal employment and skill development.

### *Other Jurisdictions*

Aboriginal Australians and Torres Strait Islanders of Australia, the Maori People of New Zealand, and American Indians and Alaskan Natives in the United States are also experiencing similar socio-economic challenges. For example,

**Aboriginal Australians and Torres Strait Islanders.** According to the 2001 Census, the unemployment rate for Aboriginal Australians and Torres Strait Islanders was close to three times higher than their non-Aboriginal counterparts—only 54 percent of working age Aboriginal Australians were employed compared to 71 percent of non-Aboriginal working age Australians (Australian Chamber of Commerce & Industry, 2005). In terms of education levels, 60 percent of Aboriginal Australian wage earners had completed high school, compared to 75 percent of wage earners in the general population of Australia (Australian Public Service Commission, 2005);

**Maori People of New Zealand.** According to the 2001 Census, the median age for the Maori People was approximately 22 years while the median age was 34.8 years for the total New Zealand population (Ministry of Maori Affairs, 2004). The Maori People of New Zealand continue to be overrepresented among the long-term unemployed in New Zealand. Based on findings from the 1999 *Household Labour Force Survey*, the unemployment rate for the Maori People of New Zealand was 19.0%, compared to 6% for the non-Maori population (Statistics New Zealand, 2002a). Key occupations held by the Maori People of New Zealand were in services/sales (16.7%), plant/machine operators and assemblers (16.4%) and clerks (12.1%) (Statistics New Zealand, 2002b);

**American Indians and Alaskan Natives.** In the area of employment, American Indians and Alaskan Natives participated in the labour force at a lower rate than the total U.S. population<sup>8</sup>. American Indians and Alaskan Natives were also less likely than the total U.S. population to be employed in management, professional, technical and scientific occupations. Key occupations held by American Indians and Alaskan Natives were in the service, construction, transportation and farming/fishing industries (Ogunwole, 2006). Regarding education levels, 71 percent of American Indians and Alaskan Natives (25 years of age and older) had at least a high school education, compared with 80 percent of the total U.S. population. Post-secondary statistics indicated that 11 percent of the American Indian and Alaskan Native population had at least a bachelor's degree, compared with 24 percent of all U.S. citizens (Ogunwole, 2006). James et al. (1995) noted that many employment programs targeted at American Indians have focused on trades, construction, manufacturing and clerical occupations as opposed to technical, professional or scientific positions. James et al. (1995) also described the realities that many of these American Indian employment and training programs were

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<sup>8</sup> The labour force participation rate for American Indian and Alaskan Native men was 66% compared to total participation rate for all U.S. men at 71%. In addition, the labour force participation rate for American Indian and Alaskan Native women was 57% compared to the total participation rate for all U.S. women at 58% (Ogunwole, 2006).

geared towards occupations that have been in decline (from a labour and economic standpoint) for several years within the United States; thus, American Indians who participated in these employment programs possessed new skills that were not in demand and aligned with current U.S. labour market needs.

### **What Works: Effective Aboriginal-Specific Human Resource Management Initiatives**

In the next section of this report, a suite of Aboriginal-specific human resource management initiatives such as strategic planning components/principles, recruitment, career development, and other human resource management factors are presented. These effective initiatives are based on findings from the literature review as well as participants' responses from the consultation portion of this research study.

It is important to note that; unfortunately, relatively little literature appears to exist which explores and specifically details evaluation-based Aboriginal-specific human resource management strategies, practices, policies and/or programs. In general, literature on Aboriginal-specific human resource management initiatives tends to consist of qualitative case studies that describe anecdotal and perceived benefits of designing and implementing Aboriginal-specific human resource management strategies, programs, policies and/or practices within a given organization or jurisdiction. As a result, case studies of this nature were not based on rigorous evaluations. While case studies can be valuable tools through which to build theory, it would be advantageous, in the future, for researchers to supplement case studies with quantitative research to assess/evaluate the value and overall effectiveness of a given Aboriginal-specific human resource management initiative.

In addition to the existing literature, participants (within the consultation portion of this study) identified and outlined effective Aboriginal-specific human resource management initiatives in one of two primary ways: (a) provided a self-report/anecdotal perspective (typically based on participants' professional knowledge/expertise) on an Aboriginal-specific human resource management initiative that they were currently involved in designing and/or implementing; or (b) referenced past or current "top inclusive employers of Aboriginal people". For participants who referenced top inclusive employers such as Syncrude, Royal Bank of Canada, Cameco Corporation, Xerox Corporation and the Nasittuq Corporation, they primarily based their definition of "effectiveness" on published ranking report findings prepared by *Canadian Business* or the Progressive Aboriginal Relations (PAR) program. Details about *Canadian Business*'s and PAR's methodology and associated performance measures/standards are further described on pages 35-36 of this report.

As noted in the "Limitations" section of this report, based on the literature review and consultation findings, there is clearly no consensus on a set of standard/consistent performance measures that can be used to assess the effectiveness of Aboriginal-specific human resource management initiatives. The "Recommendations" section of this report offers further comments on potential ways to address these issues. Despite this challenge, the existing literature and consultations with participants representing four major cohorts

brought forth a suite of Aboriginal-specific human resource management initiatives that are perceived as beneficial for enhancing Aboriginal people's participation in the labour force. Though lacking in the use of rigorous evaluation methods, the literature and comments brought forth by participants does offer a basis in which to invite further dialogue and research on Aboriginal-specific human resource management initiatives that are perceived as "value-added" factors/components in improving Aboriginal people's access to the labour market.

### **Aboriginal Employment Strategic Planning**

An Aboriginal employment strategic plan provides a framework for organizations and jurisdictions to design and implement specific initiatives that center around recruiting, training and developing Aboriginal people to work in permanent positions. In addition, an Aboriginal employment strategic plan works towards improving the economic and social conditions of Aboriginal people within their communities. This type of strategic plan is intended to assist Aboriginal people in gaining employment that (a) aligns and supports labour market needs, and (b) has not been traditionally accessible to Aboriginal people (e.g., management, professional/scientific/technical occupations, finance/insurance positions). At present, it appears that the design and implementation of Aboriginal employment strategies varies across organizations and jurisdictions. For example, organizations and jurisdictions such as the City of Edmonton, BC Hydro, and Assiniboine Community College are currently in the early stages of developing their respective Aboriginal employment strategies, while organizations and jurisdictions such as the City of Winnipeg, Government of New Zealand, Government of Australia, Syncrude and La Trobe University (Australia) have designed and commenced the implementation of their respective Aboriginal employment strategies.

The following is a suite of strategic planning components and principles that aided organizations and jurisdictions in effectively designing their respective strategic plan on Aboriginal employment. These effective practices and processes are based on findings from the literature review as well as participants' responses from the consultation portion of this research study. Where appropriate, examples from organizations and jurisdictions who applied these effective strategic planning practices to the topic of Aboriginal employment are also brought forth.

#### *Research & Analysis*

**Evidence-Based Planning.** Prior to designing a strategic plan, conducting research (i.e., labour market analysis, demographic analysis, gap analysis) provides organizations and jurisdictions with an opportunity to examine external environmental pressures (e.g., demographics, political/legal implications, global trends) and organizational capabilities (e.g., finances, human resources) that will guide organizational decision-making throughout the strategic planning process (Hamel & Prahalad, 1996; Porter, 1998). For example,

*Australian Public Service (APS).* The APS developed the *Employment and Capability Strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employees* as a means of (a) recruiting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to the APS and (b) developing existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees (Australian Public Service Commission, 2005). This organization examined the increasing difficulty in meeting its demand for skilled employees as the labour force ages and the proportion of new hires to the labour market declines. In particular, through thoughtful analysis (e.g., labour market analysis, demographic/workforce analysis), the APS recognized that there is an increasing need to utilize the skills and abilities of previously untapped populations within the Australian labour market (e.g., Aboriginal Australians and Torres Strait Islanders). Between 1996 and 2001, the population of Aboriginal Australians and Torres Strait Islanders grew by approximately 11% (Australian Public Service Commission, 2005). The APS predicts that the Aboriginal Australian and Torres Strait Islander population will grow by between 15-31% between 2001 and 2009 (Aboriginal Public Service Commission, 2005). For the APS, these demographic findings indicated the potential for stronger growth in their labour force if more Aboriginal Australians and Torres Strait Islanders are supported to actively locate and secure employment (Australian Public Service Commission, 2005).

*Government of Nunavut.* Based on Article 23.4.2 of the *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement* which states each government organization shall prepare an Inuit employment plan to increase and maintain the employment of Inuit at a representative level (Tungavik Federation of Nunavut, 1993), the *Inuit Employment Plan for the Nunavut Government* consisted of a labour force analysis—the identification and analysis of current trends in employment and the examination of population demographics (Berger, 2006, O. Curley, personal communication, April 25, 2006). This analysis of employment and demographic trends aided the Government of Nunavut representatives in defining areas where strategies and initiatives are needed to establish the intended goal of having a representative workforce.

**Emphasis on Fit.** When designing a strategy, some organizations place an emphasis on fit—recognition that their organization or jurisdiction is comprised of different people, structures, cultures and history. These factors will ultimately influence an organization's or jurisdiction's approach to its policy and program planning (Australian Centre for International Business, 2001; Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, 2005; Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2005). For example,

*La Trobe University (Australia).* As part of La Trobe University's *Indigenous Employment Strategy*, the university acknowledged and recognized the need to include and respect the Aboriginal Australians' aspirations and traditions from a cultural, social and religious perspective throughout the planning process and implementation phases of the Aboriginal employment strategic plan (Parish, 2001).

### *Infrastructure*

**Financial and Human Resources.** Dedicated financial and human resources such as establishing stand alone departments and/or creating working groups provides organizations with a sustained capacity in which to share ideas and collectively work towards designing and implementing a strategic plan. For example,

*City of Edmonton.* The Office of Diversity and Inclusion was created in January 2005. Along with the City's Organizational Effectiveness and Employment branch, they are collectively in the early stages of developing an Aboriginal employment strategy for their municipality (L. Hutchinson, W. King, & M. Kroening, personal communication, April 11, 2006).

*La Trobe University (Australia).* In order to effectively design and implement its *Indigenous Employment Strategy*, the university appointed an Indigenous Development Officer and established two committees (steering committee and Indigenous reference group). The Indigenous Development Officer is responsible for the development of the *Indigenous Employment Strategy* as well as coordinating cross-cultural training at the university. The steering committee is comprised of Aboriginal Australians and university employees, union representatives, and Aboriginal Australian community representatives. The indigenous reference group consists of various Aboriginal Australians with extensive knowledge, skills, and expertise in Aboriginal Australian employment strategies—particularly within the areas of post-secondary education and government. As a collective, these parties provide the necessary infrastructure to launch their university's *Indigenous Employment Strategy* (Parish, 2001).

*Government of Canada—Aboriginal Workforce Participation Initiative.* As part of the federal government's commitment to Aboriginal people, the Aboriginal Workforce Participation Initiative (AWPI) works towards increasing the participation of Aboriginal people in the labour market (Government of Canada—Indian Affairs and Northern Development, 1998). AWPI Regional Coordinators serve as key resources in raising awareness and enhancing the capacity for employers to recruit, retain and promote Aboriginal employees. Some of their major activities include producing and distributing awareness building materials, participating in awareness activities, developing and distributing skill building tools/resources for employers (e.g., *Aboriginal Workforce Participative Initiative Employer Toolkit*) (B. Nadjwan, personal communication, April 10, 2006; Government of Canada, 1998).

### *Building Relationships*

**Partnerships.** Partnerships between government bodies, organizations and agencies encourage relationship building and sharing of financial and human resources in the creation of initiatives which support an Aboriginal employment strategic plan (Ferguson & Andrews, 2002). For example,

*Government of Saskatchewan.* As part of its *Representative Workforce Strategy*, the Government of Saskatchewan's Aboriginal Employment Development Program (AEDP)

utilizes a flexible partnership model between government (i.e., Saskatchewan First Nations and Métis Relations), employers and union partners to (a) address issues related to high unemployment in the Aboriginal community, (b) meet the human capital demands anticipated by labour shortages, and (c) build a representative workforce where Aboriginal employees are represented at all occupational levels (i.e., entry, middle and senior management). The AEDP partnerships are intended to prepare workplaces to become “Aboriginal-friendly” where employers and unions engage in workplace policy reviews, provide Aboriginal awareness education to staff members, and communicate the employment and economic opportunities to Aboriginal communities (C. Belhumeur, personal communication, May 18, 2006; W. McKenzie, personal communication, March 23, 2006).

*Strategic Alliance of Broadcasters for Aboriginal Reflection (SABAR)*. This is a partnership between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal broadcasters who work together to increase the contribution and reflection of Aboriginal people within the Canadian broadcast industry. Initiated in 2003 by the Ontario AWPI Regional Coordinator, SABAR includes representatives of major national broadcasters and industry associations, Aboriginal media, and First Nations organizations. The partnerships between these various groups helps to promote job placements, work exchanges, scholarships and internship opportunities for Aboriginal people who are interested in pursuing a career within the broadcasting/media industry (B. Nadjiwan, personal communication, April 10, 2006).

