



CANADIAN INTERAGENCY FOREST FIRE CENTRE INC.
CENTRE INTERSERVICES DES FEUX DE FORÊT DU CANADA INC.

CIFFC Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Framework

Fall 2021

Prepared by:

Satya Inc.

TRUTH. TRUST. TRANSFORMATION

&

Vaughan Consulting

Creating the Workplace of Tomorrow...

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COMMITMENT STATEMENT

Welcome! On behalf of the CIFFC Board of Directors, Management Committee, and all of the federal, provincial, and territorial wildland fire management member agencies, I am thrilled to present to you CIFFC's Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Framework!

We here at CIFFC have the tremendous privilege and responsibility of facilitating the deployment of wildland firefighting resources across Canada and around the world. We take that responsibility very serious and are committed to ensuring that all deployed resources are safe and healthy throughout their deployment, both physically and psychologically. We know from our 2020 national survey of deployed members that not everyone is experiencing deployments in the same way. We know that for some, harassment and bullying occur during those times, and we are committed to putting a stop to that.

We have been working with our CIFFC team and our consultants to better understand the issues and develop a plan for moving CIFFC and all deployed members to a more inclusive and safe working environment.

Let me be unequivocal: CIFFC and its member agencies find no place for harassment, bullying, or other forms of disrespectful workplace behaviors by deployed personnel or contractors, and we are working hard to create an environment where those behaviors are not tolerated or accepted.

This framework is just the beginning of the work we will undertake in the coming year(s) to tackle the negative parts of our firefighting culture that allow these types of behaviors to continue, while preserving the positive parts of our culture that give us such pride in our work and the service we provide to the communities we serve.

As the Executive Director of CIFFC, I commit to all of you that our process for creating this change will be transparent, that we will include all of you as we move through our plans, and that we will report back regularly on the status of those plans. We won't be perfect but know we will continue to be committed to this change and to making the Canadian Wildland Firefighting landscape a better one for everyone.

Stay safe,

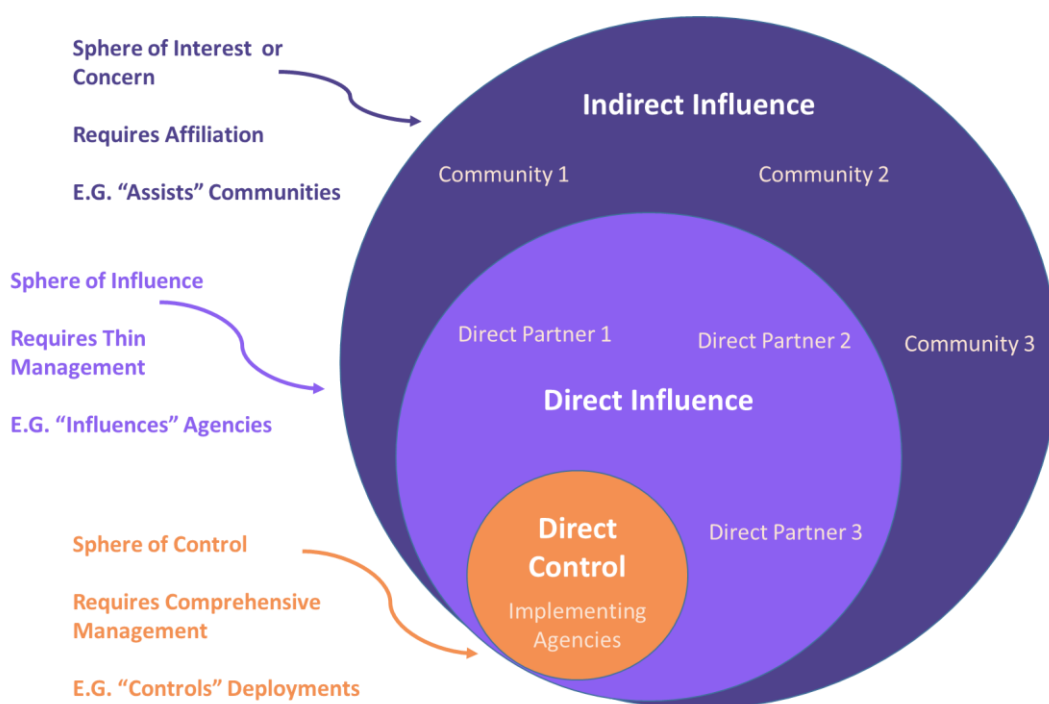


*Kim Connors
Executive Director
Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre Inc.*