*La Trobe University (Australia)*. In addition to inviting Aboriginal Australians to partake in the consultation phases on the university’s *Indigenous Employment Strategy*, the university is also committed to developing partnerships with Aboriginal Australians and communities in key areas such as employment and social development. The university’s *Indigenous Employment Strategy* outlines that it intends to work with Aboriginal Australian communities to ensure that they are offered opportunities to participate in the university’s employment, education and training initiatives. The development of partnerships between Aboriginal Australian community members and university representatives is intended to support self-determination of Aboriginal Australians and strengthen mutual understanding and respect between Aboriginal Australian and non-Aboriginal Australian people (Parish, 2001).

**Consultations.** By having open and inclusive consultations throughout the strategic planning process, this allows organizations to genuinely let people know the status of the Aboriginal employment strategic plan as well as provide opportunities for individuals (i.e., members of Aboriginal communities) to put their views forward and have them considered. It is important to engage key stakeholders (i.e., members of Aboriginal communities) at the early stages of the planning process. This is necessary to build trust and lay the foundation for a solid relationship (Ferguson & Andrews, 2002).

### *Leadership*

**Executive Champions.** An effective Aboriginal employment strategic plan has support and endorsement of the organization’s or jurisdiction’s senior management/

executive team. By establishing executive champions, this demonstrates leadership and recognition that Aboriginal participation and inclusion within today's workplace and broader labour market are valued and are important components of providing quality services and programs to the community at large (Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, 2005; Bank of Montreal, 2004).

*La Trobe University (Australia), City of Winnipeg, City of Edmonton, and Winnipeg Health Authority.* These organizations received support and endorsement in mapping out their respective Aboriginal employment strategies. At La Trobe University, Parish (2001) outlined that endorsement of the university's *Indigenous Employment Strategy* was passed by the university council, while the City of Winnipeg and City of Edmonton received their support/endorsement from each of their respective political representatives (Mayor and Council) (J. Halliburton, personal communication, March 27, 2006; L. Hutchinson, W. King, & M. Kroening, personal communication, April 11, 2006). In September 2003, the City of Winnipeg Council endorsed *First Steps: Municipal Aboriginal Pathways* (MAP)—a policy document that addresses urban Aboriginal issues. In 2004, the Mayor and Council for the City of Edmonton supported City officials' plan to commence the early stages of designing an Aboriginal employment strategy (L. Hutchinson, W. King, & M. Kroening, personal communication, April 11, 2006). In 2000, the Winnipeg Health Authority's Board of Directors incorporated a representative workforce goal within their strategic plan for the region so as to respond to the changing workforce demographics in health care (e.g., growing Aboriginal population in Winnipeg—Aboriginal community is one of the primary consumers of the health care system) (A. Bye, personal communication, April 28, 2006).

*Syncrude.* As the largest industrial employer of Aboriginal people in Canada<sup>9</sup>, this Alberta-based crude oil producer established an Aboriginal Development Steering Committee comprised of Syncrude senior managers and resource personnel (Syncrude Canada Limited, 2006). This team develops corporate Aboriginal-specific strategies and deliverables in the company's six key commitment areas: corporate leadership; employment; business development; education; community development; and the environment (Syncrude Canada Limited, 2006). In addition, the Aboriginal Development Steering Committee is responsible for the daily management and implementation of these above mentioned Syncrude commitments (Syncrude Canada Limited, 2006).

Overall, support for building Aboriginal employment strategies by senior management clearly indicates that these respective organizations have made a strong commitment to the on-going employment of Aboriginal people.

### *Accountability*

**Clearly Defined Roles and Responsibilities.** Within the Aboriginal employment strategic planning process, it is important to determine who is responsible for various components/aspects of the planning process and related activities. For example,

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<sup>9</sup> Aboriginal employees comprise approximately 9.2% of Syncrude's total workforce (Syncrude Canada Limited, 2006).

*Australian Public Service (APS).* In order to support the APS' *Employment and Capability Strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employees*, the Australian Public Service Commission was responsible for such activities as:

- Assisting agencies in addressing key barriers to employment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees;
- Identifying programs, services and activities that allow Aboriginal Australians and Torres Strait Islanders to develop the required skills and capacity to work within the APS; and
- Encouraging partnerships with other jurisdictions and organizations (including job network members) to develop innovative employment solutions that meet agency skill requirements (Australian Public Service Commission, 2005).

*City of Winnipeg.* In January 2005, the City's Mayor signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with both the Manitoba Métis Federation and the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs as it pertains to Aboriginal employment. The signing was a public event which demonstrated commitment from all parties involved. On a regular basis, staff from each of the above mentioned organizations meet to discuss and explore how to remove barriers and assist Aboriginal people to gain employment within the city (J. Halliburton, personal communication, March 27, 2006).

### *Monitoring*

**Performance Measurement and Evaluation.** The monitoring and evaluation of an organization's Aboriginal employment strategic plan assists in the identification of strengths and limitations (areas for improvement). By examining the strengths and limitations of one's Aboriginal employment strategic plan, organizations update activities and initiatives that contribute to achieving the plan's overall goals. In general, performance measures and the accompanying standards/targets need to be SMART—specific, measurable, ambitious, reachable and time-bound (Government of British Columbia, 2001). As an effective practice, it is recommended that Aboriginal employment strategic plans be revised on an annual basis to verify that all of the base assumptions are still appropriate for the subsequent implementation of key activities within the strategic planning process.

### *Communications*

**Communications and Marketing.** Once the Aboriginal employment strategic plan has been finalized and endorsed, it is equally as important to effectively communicate the various components of the plan to key parties (i.e., employees, Aboriginal community members).

## **Strategic Human Resource Management**

The strategic human resource management function is an important component of any organization. Strategic human resource management professionals serve as vital partners and decision-makers in the development and implementation of an employer's organizational strategy. The strategic human resource management function includes key components such as recruitment and career planning/development. Overall, these components assist employers with effectively attracting, retaining and developing top talent within their given industry.

### ***Recruitment***

Effective Aboriginal recruitment practices that are designed and implemented within an organization strive to (a) attract Aboriginal candidates and (b) outline how employers can benefit from recruiting and retaining qualified Aboriginal employees within a given industry. The following set of effective recruitment practices and programs are based on findings from the literature review as well as participants' responses from the consultation portion of this research study. Where appropriate, examples from organizations and jurisdictions who applied effective Aboriginal-specific recruitment practices and programs are also brought forth.

**Partnerships—Relationship Building.** This would involve employers showcasing their organizations to Aboriginal job seekers by participating in career fairs and attending workshops at Aboriginal employment/training agencies. Employers can maximize their recruitment efforts by building long-term proactive relationships with key groups such as Aboriginal communities, high schools, post-secondary institutions, employment agencies and job network agencies for the purpose of recruiting qualified Aboriginal candidates. Organizations such as the Royal Bank of Canada and Syncrude have already begun to build stronger, more proactive relationships with recognized post-secondary institutions. Relationship building activities may include, but are not limited to, identifying post-secondary institutions from which to recruit Aboriginal undergraduate, graduate students and recent alumni for various industry occupations. For example,

*Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP).* The RCMP has identified the need to provide service to Aboriginal communities as one of its key priorities. Based on this priority, the RCMP developed an Aboriginal Strategy Map that clearly outlines the recruitment of Aboriginal people as a responsibility that must be given the attention of all officers. Therefore, the RCMP has identified Aboriginal specific recruiters in some of its divisions (provinces). The recruiters travel to various communities with the purpose of identifying Aboriginal applicants. In addition, they conduct information sessions about RCMP positions as well as offer RCMP testing sessions in Aboriginal communities (D. Stenger, personal communication, April 13, 2006).

*Royal Bank of Canada.* RBC is a regular participant at various Aboriginal career events such as the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation's *Blueprint for the Future* and

*Aboriginal Youth in Motion* career fairs (M. Hirst, personal communication, April 25, 2006).

*Aboriginal Human Resource Development Council of Canada*. One strategy that AHRDCC carries out is encouraging employers to (a) develop relationships and partnerships with AHRDA holders and (b) recruit Aboriginal candidates/job seekers from AHRDA holder employment programs. The AHRDCC representative who participated in the consultation portion of the research study noted that employers who develop partnerships with AHRDA holder employment centers tend to work with local career counsellors to identify jobs that they are trying to fill and the skills they are looking for so as to improve the matching of Aboriginal skills to employer needs (C. Kosa, personal communication, April 29, 2006).

**Strategic Posting of Job Opportunities.** Some industry associations and Aboriginal organizations serve as recruiters by promoting the value of Aboriginal people's skills and abilities within today's workforce. Examples of industry associations, Aboriginal organizations and electronic job boards where employers post job opportunities for Aboriginal people included:

- Aboriginal Career Connections (<http://www.gov.sk.ca/psc/acc/default.htm>)
- Aboriginal Inclusion Network ([www.inclusionnetwork.ca](http://www.inclusionnetwork.ca))
- Building Environmental Aboriginal Human Resources (<http://www.beahr.com/>)
- Manitoba WorkInfoNet Aboriginal (<http://www.mb.workinonet.ca/aboriginal/>)
- Native Investment and Trade Association ([http://www.native-invest-trade.com/index\\_basic.shtml](http://www.native-invest-trade.com/index_basic.shtml))
- Think Trades—Alberta Aboriginal Apprenticeship Project ([www.thinktrades.com](http://www.thinktrades.com))

In addition, organizations such as the Government of Saskatchewan—Public Service Commission, Syncrude, BC Hydro and Ledcor Group post vacancy announcements or have designed a special web page on their organization's website dedicated to Aboriginal recruitment, career development and economic development. In general, these organizations list positions so Aboriginal job seekers can choose and plan a career path and/or provide information on a broad range of career options at the given organization.

**Legislative Adherence.** In adherence to federal and provincial/territorial legislation relating to employment equity and representative workforce provisions, some employers (i.e., Government of Saskatchewan, Government of Nunavut, Government of Newfoundland & Labrador) are utilizing preferential hiring and designating certain organizational positions for qualified Aboriginal people. In addition, some organizations and jurisdictions are utilizing legislation to define, communicate and measure their commitment to strengthening and enforcing various equity and representative workforce-related practices and processes. For example,

*Government of Nunavut.* Under Article 23 of the *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement*, it outlines that the territorial and federal governments<sup>10</sup> work towards increasing Inuit participation in government employment in the Nunavut Settlement Area to a representative level<sup>11</sup> (Berger, 2006; Tungavik Federation of Nunavut, 1993). In support of Article 23, the Government of Nunavut developed a Priority Hiring Policy. This hiring policy outlines that Beneficiaries who meet the qualifications will be given priority over all other applicants in all government competitions. During the selection process, where possible, Beneficiaries will be appointed to the selection committees for each competition. Finally, in a competition in which there are or may be Inuktitut-speaking applicants, every effort will be made to have an Inuktitut speaker on the panel (Government of Nunavut—Department of Human Resources, 2005a; Government of Nunavut—Department of Human Resources, 2005b).

*Government of Newfoundland & Labrador.* In support of Section 7.9.5 of the *Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement Act* (LILCA), the Government of Newfoundland & Labrador utilizes preferential hiring of qualified Inuit applicants for public service employment opportunities in specific communities covered by the LILCA. These specific communities are Nain, Hopedale, Rigolet, Postville and Makkovik. Legislative adherence to Section 7.9.5 of LILCA ensures the Government of Newfoundland & Labrador has a public service that is representative of the population of the Inuit Lands and Communities it serves. In addition, the Government of Newfoundland & Labrador advertises positions in Labrador Inuit Lands and Communities with a clause that indicates that priority will be given to qualified Inuit applicants, who must self-identify (J. Berniquez, personal communication, April 27, 2006; K. Ellis, personal communication, April 13, 2006).

*Government of the United States of America.* Under Section 166 of the *Indian and Native American Workforce Investment Act*, it states that support is to be given to American Indians, Alaskan Natives and Native Hawaiians in the areas of employment and training so as to improve literacy skills, and promote economic and social development for these specific indigenous groups (United States Department of Labor, 1998). As a result, the Employment and Training Administration (ETA) Indian and Native American Programs were designed to address the employment, training and educational needs of American Indians, Alaskan Natives and Native Hawaiians (United States Department of Labor, 1998).

*Government of New Zealand.* Provisions within the *State Sector Act* contain language regarding the responsiveness to Maori employment—the need to recognize Maori aims/aspirations and ensure greater involvement of Maori in the public service. This legislation binds all New Zealand government agencies to create human resource management practices and programs (i.e., recruitment initiatives) that support Maori representation within the federal public service (Ministry of Maori Affairs, 2004).

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<sup>10</sup> As a collective, the territorial and federal levels of government represent the largest employment sector in Nunavut.

<sup>11</sup> Representative level is defined as 85% Inuit representation in the Nunavut Government.

It is worth noting that, seven respondents from the Canadian Aboriginal association and Aboriginal labour-related department cohorts discussed the need for employers to move beyond utilizing regulatory requirements in attracting and retaining Aboriginal people within their organizations. These same respondents felt that employers who take the time to clearly and openly articulate how Aboriginal people can contribute to meeting various organizational demands/changes and tapping into new markets (i.e., new goods and services) will be more successful in recruiting and retaining Aboriginal people. Specifically, one respondent posed the question, “*Are you (as an employer) searching for warm bodies as Aboriginal people have the highest unemployment rate in the country or do you (as an employer) truly believe that an Aboriginal employee can bring value to your organization?*”

### ***Career Development***

Within today's job market, individuals are responsible for initiating their own career planning. It is up to individuals to identify their own competencies, search for information about career opportunities and develop their personal career plans (Caverley, 2002). For some people, this can be an overwhelming task. Despite this shift towards employee driven career planning, some employers are realizing the need to develop innovative career development programs to attract and retain employees within their given organizations (Caverley, 2002). In order to enhance professional development, the literature as well as responses from four major cohorts suggested the following effective career development practices and strategies. Where appropriate, examples from organizations and jurisdictions who have applied effective Aboriginal career development practices were brought forth.

**Role Models For Aboriginal Job Seekers.** This involves the publication of articles on various Aboriginal association websites, job sites, and newsletters. Articles focus on topics such as the value of Aboriginal people within the workforce, career opportunities for Aboriginal people, personal profiles of Aboriginal employees working in various sectors and industries, and job coaching techniques which provide insights on key competencies needed in various professions. In addition, Aboriginal speakers’ bureaus facilitate discussion between Aboriginal employees and Aboriginal youth. For example,

*Saskatchewan Job Futures.* This website ([www.saskjobfutures.ca](http://www.saskjobfutures.ca)), based on a partnership between Service Canada and Saskatchewan Learning, publishes various career information about Saskatchewan occupations. In particular, this website has a dedicated career section for Aboriginal people entitled, “Aboriginal Professionals at Work” (<http://www.saskjobfutures.ca/pprofiles/aboriginal.cfm?lang=en&site=graphic>). Within this section of the Saskatchewan Job Futures website, individuals have an opportunity to read career path stories and celebrate the endeavours of Aboriginal people who are working in different occupations across various sectors and industries. As the webpage states, “... follow their lead, and remember that anything is possible if you have the right attitude” (Saskatchewan Job Futures, 2006).

*Government of Saskatchewan.* The Aboriginal Government Employees' Network (AGEN) Speakers' Bureau provides opportunities for Aboriginal government employees from diverse backgrounds, occupations and geographic locations to speak with youth (e.g., Aboriginal students) to encourage them to (a) stay in school and (b) understand the variety of career opportunities available to them in the public service. In addition to providing Aboriginal youth with valuable career information, Speakers' Bureau representatives also serve as role models for their respective communities. Typically, AGEN Speakers' Bureau representatives speak to students about their personal histories, career path and how they have integrated their Aboriginal culture into their respective workplaces (Aboriginal Government Employees' Network, 2006; B. Dagdick, personal communication, April 19, 2006).

**Work Experience Programs.** The development of Aboriginal work experience programs (e.g., internships and summer employment programs) provide Aboriginal youth, undergraduate and graduate students with opportunities to apply their skills as well as gain work experience. In addition, work experience programs expose Aboriginal people to the diversity of career avenues within a given organization. For example,

*Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP).* The RCMP's Aboriginal Youth Training Program provides Aboriginal youth with 17 weeks of summer employment, including three weeks in Regina, Saskatchewan. After returning to a detachment near their home, Aboriginal youth work under the direct supervision and guidance of a regular member of the RCMP (D. Stenger, personal communication, April 13, 2006).

*Government of Canada—Indian and Northern Affairs Canada.* The purpose of INAC's Aboriginal Employment Program is to increase the representation of Aboriginal people at all levels of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC). The Aboriginal Employment Program provides INAC managers with flexibility in terms of Aboriginal employment and better enables them to meet their needs as well as those of INAC's Aboriginal employees and potential recruits (Government of Canada—Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, 2006).

*Government of Saskatchewan.* The Aboriginal Career Connections (ACC) program provides Aboriginal people<sup>12</sup> with paid work experience that can range from six months to three years. Once applicants have been assessed to determine the best fit for the internship (via interviews, written exercises/tests), successful Aboriginal candidates will participate in internships within a given department. Some of the key goals of the ACC Program are to provide Aboriginal interns with valuable work experience, network with organizational representatives (e.g., managers/supervisors, employees, other interns), and develop skills through learning opportunities (B. Dagdick, personal communication, April 19, 2006).

*National Congress of American Indians (United States of America).* The National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) offers internship and fellowship opportunities for young American Indian leaders. Interns and fellows have the opportunity to engage in

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<sup>12</sup> Aboriginal people who received (at a minimum) an undergraduate degree within the last five years.

policy and legislation development, advocacy, and research analysis (National Congress of American Indians—NCAI, 2006).

*Royal Bank of Canada.* The Royal Bank of Canada (RBC) offers the *Aboriginal Stay in School Program*. This program supports educational activities and career opportunities for Aboriginal youth and provides these students with summer employment (M. Hirst, personal communication, April 25, 2006).

*Government of Nunavut.* The Government of Nunavut's Summer Student Employment Equity Program (SSEEP) is designed to provide opportunities<sup>13</sup> for Nunavummiut students<sup>14</sup> to gain meaningful work experience within the Nunavut public service. This program also includes orientation and evaluation components to ensure that students are provided with the necessary support (O. Curley, personal communication, April 25, 2006).

*City of Winnipeg.* The City of Winnipeg offers programs such as the *Youth in Community Services Program* and *Career Awareness Summer Day Camp* in support of providing training and work experience to Aboriginal youth. In addition, as a direct result of *First Steps: Municipal Aboriginal Pathways* (MAP), the City created two paid internship positions for Aboriginal people within the areas of human resource management and engineering (J. Halliburton, personal communication, March 27, 2006).

**Management Development.** According to the 2001 Census, Aboriginal people comprised low workforce percentages in such occupations as management/administration (Statistics Canada, 2004i). As previously mentioned in this research report, 15 respondents from the Canadian Aboriginal association and federal Aboriginal employment program cohorts acknowledged that there is evidence of a human capital disconnect whereby Aboriginal employment programs need to assist Aboriginal people in developing skills within such knowledge-based fields as management, finance and science. Examples of organizations that are assisting Aboriginal people in developing their competencies within these above mentioned fields included:

*Syncrude.* In 2004, Syncrude launched the Aboriginal Financial Management Internship program. This program offers work experience opportunities (at Syncrude) and access to business mentoring/coaching to qualified Aboriginal students<sup>15</sup> who are interested in developing a career in accounting, commerce or another financial-related field (Syncrude Canada Limited, 2006).

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<sup>13</sup> "Opportunities" for Nunavummiut students may include: developing their skills and improving employability after graduation; encouraging successful completion of their studies; enriching their academic programs; helping them evaluate their career options within the territorial public service; and developing a cadre of qualified candidates for future public service appointments (O. Curley, personal communication, April 25, 2006).

<sup>14</sup> In support of the Article 23 of the *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement*, priority hiring consideration is given to Beneficiary students (Government of Nunavut—Department of Human Resources, 2005a; Government of Nunavut—Department of Human Resources, 2005b).

<sup>15</sup> Eligible candidates are Aboriginal students who are studying Business Administration at Keyano College (Fort McMurray, Alberta).

*Government of Nunavut.* In accordance with Article 23 of the *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement*, the Sivuliqtiksatsat Internship Program provides opportunities for up to 14 Beneficiaries to develop their leadership skills. By working at the director, manager and/or program coordinator levels of government, interns gain on-the-job leadership training and access to mentoring and formal education that support their on-going professional development. In partnership with the Kakivak Association and Saint Mary's University, Beneficiary employees can participate in the Nunavut Advanced Management Program that provides formal management training on key topics such as program evaluation, strategic planning and leadership (O. Curley, personal communication, April 25, 2006).

**Clear Career Paths and Associated Resources.** Ten respondents in the Canadian Aboriginal association and federal Aboriginal employment program cohorts acknowledged the need for holistic culturally-sensitive career development tools and resources (e.g., career planning tools) that will encourage and motivate on-going development and advancement of Aboriginal employees within the workplace. For example,

*Aboriginal Human Resource Development Council of Canada.* AHRDCC's *Guiding Circles* is an Aboriginal career pathing tool that blends current career development knowledge with traditional Aboriginal perspectives and values. Developed by Dr. Norm Amundson, Dr. Rod McCormick, and Gray Poehnell, the *Guiding Circles* assists Aboriginal people in developing personalized career circles that incorporate personal interests, skills, values, learning styles, and work/life balance. One of the main goals of the *Guiding Circles* is to provide Aboriginal people with a better understanding of their personal career direction/path. The act of receiving feedback from one's Aboriginal community (e.g., friends, family, elders) is highly encouraged throughout the *Guiding Circles*' career pathing process (Aboriginal Human Resource Development Council of Canada—AHRDCC, 2006).

**Aboriginal Economic Development.** Eight respondents from the Canadian Aboriginal association cohort felt that in addition to work experience programs, Aboriginal economic development initiatives (i.e., entrepreneurships) provide Aboriginal people with key technical skills and guidance to start up or enhance their business ventures. In 2001, there were more than 27,000 self-employed Aboriginal people in Canada and the majority of self-employed Aboriginal workers typically resided off-reserve (85.6%) (Ballardin & O'Donnell, 2006). Between 1996 and 2001, the increase in Aboriginal self-employment (31%) was more than nine times that of the overall Canadian population (Ballardin & O'Donnell, 2006). For example,

*National Center for American Indian Enterprise Development & American Indian Chamber of Commerce of New Mexico (United States of America).* These two organizations coordinate an annual Procurement Fair which offers Aboriginal businesses with the opportunity to meet one-on-one with federal and state contracting officers to (a) obtain information and tips on the government contracting process and (b) network with

contractors and various government agencies for possible contract opportunities (National Center for American Indian Enterprise Development—NCAIED, 2006).

*National Center for American Indian Enterprise Development (United States of America).* The National Center is involved in developing and expanding American Indian-based private sector organizations which employ American Indian labour. Key economic development-based programs offered by the National Center are:

- *Marketing and Procurement Services Program.* The Marketing and Procurement Services Program (MPSP) provides contract identification and procurement assistance to reservation-based businesses in the western United States (e.g., California, Arizona, Colorado). Key services offered through MPSP include bid matching, technical assistance (i.e., training and workshops), and resources (e.g., access to government publications and procurement procedure manuals/guidelines) (NCAIED, 2006); and
- *First American Leadership Awards (FALA) Banquet.* This annual awards event coordinated by the National Center for American Indian Enterprise Development acknowledges the accomplishments and contributions made by American Indians and those who support their economic and business development endeavours. Key awards presented at FALA include the First American Entrepreneurship award and the First American Corporation Leadership award (NCAIED, 2006).

*Government of New Zealand—Ministry of Maori Affairs.* As part of the Ministry of Maori Affairs' business facilitation services, Maori entrepreneurs (owners of small to medium-sized businesses) have access to business mentors who guide and advise them on starting up a business or expanding product and service lines for an existing business (Ministry of Maori Affairs, 2004).

*Government of Canada.* The Government of Canada developed a Procurement Strategy for Aboriginal Business (PSAB) in order to enhance the participation of Aboriginal suppliers who provide goods and services to federal public service departments and agencies. For example, an Aboriginal set-aside was created that enabled all contracts that serve a primarily Aboriginal population and that are worth more than \$5,000.00 to be reserved for competition among qualified Aboriginal businesses (Government of Canada—Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, 2006c).

*Government of Canada—Indian and Northern Affairs Canada.* This federal government department developed, *Journey to Success: Aboriginal Women's Business Guide*. This guide is based on consultations with Aboriginal women in Canada, entrepreneurs, and representatives from Aboriginal women's organizations. In general, the *Journey to Success* guide provides information about entrepreneurship based on the views and perspectives of Aboriginal women in business (Government of Canada—Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, 2006b).

*Ledcor Group.* This private sector organization supports opportunities for Aboriginal suppliers by encouraging Aboriginal participation in various organizational economic development partnerships. Therefore, where a choice exists between Aboriginal and non-local workers, suppliers and related contractors (provided there is no compromise to costs and quality), Aboriginal workers, suppliers and contractors are given preference in winning contracts and creating economic development partnerships with the Ledcor Group (Ledcor Group, 2006).

Overall, respondents within the consultation portion of the research study felt that dedicated Aboriginal-based economic development programs that support business development assist Aboriginal people in a collective journey towards economic independence, community sustainability and self-empowerment.