INTRODUCTION

The Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre (CIFFC) is a not-for-profit corporation owned and operated by federal, provincial, and territorial wildland fire management agencies to coordinate resource sharing, mutual aid, and information sharing. In 2020, CIFFC’s mandate was expanded to include ownership of FireSmart Canada and coordination of prevention and mitigation. CIFFC’s role within the wildland firefighting landscape is one of coordination and influence. While they have little direct “authority” or “control” over partner agencies and stakeholders, they do have a cooperative relationship with them, and it is this relationship and common purpose that can be leveraged to influence adoption of this Framework. CIFFC has been working hard to create internal capacity and expertise in EDI issues and has the ability to be a leader in this space nationally and internationally through its internal working groups and through external partnerships.



Project Background

CIFFC’s journey on the path towards enhanced equity, diversity and inclusion has been longstanding. In 2017, CIFFC, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, and Parks Canada hosted a National Forum on Gender and Diversity Issues that resulted in a series of recommendations. That critical first step in addressing EDI issues resulted in the creation of several recommendations. Those recommendations have all been either implemented or integrated into the recommendations of this framework. To further understand the issues, in 2020 CIFFC commissioned an Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Survey of all people who had been deployed in the previous three years. Those survey results, and subsequent engagement sessions highlighted some areas of concern and reinforced the need for change and resulted in a series of recommendations that were shared with CIFFC in the CIFFC Respectful Workplace Culture Assessment Report. To begin actioning those recommendations, in May of 2021, CIFFC began further discussions to

address culture change in the Canadian wildland fire community in response to those continued distinct, yet compounding issues around diversity, inclusion, and respect in the wildfire culture. To that end, CIFFC began working with Satya Inc. and Vaughan Consulting (“the Consultants”) to provide expertise in developing strategies to advance these issues, both within CIFFC and within the larger wildland fire community across Canada.

The objectives for the entire project included:

- Provide a clear understanding of the current state with respect to the deployment experience and the culture within the Canadian wildland fire community while on deployment.
- Provide a collective understanding of the purpose of a framework to integrate Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion within the Canadian wildland fire community.
- Clearly define what the integration of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) into the Canadian wildland fire community means.
- Define the roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders.
- Identify a process for incorporating psychological health and safety into a diversity and inclusion framework.
- Define the expected outcomes, including mental health outcomes, resulting from implementation of a framework.

The first step in the project began in June 2020 with the creation and execution of CIFFC’s first ever “Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Survey” for staff deployed through CIFFC over the past 3 years. Following that critical piece of data collection, the consultants undertook the next phase of the project, which helped validate the quantitative data collected by hosting a number of qualitative focus groups and online discussions with CIFFC deployed members from across Canada, along with a Diversity Audit of all available CIFFC documents. That phase also included additional analysis of relevant information to assess the current state and included an environmental scan to highlight trends and issues in the external environment, a literature review to summarize the existing scholarly research that could provide insight, and the completion of a SWOT analysis to enable a complete understanding of CIFFC’s diversity, inclusion and respectful workplace strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

The next phase of the project was the development of a national approach to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, through the development of a CIFFC Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion Framework. In this phase, CIFFC has made some fundamental choices about values, vision, mission, areas of emphasis and goals and crafted those into a framework and operational action plans to implement the recommendations with goals, activities, tasks, responsibilities, timelines, resources, and evaluation metrics.

Project Alignment

This Diversity and Inclusion Framework is meant to align with, and cascade from CIFFC’s Strategic Plan. Although the current Strategic Plan is expiring and is currently under review, that is not critical to the work of this project. It is only important to understand that the Strategic Plan is the overarching document from which this work falls. We are confident that CIFFC’s new or updated Strategic Plan will place a strong emphasis on equity, diversity, and inclusion, and that this framework will compliment it. Subsequent annual Action Plans created to tackle the implementation of the CIFFC EDI Framework recommendations will flow from this report.