**Recognition of Aboriginal Educational Achievement.** In addition to guiding and developing Aboriginal people within the current workforce, it is equally important to promote the value of education to the next generation of workers (i.e., Aboriginal youth). Twelve respondents from Canadian Aboriginal association and Aboriginal labour-related department cohorts acknowledged that some employers provide education supports to Aboriginal students by way of scholarships and grants. For example,

*Xerox Canada.* This private sector organization awards up to eight qualified Aboriginal people<sup>16</sup> through the Xerox Canada Aboriginal Scholarship Program. Each award recipient receives \$3,000 every year (for up to four years for university programs and three years for college programs). The program is intended to encourage Aboriginal people to participate in the high tech/digital economy (Xerox Canada, 2006).

*SaskTel.* This telecommunications company offers the Aboriginal Youth Awards of Excellence to Aboriginal youth (aged 13-19) in recognition for their outstanding achievement in one of ten categories (e.g., leadership, education, community services, technology/science) (SaskTel, 2006; S. Mitschke-Hanna, personal communication, April 30, 2006).

*Royal Bank of Canada (RBC) and Cameco Corporation.* RBC offers the Aboriginal Student Awards Program. This program provides annual financial awards (\$4,000) to five Aboriginal students for their post-secondary education (up to a maximum of four years). In addition, award recipients are offered summer employment at RBC. Since 1992, RBC has awarded 59 scholarships totaling \$548,000 (M. Hirst, personal communication, April 25, 2006). The Cameco Corporation (private sector uranium company) offers the Bernard Michel Scholarship. This scholarship provides up to \$20,000 to a Saskatchewan Aboriginal student enrolling in an engineering, commerce or geology program at the University of Saskatchewan. In addition to the \$20,000 award, the award recipient participates in summer employment at Cameco, participates in mentoring with senior Cameco staff members, and engages in a two-year employment contract at Cameco (upon graduation) (Cameco Corporation, 2006).

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<sup>16</sup> Aboriginal student who is Canadian, a full-time student at an approved Canadian post-secondary institution, and registered in a degree or diploma-granting program (e.g., information technology, business).

*Syncrude.* This private sector organization offers two major education awards to Aboriginal students who are pursuing studies that align with various fields such as management/business administration and/or science and technology. They include:

- *Aboriginal/Women Education Awards Program.* This program offers six awards in the areas of science and technology, and finance/business. Two awards of \$2,000 each are awarded to Aboriginal people attending post-secondary educational institutions in programs related to the oil sands industry (i.e., engineering, computer science). Two additional awards of \$2,000 each are awarded to Aboriginal people pursuing studies in finance, accounting and/or business. Finally, two awards of \$2,000 each are presented to women pursuing a degree in science and technology (Syncrude Canada Limited, 2006).
- *Syncrude/Athabasca University Aboriginal Scholarship.* Three scholarships of \$2,500 each are awarded to Aboriginal students at Athabasca University<sup>17</sup> (Syncrude Canada Limited, 2006).

*BC Hydro and Nasittuq Corporation.* BC Hydro provides up to eight Aboriginal scholarships (at \$1,000 per recipient). Similar to Syncrude's Aboriginal scholarship opportunities, BC Hydro awards scholarships to Aboriginal people who plan to enroll or are currently attending a full-time Canadian post-secondary institution (in any field of study) (BC Hydro, 2006). In addition, this organization offers the Randy Brant Memorial Scholarship (\$2,000 award) to a qualified Aboriginal person who demonstrates high academic achievement and outstanding community involvement (BC Hydro, 2006). The Nasittuq Corporation offers an Aboriginal Scholarship Program that awards \$1,000.00 to first year college/university Aboriginal students who are interested in pursuing higher education in one of the following areas of study: electrical engineering; computer science; environmental studies; Aboriginal studies; or business administration (Nasittuq Corporation, 2006).

**Aboriginal Employee Networks.** Aboriginal employee networks are typically based on a collaborative and united effort by various parties to (a) identify employment opportunities for Aboriginal job seekers within a particular jurisdiction, (b) develop support systems for Aboriginal employees to meet and share experiences, and/or (c) connect Aboriginal employees and non-Aboriginal employers in order to discuss methods and strategies for improving recruitment, training, development and promotion/advancement opportunities. For example,

*Government of Canada—Indian and Northern Affairs Canada.* The Committee for the Advancement of Native Employment's (CANE) purpose is to examine, explore and recommend ways to increase the number of Aboriginal people employed within Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC). Key activities that CANE carries out include: proposing strategies and recommendations that support Aboriginal employment through

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<sup>17</sup> Eligible Aboriginal candidates are required to be in degree-granting fields such as management, industrial relations or computing and information systems.

training, advancement and career planning (Government of Canada—Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, 2006a).

*Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP).* The RCMP Aboriginal Employee Council (RAEC) addresses human resource issues affecting Aboriginal employees. This provides a formal mechanism to address Aboriginal employee concerns and opportunities to share work-related experiences and successes. Discussions and issues stemming from the RAEC serve as the basis for committee work to examine and analyze the impact of current policies, procedures and practices. Overall, RAEC seeks to develop national strategies to address issues that impact Aboriginal employees and applicants (D. Stenger, personal communication, April 13, 2006).

*Government of Saskatchewan.* Established in 1992, the Aboriginal Government Employees Network (AGEN) is dedicated to promoting a supportive environment for Aboriginal employees within the workplace and raising awareness around Aboriginal issues. Some of the key activities of AGEN are liaising with provincial government departments and unions, facilitating discussion on barriers to employment for Aboriginal people within government departments, and providing a support mechanism for Aboriginal employees (Aboriginal Government Employees' Network, 2006; B. Dagdick, personal communication, April 19, 2006).

*Royal Bank of Canada.* RBC's Royal Eagles Aboriginal groups provide local networking, mentoring and support to Aboriginal employees. In addition, Royal Eagle members meet as a national group to share best practices and strategies for ensuring that RBC is inclusive and an Aboriginal-friendly workplace. Royal Eagles Aboriginal groups are located in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Ontario (M. Hirst, personal communication, April 25, 2006).

*City of Winnipeg.* As one of the activities identified in the *First Step: Municipal Aboriginal Pathways* policy document, a civic Aboriginal Employee Networking Group was established with the purpose of (a) identifying and removing barriers to enhance the recruitment of Aboriginal people within the City of Winnipeg and (b) identifying ways to support and understand Aboriginal culture (e.g., coordination of National Aboriginal Day celebrations and organization of a one day forum for Aboriginal employees to develop strategies that will help attract and retain Aboriginal employees) (J. Halliburton, personal communication, March 27, 2006).

Finally, respondents within the Canadian Aboriginal association, federal Aboriginal employment program and human resource management professional cohorts acknowledged that the effective human resource management practices outlined within this report are transferable in nature—that is, they can be tailored to assist Aboriginal people currently employed within a given organization or these effective practices may be used to create job opportunities for Aboriginal people who are unemployed or underemployed (depending on the needs and approach taken by a given jurisdiction or organization).

### *Additional Strategic Human Resource Management Factors*

Though it is beyond the scope of this research report, based on the literature as well as from respondents' comments, additional strategic human resource management factors exist that impact and influence Aboriginal employment. They include:

**Aboriginal Awareness Training.** In general, 10 respondents from the Canadian Aboriginal association and federal Aboriginal employment program cohorts stated that there is a need for staff members within private and public sector organizations to participate in Aboriginal awareness training. Aboriginal awareness plays a major role in developing better understanding between Aboriginal communities and non-Aboriginal employers. It has the potential to build the foundation for workplace cohesion (Ferguson & Anderson, 2002). The purpose of Aboriginal awareness training is to provide employee groups such as managers, supervisors, human resource management staff, and customer service staff with an understanding of issues facing Aboriginal people in the workplace. Aboriginal awareness training also provides these above mentioned employees with the necessary skills to effectively communicate and interact with Aboriginal clientele. For example,

*Saskatchewan Association of Health Organizations (SAHO).* This health organization offers two major Aboriginal awareness training sessions. They are:

- *Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE)/Saskatchewan Association of Health Organizations (SAHO) Aboriginal Awareness Training.* Working in partnership, CUPE and SAHO developed a half day workshop that provides employees with Aboriginal Awareness training (Saskatchewan Association of Health Association—SAHO, 2006); and
- *SAHO's Five Module Aboriginal Awareness Training Program.* This program consists of five modules which can be presented in one full day of training or in five 90 to 120 minute sessions. The five modules focus on Aboriginal partnerships, First Nation world views and historical perspectives, treaties and treaty rights in Saskatchewan, and Métis historical perspectives (SAHO, 2006).

*Ledcor Group, BC Hydro and the City of Winnipeg.* BC Hydro, the Ledcor Group and the City of Winnipeg offer Aboriginal awareness training to its employees. Aboriginal awareness training is available to all employees and is designed to provide general information regarding Aboriginal history, contemporary issues faced by Aboriginal people throughout Canada, and strategies for overcoming these issues (BC Hydro, 2006; J. Halliburton, personal communication, March 27, 2006; Ledcor Group, 2006). For BC Hydro, this organization created a DVD on Aboriginal relations which supplements Aboriginal awareness and cross-cultural training sessions. In addition, the Ledcor Group offers Aboriginal cultural training. Ledcor Group's Aboriginal cultural training is project-specific and provides staff members with key competencies for establishing relationships with Aboriginal communities on various initiatives (Ledcor Group, 2006).

Aboriginal awareness training within these above mentioned organizations assists employers in (a) reducing and eliminating negative stereotyping of potential Aboriginal employees, (b) increasing knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal culture, and (c) developing culturally-sensitive skills to enhance service and program delivery to Aboriginal clientele.

**Labour Relations—Collective Bargaining.** Within unionized work settings, a collective agreement serves as a key document for developing contract language that promotes a representative workforce. For example,

*Saskatchewan Association of Health Organizations (SAHO).* As the health employers' official bargaining agent, SAHO recognized that further actions were needed by health care employers to promote and facilitate employment of Aboriginal people. In 2000, SAHO, Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) and Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs (aka. Government Relations and Aboriginal Affairs - GRAA) signed a tripartite partnership agreement to work in a collaborative fashion in developing and implementing a representative workforce where Aboriginal people are present in all occupations in proportion to the provincial population (SAHO, 2006). A second tripartite agreement was signed in 2003 between SAHO, Saskatchewan Union of Nurses (SUN) and GRAA (SAHO, 2006). At present, SAHO continues to work with unions to identify workplace barriers facing Aboriginal employees, identify collective agreement provisions to encourage Aboriginal people to gain access to health care jobs (e.g., inclusion of representative workforce language within collective agreements), and provide Aboriginal awareness training to health care employees (SAHO, 2006).

Within the next section of this report, gaps in Aboriginal employment – particularly in the areas of performance measurement/evaluation and gender are described.

### **Gaps in Aboriginal Employment**

Through the literature review and consultation phases of this research study, there appeared to be two major areas where there was relatively little information (within the academic and practitioner-based literature) that exists which specifically focuses on the issue of Aboriginal employment. These key areas were performance measurement/evaluation and gender.

#### ***Performance Measurement and Evaluation***

In the spirit of accountability and transparency, an increasing number of employment programs and organizations (public and private sectors) in Canada, Australia and the United States have begun to introduce performance measures to ensure their program targets are met. Particularly for publicly-funded employment programs, performance measurement and evaluation analysis (as part of one's program design) provides important information to sponsoring government agencies who ultimately

determine funding levels and the overall sustainability of one's programs and services (Gaiko, Wikle, & Kavanaugh, 1999).

### *Performance Measurement*

Performance measurement is intended to (a) meet the demands for external accountability, (b) establish clear, significant mission goals, and (c) foster a strong sense of internal accountability (Becker, Huselid, & Ulrich, 2001). Beyond workplace representation statistics (e.g., number of Aboriginal people within the workplace), existing literature as well as consultations with representatives from Canadian Aboriginal associations, federal Aboriginal employment programs, Aboriginal labour-related departments, public and private sector organizations revealed limited information on performance measurement and evaluation as it is applied to Aboriginal employment.

Organizations and jurisdictions such as the Government of Australia, Royal Bank of Canada, Bank of Montreal, Government of British Columbia, Government of Saskatchewan, Government of Newfoundland & Labrador, and the City of Winnipeg tend to utilize performance measures which focus primarily on numerical tabulations such as the percentage of Aboriginal employees who are recruited, promoted or who hold leadership/ senior management positions within an organization or jurisdiction. Berger (2006) viewed the exclusive focus on representation targets as a “numbers game... we should not lose sight of the fact that the numbers are also a means to other ends”<sup>18</sup>, not simply an end in themselves” (p. 74). Though representation statistics provide organizations with valuable demographic information about their workplaces, additional performance measures could be incorporated into organizations' broader performance measurement frameworks so as to provide a holistic outlook on monitoring Aboriginal employment strategies, programs and practices.

In addition to the above mentioned internal numerical calculations prepared by organizations and jurisdictions, performance measures developed by *Canadian Business* and PAR appear to represent a select set of national standards for assessing Aboriginal-specific employment initiatives. In 2004, *Canadian Business* identified “top Native leaders – most inclusive workplaces for Aboriginal people” (Holloway, 2004). In terms of the magazine's methodology, a panel of four experts conducted a quantitative analysis on available public data<sup>19</sup> and assigned points in categories such as:

- percentage of employees that are Aboriginal;
- percentage of senior managers that are Aboriginal;
- percentage of employees earning over \$100,000.00 (Canadian dollars) that are Aboriginal; and

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<sup>18</sup> “Other ends” refers to such activities as Inuit People's active participation in the governance of Nunavut, and the design and delivery of culturally sensitive government services/programs (Berger, 2006).

<sup>19</sup> The expert panel's analysis was based on demographic data on the amount of diversity within Canadian organizations (e.g., percentage or number of Aboriginal employees). Through employment equity legislation, workforce demographic data of this nature is made publicly available to Canadians. The panel specifically examined demographic data from 1997 and 2002 for their ranking report (Holloway, 2004).

- percentage hired that are Aboriginal.

Based on the expert panel's point assignment in each of these above mentioned categories, organizations were given a final score/ranking (Holloway, 2004).

As it relates to PAR, this program's particular standards identify Canadian employers that are committed to four specific factors. According to CCAB (2003b), the four factors that organizations are assessed on pertain to:

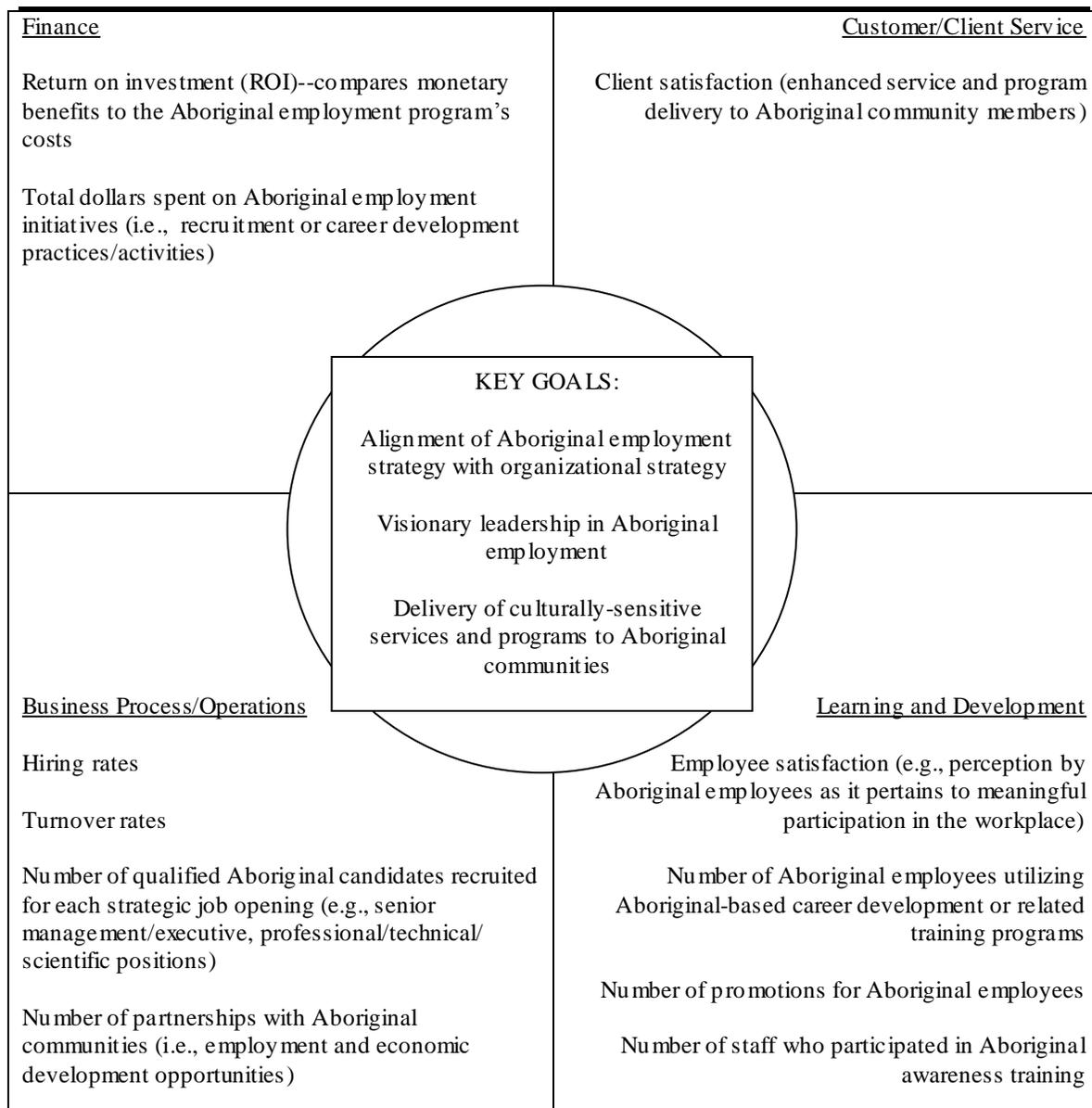
- employment (e.g., total number of Aboriginal employees, type of employment and opportunities for retention and advancement);
- business development (e.g., the nature of accessing Aboriginal suppliers in the purchasing and contracting process);
- individual capacity development (e.g., individual access to training and career development initiatives such as Aboriginal scholarships and summer employment/work experience job placements); and
- community relations (e.g., the establishment of a dialogue process with Aboriginal communities regarding employment and business development).

PAR participants measure their performance through a self-assessment and external verification process. The results are verified via an external paper review and/or on-site review by the National Quality Institute (NQi) – a non-profit organization that has expertise in creating national criteria and providing assessment/verification services (National Quality Institute, 2006). Upon review of the self-report and external verification by NQi, an independent panel of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal business leaders determines the final ranking (Gold, Silver, Bronze or Commitment level) of a given employer (CCAB, 2003a).

Though some organizations are endeavouring to collect and report on Aboriginal-specific workforce demographics, at present, the study of Aboriginal-specific human resource management initiatives cannot clearly identify a direct, causal relationship between a given Aboriginal-specific human resource management initiative and improved access and/or participation of Aboriginal people within the workforce.

Figure 1 applies the major dimensions of the performance measurement “scorecard” approaches (e.g., *Balanced Scorecard*, *HR Scorecard*, *Workforce Scorecard*) to the area of Aboriginal employment. A sample listing of performance measures are provided as examples of key measures that can be incorporated into a more comprehensive measurement and evaluation framework for Aboriginal employment programs.

Figure 1. Sample Measures—Aboriginal Employment



In addition to the lack of a comprehensive set of well-defined performance measures, many public and private sector organizations appear to also lack a structured evaluation framework to examine their respective Aboriginal employment strategies, programs and/or practices.

### *Program Evaluation*

Hanselmann (2003), Gaiko et al. (1999), James et al. (1995), and Mendelson (2004) noted that only a few studies have measured long-term outcomes of employment programs and their impact on Aboriginal people. As Hanselmann (2003) noted, “evaluation is a vital aspect of policy-making and programming, and its absence in the urban Aboriginal context is noticeable” (p. 4). Evaluations can be used to aid individuals within various organizations to make informed decisions relating to program design, resources and budget. Evaluation studies require a researcher to work collaboratively with stakeholders and key individuals who are impacted by the evaluation. Possible reasons for this gap in the Aboriginal employment literature include:

- **Interdepartmental Evaluations.** Aboriginal employment program design, implementation and funding tends to be divided across several federal lines of government. As a result, this requires the need for an interdepartmental evaluation—a typically lengthy and challenging evaluation to perform;
- **Turnover Rates.** Employment service providers tend to change every three to five years; therefore, it is often difficult to evaluate/assess how to improve Aboriginal employment program design (from a longitudinal perspective) when many of the employment programs are experiencing turnover of service providers every couple of years; and
- **Definition of “Effective” and “Successful”.** There is a need to operationalize Aboriginal employment program “effectiveness”. A consistent definition is lacking within the evaluation literature as to what constitutes Aboriginal employment program “success” (i.e., the set of factors that determine employment success). Without a clear and consistent operationalized definition of “effectiveness”, this presents challenges for policy decision-makers and human resource management professionals in adequately evaluating Aboriginal employment program effectiveness over time.

Borg and Gall (1989) outlined four criteria for a strong evaluation. They were:

- **Utility.** Informative, timely and useful information presented to stakeholders;
- **Feasibility.** An appropriate setting is used in conducting the study;
- **Propriety.** Maintenance of high ethical standards; thus, protecting the rights and confidentiality of participants; and
- **Accuracy.** Presentation of valid and reliable data.

Evaluation research offers insight on how useful a program is for particular populations. It offers recommendations on opportunities for improvement with the given program or service. Also, evaluation research measures and ensures accountability in the

management and coordination of programs so as to ensure that adequate resources are in place to support the program. Another gap in the existing Aboriginal employment literature pertains to Aboriginal women within the workforce.

### *Gender Issues*

Overall, literature pertaining to Aboriginal, Native American, Alaskan Native, Aboriginal Australian and Maori women has focused primarily on issues related to social problems (i.e., alcoholism, domestic abuse/violence, suicide) or women's health (i.e., pregnancy and nutrition) rather than employment (Andrew & Rodgers, 1997; Irving, 1990). Organizations such as the Government of New Zealand and Native Women's Association of Canada acknowledged the lack of information and research on Aboriginal, Native American, Alaskan Native, Aboriginal Australian and Maori women. This lack of adequate research has created a barrier for organizations and jurisdictions who are developing effective employment strategies, programs and practices for this particular population. At present, statistical data from each jurisdiction's respective Census appears to be the only major source of information on Aboriginal, Native American, Alaskan Native, Aboriginal Australian and Maori women. For example, "in 2001, 47% of Aboriginal women aged 15 and over were employed, compared with 56% of non-Aboriginal women. Aboriginal women were also less likely than their male counterparts, 47% versus 53%, to be employed that year" (Statistics Canada, 2006, p.198).

Within the Canadian literature, Economic Development for Canadian Aboriginal Women (1995), Kenny (2002), Levesque, Trudeau, Bacon, Montpetit, Cheezo, Lamontagne and Wawanoloath (2001), Steering Committee of the Aboriginal Women in the Canadian Labour Force Project (1993) have reported that Aboriginal women are disadvantaged in the workplace by all of the traditional social and systemic barriers affecting women (i.e., sexism) as well as by all of the racial and geographical barriers affecting the broader Aboriginal population. All too often, Aboriginal women tend to be among the working poor or the unemployed (Kenny, 2002; Levesque et al., 2001). Women are often excluded from getting training from their employers because they are more likely to have part-time or other non-standard employment (i.e., temporary or seasonal employment) (Kenny, 2002; Levesque et al., 2001). Given the escalating costs in education, some Aboriginal women may not be able to participate in training opportunities outside of their workplaces as a means of enhancing their skills, abilities and knowledge (Kenny, 2002; Levesque et al., 2001).

Though studies of this nature have provided readers with further insights on Aboriginal women in the workplace and the Canadian labour market, they are typically limited to examining Aboriginal women in a specific sector, occupation or region of Canada—examining their perspectives and related circumstances at a single point in time typically in a case study or survey format. Overall, Andrew and Rodgers (1997), Irving (1990), Stout and Kipling (1998) noted that very few studies have addressed the issue of employment or employability among Aboriginal people (especially as it pertains to Aboriginal women). Therefore, there appears to be a clear gap in the current research and broader policy literature on Aboriginal women in the workforce.

## Recommendations

Based on an analysis of the major findings and suggestions brought forth within the existing literature and through consultations with representatives from four major cohorts, a series of proposed recommendations are brought forth. The proposed recommendations are intended to (a) encourage further organizational discussions and public policy debate, and (b) suggest next step strategies and actions for improving Aboriginal people's access to the labour market.