Organizations that rely on people to execute their mission and achieve business goals must develop an equity, diversity, and inclusion approach that aligns their goals and objectives with respectful, equitable and inclusive treatment in the workplace. As CIFFC embarks on their EDI journey, it is important that they have a framework to guide their efforts. This framework will serve as a road map to the organizational and people management systems that should be implemented, changed, or eliminated as they strive towards sustainable EDI programming and practices.

CRITICAL ELEMENTS OF THE FRAMEWORK

To embark on a robust equity, diversity, and inclusion culture change, a number of steps must be taken to ensure CIFFC, partner agencies, stakeholders, and associated personnel are all oriented and aligned on the who, what, when, and how of the change. To achieve that orientation and alignment, it will be critical for CIFFC to articulate the following:

1. **PURPOSE & BENEFIT:** Identify the purpose and benefits of developing and implementing an equity, diversity, and inclusion framework, and “what’s in it for them.”

2. LEADERSHIP: Identify who will be responsible for creating, leading, and actualizing the framework.
3. READYING: Identify how the framework and its action plans will prime the organization and its stakeholders to ensure readiness for the change.
4. CLARITY ON THE END STATE: Identify what the desired future state, or “success” will look like.
5. ARTICULATING THE FRAMEWORK: Identify and communicate what the actual framework and action plans are.
6. MONITORING AND ASSESSING THE FRAMEWORK AND PLANS: Identify how the action plans will be monitored and assessed, and what the metrics for assessment will be.
7. REPORTING ON THE STATUS OF THE ACTION PLANS: Identify how the results will be reported, both internally and externally.

The remainder of this framework will address how CIFFC can best address these key sections to maximize its work efforts to the greatest outcomes.

Step 1: Purpose and Benefit

Identify the purpose and benefits of developing an equity, diversity, and inclusion framework.

At its core, the ultimate goals of having an EDI framework are simple:

1. To create a better, more equitable work environment.
2. To advance an inclusive culture.
3. To improve organizational effectiveness.

The benefits of having an equitable, diverse, and inclusive workplace are many, key amongst them being an increased capacity for problem solving, innovation, and an increased likelihood to be more open to the possibility of creative changes for the betterment of the service delivery. In addition, having a diverse workforce that better reflects the communities being served increases trust and confidence in the organization by those very communities.

“Diversity is not a problem to be managed, it is value added to your service”

Fire Chief jona olsson, 2002

CIFFC’s current Strategic Plan (2019-2021) contains several relevant “themes” that align with their desire to create an EDI Framework and will help guide the framework to ensure that the mission and values are not compromised. These include:

CIFFC Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Framework

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- Continuous improvement and safety culture.
- Maintaining the status of CIFFC as an independent facilitator and nexus for interagency and international cooperation.
- A commitment to ensuring a continued focus on equality and inclusion for all people engaged in the CIFFC community.

CIFFC’s organizational values provide guidance for performance and conduct and form the foundation of the CIFFC cooperative network. They help CIFFC to achieve their vision and can be pointed to as the foundation for the EDI framework. The CIFFC Values are:

- A safety-first attitude and culture in ourselves and our workforce.
- Excellence and efficiency in all activities.
- The maximization of combined benefits to all member agencies.
- Transparent, consultative, and fiscally responsible decision making.
- Environmentally and socially responsible business practices.
- Integrity and respect in all dealings among members agencies, staff, clients, and partners.
- Resolution of issues through discussion and cooperation to achieve common goals.
- Ownership of work and responsibility for decisions.

CIFFC’s Management Committee has indicated that they want an EDI Framework for a variety of reasons, including:

- They wish to cultivate a productive and engaging workplace culture, both on deployments and in day-to-day CIFFC operations and decision making.
- They want to provide a better experience for deployed members.
- They understand and believe that a diverse team will lead to better outputs and increased productivity.
- They wish to be global leaders in the Wildland firefighting landscape and be a resource for partner agencies in the EDI space.

It is clear from the data collected to date that this work in moving CIFFC and the Canadian wildland firefighting community towards a more inclusive, respectful, and professional workplace is critical. While many respondents reported a positive deployment experience, that was not the case for all. Some survey respondents spoke about feeling left to their own devices while on deployment (and in their own agencies) when it came to understanding issues of harassment and disrespect, how to react to and respond to those issues, and how to eliminate them.