### *Research & Analysis*

- **Need for Future Research.** As researchers such as Andrew and Rodgers (1997), Irving (1990), Stout and Kipling (1998) have noted, there is a lack of research on the topic of Aboriginal employment and employability. Therefore, it would be advantageous for researchers within the areas of public policy and administration, human resource management and organizational behaviour to conduct further research on the topic of Aboriginal employment in order to contribute to the broader literature and aid in future policy discussions and action. Examples of key areas for future research include:
  - *Job Search Behaviours of Aboriginal People.* Utilizing a longitudinal research design, this study would identify characteristics of successful job search behaviours in the Aboriginal population. A study of this nature has the potential to provide further insights on the Aboriginal work force as well as provide employers with key information that can aid them in their recruitment and career development strategies;
  - *Aboriginal Career Success.* An examination of factors contributing to Aboriginal career success in key occupations (e.g., executive, management, professional/technical/scientific positions). It would be advantageous to also collect data (over a sustained period of time) on Aboriginal sub-populations such as Aboriginal women, Aboriginal people with disabilities, and Aboriginal people in remote communities (i.e., rural settings, northern communities);
  - *Aboriginal Employment Case Study Analysis.* This would involve an in-depth analysis of a select group of organizations and jurisdictions so as to determine how they successfully implemented Aboriginal-specific employment programs and related initiatives within their respective workplaces or communities. Case study analysis on Aboriginal employment programs has the potential of adding strength to what is already known through previous research. In addition, case studies can offer a detailed contextual analysis of "effective" employment program factors and their relationships to Aboriginal people's participation in the workforce.

- **Enhanced Data Collection on Aboriginal Issues.** James et al. (1995) brought forth the need for enhanced data collection on Native American issues such as collecting extensive (national-wide) information on Native American and Alaskan Native education and employment. This U.S. concept could be applied to Canada in order to aid researchers in analyzing and examining labour and economic factors and outcomes that impact Aboriginal people. Census data from Statistics Canada provides valuable information for human resource management decision-making; however, data from the Census is not available until several years after the survey is conducted—creating a lag in current/up-to-date information for organizations and jurisdictions who are designing and implementing Aboriginal employment strategies. James et al. (1995) went on to suggest the creation of national databases that house research studies, demographic data<sup>20</sup> and related information on Aboriginal employment. These national databases would be made available to organizations and public policy decision-makers to search for relevant research in which to support their strategic planning and policy position papers on Aboriginal issues.
- **Creation of a National Interdisciplinary Consortium on Aboriginal Employment.** The creation of a Canada-wide consortium comprised of employers, labour, researchers, government (municipal, provincial, and federal public service representatives), educators, and human resource management professionals. The purpose of this national interdisciplinary consortium would be to provide a holistic approach towards addressing various issues related to Aboriginal employment. Key activities carried out by this consortium may include (a) identifying existing knowledge on Aboriginal employment, (b) developing research agendas to broaden existing literature and related findings on Aboriginal employment, and (c) communicating/disseminating information on Aboriginal employment to aid employers and government in advancing their strategic planning and policy-making on improving access to employment for Aboriginal people in Canada.

Without sufficient research findings on the topic of Aboriginal employment, it will continue to be a challenging process to bring forth sound public policy and make Aboriginal employment a top priority at a national-level.

### *Public Policy*

- **Shared Responsibility.** There is a need to ensure that shared responsibility exists between Aboriginal organizations, sub-provincial (i.e., municipal), provincial and federal levels of government in improving access to employment for Aboriginal people in Canada. As suggested earlier in this research report, a clear and formal agreement of roles and responsibilities in the area of Aboriginal employment appears to be currently lacking across various provinces, territories and local

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<sup>20</sup> This would include general demographic information about Aboriginal people as well as data on sub-populations such as Aboriginal women, Aboriginal people with disabilities, and Aboriginal people in rural/remote communities.

communities. Berger (2006) and Hanselmann (2003) suggested the use of a Memoranda of Agreement or multipartite agreement to formalize the responsibilities of all parties involved in the funding, resource sharing, coordination and delivery of services related to Aboriginal employment.

### *Infrastructure*

- **Creation of Aboriginal Liaison Officer Positions.** Eleven respondents from the Canadian Aboriginal association and Aboriginal labour-related department cohorts recommended the need for building relations and partnerships between non-Aboriginal organizations and Aboriginal communities. Eight respondents from the Canadian Aboriginal association and Aboriginal labour-related department cohorts suggested the creation of Aboriginal Liaison Officer positions that would be housed within Aboriginal communities. Aboriginal Liaison Officers would work towards coordinating and building partnerships between government, business and Aboriginal communities, specifically as it applies to improving employment and economic development opportunities for Aboriginal people (e.g., coordination of employment/employer forums).
- **Increase the Number of “Aboriginal Career Development Advisor” Positions** (community-based). In addition to Aboriginal Liaison Officer positions, nine respondents from Canadian Aboriginal association and federal Aboriginal employment program cohorts suggested that “Aboriginal Career Development Advisor” positions be increased in Aboriginal communities. These advisor positions would assist Aboriginal people to provide career guidance for Aboriginal job seekers as well as for their family members (i.e., parents) utilizing a blend of contemporary career guidance strategies with traditional Aboriginal practices. The purpose of these positions would be to provide Aboriginal community members with access to career guidance, assessment and career development services so as to allow them to determine their skill levels, identify possible employment avenues and obtain the required education/training needed to enter or sustain their existing employment within the workforce.

### *Strategic Planning*

- **Design and Implement Aboriginal Employment Strategies.** In order to raise the profile of the need to improve labour market access to Aboriginal people, organizations and jurisdictions can adopt long-term Aboriginal employment strategies to (a) set aside appropriate funding and resources for Aboriginal human resource management programs and practices (i.e., recruitment and career development activities), (b) align and support labour market needs, and (c) provide Aboriginal people with access to employment opportunities within the knowledge-based economy (e.g., scientific/technical occupations, finance/insurance positions).

### *Recruitment*

- **Design of a Targeted Recruitment Strategy.** In order to tap into the pool of Aboriginal candidates, a comprehensive targeted recruitment strategy that specifically focuses on attracting members of the Aboriginal community can assist employers in recruiting talent. A comprehensive targeted recruitment strategy (aligned with an organization's respective Aboriginal employment strategy and/or organizational business plan) can assist employers in attracting candidates who are prepared to meet an employer's strategic goals and priorities. One main component of a targeted Aboriginal recruitment strategy would be to identify where Aboriginal job seekers go to find job postings and career information (e.g., Aboriginal radio, Aboriginal television, local newspapers, magazines, community newsletters).

### *Career Development*

- **Improve Access to Career Information.** As previously mentioned, twelve respondents recognized the need for employers (within the public and private sectors) to provide improved access to career information—particularly for Aboriginal people who reside in remote locations (i.e., rural settings, northern communities). Twelve respondents from Canadian Aboriginal association and Aboriginal labour-related department cohorts suggested the creation of on-line Aboriginal Skills Inventories that can provide Aboriginal people with job matching services (matching Aboriginal people's skills with employer job opportunities), personalized education/training plans and related career planning information to prepare Aboriginal people to work in the Canadian labour force.
- **Identify Succession Planning Needs.** Fifteen respondents from the Canadian Aboriginal association, federal Aboriginal employment program, and Aboriginal labour-related department cohorts commented that there is a need for Aboriginal communities to understand succession planning issues facing today's employers. By understanding employers' succession planning needs, Aboriginal communities can begin the process of identifying and implementing enhanced employment, education and training programs which support key skills needed to meet current and future labour market demands within the public and private sectors (i.e., management, science and technology); thus, providing opportunities for Aboriginal people to fully engage in the knowledge economy.

### *Additional Human Resource Management Factors*

- **Increase the Use of Aboriginal Awareness Training.** By building opportunities for non-Aboriginal people and employers to learn about Aboriginal culture, tradition and history, this presents avenues for Aboriginal people and non-Aboriginal employers to learn more about one another, discover ways to effectively communicate and work together within their organizations and the broader community.

- **Coordinate Municipal, Provincial/Territorial and National Employer/Employment Forums.** Ten respondents from Canadian Aboriginal association and Aboriginal labour-related department cohorts recommended the need for employer/employment forums. The purpose of these forums would be to create collaborative relationships between Aboriginal communities, government, and private business in improving Aboriginal people's participation in the labour market.
- **Labour Relations.** Within unionized work environments, it would be advantageous for employers and union(s) to negotiate culturally appropriate language that respects Aboriginal tradition in their collective agreements (e.g., accommodation of Aboriginal spiritual or cultural observances). In addition, collective agreement language can support organizational efforts to promote increased representation of Aboriginal employees in all occupations within a given organization.

### *Leadership*

- **Leadership.** Hanselmann (2003), Lamontagne (2004), Papillon and Cosentino (2004) as well as comments from seven respondents in Canadian Aboriginal association and federal Aboriginal employment program cohorts recognized that if changes are to be made about Aboriginal employment needs, it would be advantageous to encourage members of the Aboriginal community to serve as change agents within organizations or within the broader Canadian political arena. Respondents suggested that members of the Aboriginal community could actively participate on advisory boards and board of directors—providing guidance and expertise on Aboriginal human resource management issues (i.e., recruitment, career development, training, and advancement). In addition, these same respondents also supported the need for increased Aboriginal representation within municipal, provincial and federal politics where Aboriginal politicians can serve as champions and key policy decision-makers on issues such as Aboriginal employment.

### *Finances*

- **Additional Funding and Resources.** Additional money and resources are needed in order to provide access to employment and training opportunities for Aboriginal people. As previously noted, 12 respondents within the Canadian Aboriginal association and federal Aboriginal employment program cohorts mentioned that limited financial resources exist to fully design and implement Aboriginal-specific recruitment and career development programs/practices. These same respondents suggested that funding and resources could take the form of scholarship and internship programs for Aboriginal people as well as dedicated work units within organizations that address the topic of attracting and retaining Aboriginal people in the workplace.

### *Education*

- **Design of an Education Strategy and Campaign for Aboriginal People.** As Berger (2006) stated in the *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement Implementation Contract Negotiations for the Second Planning Period 2003-2013: Conciliator's Final Report*, “you can't speak of employment without speaking of education” (p. 47). Thirteen respondents from the Canadian Aboriginal association and federal Aboriginal employment program cohorts suggested that there is a need to launch a targeted education strategy and campaign to (a) promote the value of learning/training (K-12 as well as post-secondary) especially as it relates to improving Aboriginal people's access to the labour market, and (b) promote the value of higher education in relation to career success in various industries (e.g., public service, science/technology, finance/business administration). Gaiko et al. (1999) felt that education promotion not only needs to be directed towards Aboriginal youth but also their families (e.g., parents and extended family members). These researchers acknowledged that family provides a key support mechanism for Aboriginal youth in achieving success in school.

### *Performance Measurement and Evaluation*

- **Develop a Suite of Aboriginal Employment Performance Measures.** Beyond workplace representation statistics, existing literature revealed limited information on Aboriginal employment-related performance measurement and evaluation. There is a need for the development of a suite of Aboriginal employment measures that can be utilized by organizations and jurisdictions in measuring the success/effectiveness of their respective Aboriginal human resource management programs and practices (e.g., recruitment and career development). In terms of operationalizing the term “effectiveness”, it may be advantageous to partner with the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business and the National Quality Institute to design and implement national performance measures to consistently assess Aboriginal-specific human resource management initiatives.
- **Use of Consistent Program Evaluation Approaches for Aboriginal Employment.** In order to effectively design, deliver and manage employment strategies, programs and practices, it will be necessary for employers and Aboriginal employment program providers to monitor the effectiveness of their initiatives by adopting and implementing consistent program evaluation approaches. Examples of program evaluation approaches that could be utilized in evaluating the success/effectiveness of an organization's Aboriginal-specific human resource management programs and practices include:
  - **Cost-Benefit Analysis.** Musgrave (1969) and Nas (1996) described this evaluation model as a type of analysis that ensures society maintains an optimum level of efficiency in allocating resources. Major components of a cost-benefit analysis include:

- identification of key stakeholders and their values;
  - identification of alternative choices to compare to the program under evaluation;
  - definition of the costs and the benefits;
  - placement of a monetary value on the costs and benefits;
  - identification of intangible benefits;
  - comparison of the costs and benefits; and
  - decision-making regarding the program.
- **Kirkpatrick Four Level Approach** which consists of four levels of evaluation. They are:
- *Reaction (Level 1)*. Participant's overall reaction to a given program;
  - *Learning (Level 2)*. The extent to which new knowledge, skills, techniques and facts have been acquired by a participant;
  - *Behaviour (Level 3)*. This level focuses on changes in a participant's behaviour in relation to the given program; and
  - *Results (Level 4)*. This level examines organizational improvements such as changes in work outputs, quality and cost savings (Kirkpatrick, 1975).
- **Phillips' Return on Investment (ROI) framework**. The ROI framework adds a fifth level to Kirkpatrick's program evaluation framework by including financial accounting as part of a key measure of program success—compares monetary benefits to the program costs (Phillips, 1997).

By establishing a clear and consistent approach to monitoring the long-term effectiveness of various Aboriginal employment program and practices, policy decision-makers and service providers can collectively examine the strengths and limitations of existing employment programs for Aboriginal people.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, this report focused on identifying effective human resource management strategies, practices, programs and policies (specifically in the areas of recruitment and career development) that impact and influence Aboriginal people within the workforce. As it pertains to strategic planning, effective components and principles of Aboriginal employment strategic plans centered around the establishment of: evidence-based planning; dedicated financial/human resources; Aboriginal partnerships; executive champions, clearly defined roles and responsibilities; performance measurement/

evaluation framework; and a communications/marketing plan. Overall, the design and implementation of Aboriginal employment strategic plans in organizations such as the City of Winnipeg, Government of New Zealand, Government of Australia, Syncrude and La Trobe University (Australia) focused on recruiting, training and developing Aboriginal people to work in permanent positions which align and support labour market needs and improve the economic and social conditions of Aboriginal people within their communities.

Effective Aboriginal recruitment practices implemented within organizations such as the RCMP, Royal Bank of Canada, Government of Nunavut, and Government of Newfoundland/Labrador strived to attract Aboriginal candidates and outlined how they (as employers) can benefit from recruiting and retaining qualified Aboriginal employees within a given industry. Key effective recruitment practices and programs for Aboriginal people included: partnerships (relationship building with Aboriginal communities); strategic posting of job opportunities; and legislative adherence. Regarding career development, effective Aboriginal career development practices implemented in organizations such as the Government of Saskatchewan, City of Winnipeg, Syncrude and Ledcor Group centered around the development of: “role model” initiatives for Aboriginal job seekers; work experience programs; management development programs; clear career paths and associated resources; Aboriginal economic development; educational achievement programs; and Aboriginal employee networks. Though it is beyond the scope of this research report, additional human resource management factors such as Aboriginal awareness training and labour relations (collective bargaining) appeared to impact and influence Aboriginal employment.

The report also identified gaps/areas for improvement as it pertains to recruiting and developing Aboriginal people within the Canadian workforce. Through the literature review and consultation phases of this research study, there appeared to be relatively little information on performance measurement/evaluation and gender as it relates to the topic of Aboriginal employment. Researchers such as Hanselmann (2003), Gaiko et al. (1999), James et al. (1995), and Mendelson (2004) noted that only a few studies had measured long-term outcomes of employment programs and their impact on Aboriginal people, while Andrew and Rodgers (1997), Irving (1990), Stout and Kipling (1998) noted that very few studies have addressed the issue of employment or employability among Aboriginal people (especially as it pertains to Aboriginal women). This lack of adequate research has created a barrier for organizations and jurisdictions who are developing effective employment strategies, programs and practices for this particular population.

Proposed recommendations were brought forth (based on the existing literature and respondents’ comments from the consultation portion of the study) as a means of encouraging further discussion and action on improving Aboriginal people’s access to the labour market. Broad theme areas of the proposed recommendations revolved around: research and analysis; public policy; infrastructure; strategic planning; recruitment; additional human resource management factors; leadership; finances; education; and performance measurement/evaluation.

Overall, the findings from this study were intended to provide policy decision-makers and human resource management professionals with further insights in increasing awareness and promoting policy/program coordination so as to improve Aboriginal people's access to the labour market. Organizations and jurisdictions who want to take a proactive approach to recruiting, retaining and developing Aboriginal people can utilize and learn from the strategies, practices and programs presented in this report to build an Aboriginal employment strategic plan and accompanying set of initiatives that are flexible and acknowledge the specific needs of both Aboriginal communities and employers within today's labour market.

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## Appendix A: Detailed Methodology

In addition to the overview of research methods provided on pages 2-5, detailed information about specific methodology components of this report such as: assumptions; general approach; instrumentation; data collection; and procedure for data analysis are presented below.

### *Assumptions*

The following assumptions were expected to prevail throughout this research study:

1. In the consultation portion of the study, it was anticipated that the participants would be honest with their responses. In addition, it was anticipated that the participants would accurately carry out the instructions provided by the principal researcher;
2. There are systemic barriers for Aboriginal people within the workplace and in the broader labour market as it relates to recruitment and career development; and
3. A qualitative approach provides an opportunity to gather relatively rich information that is more easily obtained through open-ended questions rather than highly structured survey instruments.

### *General Approach*

A qualitative approach was used for this research study. This approach explores phenomena in its natural setting via the use of consultations and documentation (i.e., literature review). Qualitative research focuses on how individuals and groups view and understand the world and construct meaning from their experiences (Anderson & Arsenault, 1998). Internal and external validity for qualitative research are established using key principles such as:

- **Awareness and recognition of researcher's assumptions/biases.** This would take the form of researchers acknowledging their biases within the "Assumptions" section of their reports (Anderson & Arsenault, 1998);
- **Acknowledgment of the limitations of the sample population used.** At times, qualitative research does not lend itself well to being generalized to larger populations (Anderson & Arsenault, 1998). Researchers acknowledge these issues within the "Limitations" section of their reports;
- **Utilization of participants' own words.** Qualitative research often uses questionnaires and/or interviews as methodological tools within data collection; When coding and analyzing responses, researchers need to ensure that they do not

skew the context and wording of the participants in order to fulfill the expectations of results within the particular study (Borg & Gall, 1989).

The qualitative approach tends to capture the richness of human experience and looks for exceptions to the rule; however, it should be noted that qualitative research is more difficult to replicate and generalize to larger populations.

#### *Instrumentation*

TICS Inc. drafted four individual sets of open-ended questions for the consultation sessions. The open-ended questions were tailored specifically to each key cohort. These drafts were reviewed by HRSDC, revised, and finalized for use. Please refer to Appendices D, F, H, and J for a copy of the open-ended questions.

The purpose of utilizing open-ended interview questions was not to put participants' ideas, thoughts and beliefs into any preconceived categories rooted in previous studies and/or theories but to tap into the perspectives of the participants involved in this consultation process. Participants who agreed to voluntarily participate in the research study were asked a series of open-ended questions regarding:

- organizational and societal barriers that impact and influence Aboriginal employment practices;
- current and future recruitment and career development needs and gaps within the Canadian workforce;
- current effective policies, programs and practices regarding Aboriginal recruitment and career development; and
- performance measures which determine Aboriginal employment program success.

At no time did the principal researcher supply and predetermine the phrases that were used by respondents to express themselves.

#### *Data Collection*

Respondents who agreed to voluntarily participate in the research study had the option of responding to the open-ended questions via telephone interview or in writing (based on their personal communication preference). Participants were required to participate up to a maximum of one hour. For those respondents who opted for a telephone interview, all sessions were conducted by the principal researcher (Natasha Caverley). The principal researcher collected text information by taking notes during each telephone interview. Note-taking during the consultations helped the principal researcher to facilitate later analysis. Three follow up "friendly reminder" e-mail messages were sent to individuals who had not responded to the open-ended questions.

### *Procedure for Data Analysis*

The principal researcher analyzed the data using content analysis. Content analysis is a process of sorting through the transcribed information from responses to the open-ended questions in order to develop concepts and/or categories (Creswell, 2003; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). Content analysis allowed the principal researcher to search for patterns and elicit themes, dimensions and words that respondents used to describe their thoughts and perspectives on Aboriginal employment.

This process involved reviewing the responses of the 49 participants and grouping the responses into categories such as societal and organizational barriers, recruitment, career development, performance measurement, and partnership building. Key phases of the content analysis involved:

- Reviewing excerpts from the transcribed notes;
- Dividing excerpts and notes into key words and phrases that convey an idea or a comment;
- Attaching words/phrases on cue cards and coding back of the cards to identify the respondent; and
- Sorting the cue cards (using the principal researcher's own professional judgment about what items describe similar things).

The purpose of sorting the responses and categorizing their responses was to identify common themes and sub-themes.

**Appendix B: Listing of participating organizations by key cohort  
(in alphabetical order)**

*Canadian Aboriginal associations\**

TICS Inc. conducted full consultation sessions with 12 representatives from the:

<b>Name of Organization</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>
Aboriginal Human Resource Council of Canada	1
Congress of Aboriginal Peoples**	1
Inuit Tapirisat of Canada	2
Oteenow Employment and Training Society**	1
Métis Nation British Columbia**	1
Métis Nation of Alberta Association**	1
Métis National Council	1
Métis Settlements General Council of Alberta**	1
Native Women's Association of Canada**	1
New Brunswick Aboriginal Peoples Council**	1
United Native Nations Society	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12</b>

*\*This cohort also includes Aboriginal-based employment service providers.*

*\*\*AHRDA holders*

*Federal Aboriginal employment programs*

TICS Inc. conducted full consultation sessions with six representatives from the:

<b>Name of Organization</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>
Aboriginal Workforce Participation Initiative	1
Human Resources and Skills Development Canada – Aboriginal Affairs	1
National Council of Aboriginal Employees	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6</b>

*Aboriginal-related labour departments*

TICS Inc. conducted full consultation sessions with 12 representatives from the:

<b>Name of Organization</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>
City of Edmonton	3
Edmonton Economic Development	1
Government of Alberta – Alberta Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development	1
Government of Manitoba – Department of Education and Training	1
Government of New Brunswick – Aboriginal Affairs Secretariat	1
Government of Newfoundland & Labrador – Department of Labrador & Aboriginal Affairs	1
Government of Nova Scotia – Office of Aboriginal Affairs	1
Government of Ontario – Ontario Secretariat for Aboriginal Affairs	1
Government of Saskatchewan – First Nations and Métis Relations	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12</b>

TICS Inc. collected partial information from one other organizations:

<b>Name of Organization</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>
City of Calgary	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1</b>

*Public and Private Sector Organizations – Human Resource Management Professionals*

TICS Inc. conducted full consultation sessions with 10 representatives from the:

<b>Name of Organization</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>
City of Winnipeg	1
Government of Canada – Department of Justice	1
Government of Newfoundland & Labrador – Public Service Commission	1

<b>Name of Organization</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>
Government of Nunavut – Department of Human Resources	1
Government of Prince Edward Island – Public Service Commission	1
Government of Saskatchewan – Public Service Commission	1
Royal Bank of Canada	1
Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP)	1
SaskTel	1
Winnipeg Regional Health Authority	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>10</b>

TICS Inc. also collected partial information from eight other organizations:

<b>Name of Organization</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>
Assiniboine Community College	1
Bank of Montreal	1
BC Hydro	1
Government of Ontario – Ministry of Government Services	1
Government of New Brunswick – Office of Human Resources	1
Government of New Zealand – Department of Internal Affairs	1
Government of New Zealand – State Services Commission	1
Government of Quebec – Civil Service Commission	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8</b>

**Total number of participants: 49**

### **Appendix C: Request for participation invitation – Canadian Aboriginal associations**

Greetings XXXX,

My name is XXXX. I am a Research Consultant for Turtle Island Consulting Services Inc. in Victoria, British Columbia. At present, I am conducting research on behalf of Human Resources and Social Development Canada (Government of Canada) as part of their *What Works: Effective Policies and Programs for Aboriginal Peoples of Canada* initiative.

The purpose of my research is to identify and evaluate human resource management best practices/policies which impact and influence Aboriginal people within the workforce. The major component of my study involves conducting a targeted literature review focusing on human resource management strategies (e.g., recruitment, career development) which improve access for Aboriginal people within the workforce. In addition, I am conducting a cross-jurisdictional survey of representatives from various Canadian Aboriginal associations. I am particularly interested in your knowledge and experience regarding labour market access for Aboriginal people.

I am requesting that you or another suitable individual participate in my study by responding to the attached questionnaire. The questionnaire consists of eight (8) open-ended questions concerning organizational/societal barriers, recruitment/development issues which impact and influence Aboriginal employment practices.

As a participant, you have the option of completing and returning the questionnaire to me via e-mail or I can arrange to discuss the attached questions by way of a telephone interview at a mutually agreed upon time (anytime between March 20, 2006 – April 14, 2006). I anticipate that either option will take 30-60 minutes in length.

If you have any questions and/or comments regarding the above mentioned research study, please feel free to contact me by e-mail at: XXXX

Should you require any additional information regarding the broader Human Resources and Social Development Canada *What Works: Effective Policies and Programs for Aboriginal Peoples of Canada* initiative, you can contact Jenn Scribner (Project Authority) at (819) 934-6321 or by e-mail at: [jennifer.scribner@hrsdc-rhdcc.gc.ca](mailto:jennifer.scribner@hrsdc-rhdcc.gc.ca)

I thank you in advance for your interest and participation in this study!

Sincerely,

XXXX

Turtle Island Consulting Services Inc.

## **Appendix D: Questions – Representatives from Canadian Aboriginal associations**

### *Background*

1. Can you describe the nature of your work related to career development and employment for Aboriginal people?

### *Societal and Organizational Barriers*

2. Based on your experience and expertise, what are the top three challenges facing Aboriginal people (as it pertains to employment) within today's Canadian labour market?
3. Based on your experience and expertise, what are the top three changes that are needed to help Aboriginal people access or improve employment opportunities within today's Canadian labour market?

### *Recruitment*

4. Based on your experience and expertise, do you have any suggestions that might help Canadian employers (within the public and private sectors) with recruiting Aboriginal people?
  - a) For example, knowing Aboriginal people you have worked with and the job market they face, do you have any reflections about what Aboriginal people are looking for in a job or career?
  - b) Do you have ideas about how Canadian employers (within the public and private sectors) might do a better job in contacting Aboriginal people to work in their organizations?
5. Can you suggest any recommended readings (e.g., reports, research articles) regarding effective recruitment practices for Aboriginal people?

### *Career Development*

6. Based on your experience and expertise, do you have any suggestions that might help Canadian employers (within the public and private sectors) with developing the careers of Aboriginal people?
7. Can you suggest any recommended readings (e.g., reports, research articles) regarding effective career development practices for Aboriginal people?

*Building Partnerships*

8. As it pertains to improving Aboriginal people's access to the Canadian labour market, what are some recommended methods to foster partnerships between Aboriginal organizations, government and private business?

**Thank you for your participation!**

## **Appendix E: Request for participation invitation – Federal Aboriginal employment programs**

Greetings XXXX,

My name is XXXX. I am a Research Consultant for Turtle Island Consulting Services Inc. in Victoria, British Columbia. At present, I am conducting research on behalf of Human Resources and Social Development Canada (Government of Canada) as part of their *What Works: Effective Policies and Programs for Aboriginal Peoples of Canada* initiative.

The purpose of my research is to identify and evaluate human resource management best practices/policies which impact and influence Aboriginal people within the workforce. The major component of my study involves conducting a targeted literature review focusing on human resource management strategies (e.g., recruitment, career development) which improve access for Aboriginal people within the workforce. In addition, I am conducting a cross-jurisdictional survey of representatives from Federal Aboriginal employment programs. I am particularly interested in your knowledge and experience regarding recruitment and career development policies, programs and practices for Aboriginal people.

I am requesting that you or another suitable individual participate in my study by responding to the attached questionnaire. The questionnaire consists of six (6) open-ended questions which center around current policies, programs and practices regarding Aboriginal recruitment and career development as well as key performance measures which determine Aboriginal employment program success.

As a participant, you have the option of completing and returning the questionnaire to me via e-mail or I can arrange to discuss the attached questions by way of a telephone interview at a mutually agreed upon time (anytime between March 20, 2006 – April 14, 2006). I anticipate that either option will take 30-60 minutes in length.

If you have any questions and/or comments regarding the above mentioned research study, please feel free to contact me by e-mail at: XXXX

Should you require any additional information regarding the broader Human Resources and Skills Development Canada *What Works: Effective Policies and Programs for Aboriginal Peoples of Canada* initiative, you can contact Jenn Scribner (Project Authority) at (819) 934-6321 or by e-mail at: [jennifer.scribner@hrsdc-rhdcc.gc.ca](mailto:jennifer.scribner@hrsdc-rhdcc.gc.ca)

I thank you in advance for your interest and participation in this study!

Sincerely,

XXXX

Turtle Island Consulting Services Inc.

## **Appendix F: Questions – Representatives from Federal Aboriginal employment programs**

### *Background*

1. Can you describe the nature of your work related to career development and employment for Aboriginal people?

### *Societal and Organizational Barriers*

2. Based on your experience and expertise, what are the top three challenges facing Aboriginal people (as it pertains to employment) within today's Canadian labour market?
3. Based on your experience and expertise, what are the top three changes that are needed to help Aboriginal people access or improve employment opportunities within today's Canadian labour market?

### *Aboriginal employment program*

4. Please describe your Aboriginal employment program...
  - a) What led to the design and development of your Aboriginal employment program?
  - b) What is the overall purpose of your Aboriginal employment program?
  - c) What are the key objectives of your Aboriginal employment program?
  - d) What are the key activities associated with your Aboriginal employment program?
  - e) Could you provide me with a copy of any reports and/or briefings describing your Aboriginal employment program?

### *Performance Measurement*

- 5a. Are there any performance measures associated with your Aboriginal employment program (e.g., how do you measure the effectiveness of your Aboriginal employment program)?
- 5b. If so, could you list these performance measures?

### *Key Readings*

6. Can you suggest any recommended readings (e.g., reports, research articles) regarding effective employment practices for Aboriginal people?

**Thank you for your participation!**

## **Appendix G: Request for participation invitation – Aboriginal-related labour departments**

Greetings XXXX,

My name is XXXX. I am a Research Consultant for Turtle Island Consulting Services Inc. in Victoria, British Columbia. At present, I am conducting research on behalf of Human Resources and Social Development Canada (Government of Canada) as part of their *What Works: Effective Policies and Programs for Aboriginal Peoples of Canada* initiative.

The purpose of my research is to identify and evaluate human resource management best practices/policies which impact and influence Aboriginal people within the workforce. The major component of my study involves conducting a targeted literature review focusing on human resource management strategies (e.g., recruitment, career development) which improve access for Aboriginal people within the workforce. In addition, I am conducting a cross-jurisdictional survey of representatives from provincial, territorial, sub-provincial (e.g., municipal), federal and international jurisdictions. I am particularly interested in your knowledge and experience regarding recruitment and career development policies, programs and practices for Aboriginal people.

I am requesting that you or another suitable individual participate in my study by responding to the attached questionnaire. The questionnaire consists of eight (8) open-ended questions which center around current strategies and practices regarding Aboriginal employment within your jurisdiction.

As a participant, you have the option of completing and returning the questionnaire to me via e-mail or I can arrange to discuss the attached questions by way of a telephone interview at a mutually agreed upon time (anytime between March 20, 2006 – April 14, 2006). I anticipate that either option will take 30-60 minutes in length.

If you have any questions and/or comments regarding the above mentioned research study, please feel free to contact me by e-mail at: XXXX

Should you require any additional information regarding the broader Human Resources and Social Development Canada *What Works: Effective Policies and Programs for Aboriginal Peoples of Canada* initiative, you can contact Jenn Scribner (Project Authority) at (819) 934-6321 or by e-mail at: [jennifer.scribner@hrsdcc.gc.ca](mailto:jennifer.scribner@hrsdcc.gc.ca)

I thank you in advance for your interest and participation in this study!

Sincerely,  
XXXX

Turtle Island Consulting Services Inc.

## **Appendix H: Questions – Representatives from Aboriginal-related labour departments**

### *Background/General*

1. Can you describe the nature of your work related to Aboriginal employment?

### *Societal and Organizational Barriers*

2. Based on your experience and expertise, what are the top three challenges facing Aboriginal people (as it pertains to employment) within today's Canadian labour market?
3. Based on your experience and expertise, what are the top three changes that are needed to help Aboriginal people access or improve employment opportunities within today's Canadian labour market?

### *Aboriginal Employment Strategy – Policy & Planning*

- 4a. Does your jurisdiction have an employment strategy which supports access to jobs for Aboriginal people?
- 4b. If so, please describe this strategy...
  - (i) What led to the design of your jurisdiction's Aboriginal employment strategy?
  - (ii) What are the key objectives your jurisdiction's Aboriginal employment strategy?
  - (iii) What are the key activities associated with your jurisdiction's Aboriginal employment strategy?
  - (iv) What are the top three successes in implementing your jurisdiction's Aboriginal employment strategy?
  - (v) What are the top three challenges in implementing your jurisdiction's Aboriginal employment strategy?
  - (vi) Could you provide me with a copy of your jurisdiction's Aboriginal employment strategy?

### *Performance Measurement & Statistics*

- 5a. Are there any performance measures associated with your Aboriginal employment strategy (e.g., how do you measure the effectiveness of your Aboriginal employment strategy)?
- 5b. If so, could you list these performance measures?

- 6a. What types of statistics does your department/ministry track regarding Aboriginal employment (please list)?
- 6b. If possible, can you provide me with recent annual Aboriginal employment data (2003, 2004 and 2005) for your jurisdiction?

*Building partnerships*

7. As it pertains to improving Aboriginal people's access to the Canadian labour market, what are some recommended methods to foster partnerships between Aboriginal organizations, government and private business?

*Key readings*

8. Can you suggest any recommended readings (e.g., reports, research articles) regarding effective employment practices for Aboriginal people?

**Thank for your participation!**

**Appendix I: Request for participation invitation: Private and public sector human resource management professionals**

Greetings XXXX,

My name is XXXX. I am a Research Consultant for Turtle Island Consulting Services Inc. in Victoria, British Columbia. At present, I am conducting research on behalf of Human Resources and Social Development Canada (Government of Canada) as part of their *What Works: Effective Policies and Programs for Aboriginal Peoples of Canada* initiative.

The purpose of my research is to identify and evaluate human resource management best practices/policies which impact and influence Aboriginal people within the workforce. The major component of my study involves conducting a targeted literature review focusing on human resource management strategies (e.g., recruitment, career development) which improve access for Aboriginal people within the workforce. In addition, I am conducting a cross-jurisdictional survey of public and private sector human resource management professionals. I am particularly interested in your knowledge and experience regarding recruitment and career development policies, programs and practices for Aboriginal people within your given organization.

I am requesting that you or another suitable individual participate in my study by responding to the attached questionnaire. The questionnaire consists of eight (8) open-ended questions which center around current policies, programs and practices regarding Aboriginal recruitment and career development as well as key performance measures which determine Aboriginal employment program success.

As a participant, you have the option of completing and returning the questionnaire to me via e-mail or I can arrange to discuss the attached questions by way of a telephone interview at a mutually agreed upon time (anytime between March 20, 2006 – April 14, 2006). I anticipate that either option will take 30-60 minutes in length.

If you have any questions and/or comments regarding the above mentioned research study, please feel free to contact me by e-mail at: XXXX

Should you require any additional information regarding the broader Human Resources and Social Development Canada *What Works: Effective Policies and Programs for Aboriginal Peoples of Canada* initiative, you can contact Jenn Scribner (Project Authority) at (819) 934-6321 or by e-mail at: [jennifer.scribner@hrsdc-rhdcc.gc.ca](mailto:jennifer.scribner@hrsdc-rhdcc.gc.ca)

I thank you in advance for your interest and participation in this study!

Sincerely,

XXXX

Turtle Island Consulting Services Inc.

## **Appendix J: Questions – Public and private sector human resource management professionals**

### *Background*

1. Can you describe the nature of your human resource management work related to recruitment and career development of Aboriginal people?

### *Recruitment*

2. Please describe your organization's best (i.e., most effective) recruitment practices in the hiring of Aboriginal people?
  - i) What led to the design and development of your organization's Aboriginal recruitment practices?
  - ii) What are the key objectives of your organization's Aboriginal recruitment practices?
  - iii) What are the key activities associated with your organization's Aboriginal recruitment practices?
  - iv) What are the top three successes in implementing your organization's Aboriginal recruitment practices?
  - v) What are the top three challenges in implementing your organization's Aboriginal recruitment practices?
  - vi) Could you provide me with a copy of any reports and/or briefings describing your organization's Aboriginal recruitment practices?
- 3a. Are there any performance measures associated with your Aboriginal recruitment practices (e.g., how does your organization measure the effectiveness of its Aboriginal recruitment practices within the organization)?
- 3b. If so, could you list these performance measures?

### *Career Development*

4. Please describe your organization's best (i.e., most effective) career development practices for Aboriginal people within your workplace?
  - i) What led to the design and development of your organization's Aboriginal career development practices?
  - ii) What are the key objectives of your organization's Aboriginal career development practices?
  - iii) What are the key activities associated with your organization's Aboriginal career development practices?
  - iv) What are the top three successes in implementing your organization's Aboriginal recruitment practices?
  - v) What are the top three challenges in implementing your organization's Aboriginal recruitment practices?

- vi) Could you provide me with a copy of any reports and/or briefings describing your organization's Aboriginal career development practices?
- 5a. Are there any performance measures associated with your Aboriginal career development practices (e.g., how does your organization measure the effectiveness of its Aboriginal career development practices within the organization)?
- 5b. If so, could you list these performance measures?

*Additional Aboriginal Initiatives*

- 6a. Does your organization have additional initiatives which support Aboriginal employment?
- 6b. If so, please describe each additional Aboriginal employment initiative.
  - i) What led to the design and development of your organization's additional Aboriginal employment initiative?
  - ii) What is the purpose of your organization's additional Aboriginal employment initiative?
  - iii) What are the key objectives of your organization's additional Aboriginal employment initiative?
  - iv) What are the key activities with your organization's additional Aboriginal employment initiative?
  - v) What are the top three successes in implementing your organization's additional Aboriginal initiative?
  - vi) What are the top three challenges in implementing your organization's additional Aboriginal initiative?
  - vii) Could you provide me with a copy of any reports and/or briefings describing your organization's additional Aboriginal employment initiative?
- 7a. Are there any performance measures associated your additional Aboriginal employment initiatives (e.g., how does your organization measure the effectiveness of these additional Aboriginal employment initiatives)?
- 7b. If so, could you list these performance measures (for each additional Aboriginal employment initiative)?

*Building partnerships*

- 8. As it pertains to improving Aboriginal people's access to the Canadian labour market, what are some recommended methods to foster partnerships between Aboriginal organizations, government and private business?

**Thank you for your participation!**