“Agency briefings covered operations and safety well, but not the procedures around bullying, harassment, etc.”

CIFFC Survey Respondent, 2019

By creating this framework, CIFFC has the opportunity to be at the forefront both nationally and internationally in creating the necessary change to the industry. The Centre for Global Inclusion (2021) lists the following as some of the benefits to an organization of a well thought out and executed EDI framework:

- Achieve its organizational vision, mission, strategy.
- Live its values.
- Attract and retain diverse talent.
- Build strong and high-performing teams.
- Cultivate engaged leaders who inspire inclusion and champion diversity.
- Leverage a range of backgrounds and skills to enhance creativity, innovation, and problem solving.
- Increase engagement, motivation, and productivity.
- Improve the quality of work/life integration.
- Enhance the organization’s reputation/brand as an employer or provider of choice.
- Minimize risk and exposure to ensure compliance with legal requirements.
- Sustain an environment that treats people fairly and equitably.

Certainly, CIFFC will achieve similar benefits by creating a CIFFC-unique, CIFFC-driven framework. Having such a framework allows CIFFC, and by extension, its partner agencies and stakeholders, to evolve the culture. By creating a more diverse and inclusive deployment and work experience, the outcome should be a stronger workforce that is better positioned to respond to the mission at hand, that being public safety. Research tells us that increased diversity brings more innovative teams that outperform traditionally homogeneous teams. Diverse teams are typically better problem-solvers and stronger for it. Creating a diverse team alone, however, is not the answer. As Dr. Angela Workman-Stark (2017) says “diversity coupled with assimilation is no longer a viable strategy”.

Many organizations make the mistake of simply focusing on increasing the recruitment of diverse personnel, while paying very little attention to the necessary work to ensure the culture is primed and ready to receive those personnel. Without a significant change in culture to one that accepts diversity, embraces the strengths of diverse experiences and perspectives, and cultivates and leverages those differences, attracting and retaining diverse personnel will be difficult, and the benefits of diversity will not be realized.

CIFFC must be clear in all its communications with employees, stakeholders, deployed personnel, and contractors that EDI is a value-added proposition for the organization, that diversity brings strength to the organization, that EDI is a critical component of a safe and healthy workplace, and that it is at the forefront of everything they do.

Step 2: Leadership

Identify who will be responsible for creating, leading, and actualizing the Framework and action plans.

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CIFFC has taken many steps to date to support an equitable, diverse, inclusive workplace, but building and maintaining an inclusive and respectful workplace requires the ongoing support, commitment, and resources of many groups. They are committed to continuing to work with partners, members, and stakeholders to advance this framework and leverage the collective knowledge, expertise, and opinions of everyone involved.

While CIFFC's EDI Framework and subsequent action plans will be administered by the Executive Director and fall under the purview of the Management Committee for oversight and accountability, ultimately everyone in the organization and partner agencies "owns" the EDI initiatives. Involving the Management Committee as the governance body strategically ensures that the framework includes diverse perspectives, that it will be empowered to institute changes association wide, and that it will engage all levels of the organization.

For an EDI framework to be successful, leadership across the organization must model the behavior, values, and norms that foster an equitable and inclusive workplace. It is imperative for individual leaders to be on their own EDI journey (leading the self) while inspiring peers and their direct reports (leading others). As a component of this framework, the Management Committee will:

- Support staff in ensuring inclusive workplace practices and achieving the mainstreaming of diversity and inclusiveness issues.
- Support the development and monitor the progress of initiatives that enable CIFFC to provide inclusive programs, services and support that fosters a diverse and inclusive workplace.
- Support CIFFC to fulfill its statutory obligations with respect to diversity and respectful workplace behaviours.
- Harness insights and ideas to enhance equity, diversity, and inclusiveness across the Canadian wildland fire landscape.

Ultimately, regardless of their position in the organization, every member has a role to play in creating and maintaining an equitable, diverse, and inclusive workplace. It is the responsibility of everyone to lead by example and act as role models for others. These responsibilities include:

Deployed Personnel:

- Practice inclusion.
- Demonstrate respect for differences.
- Work together.
- Understand and accept workplace expectations.
- Commit to their own development, competence, and understanding of EDI issues.

Supervisors:

- Communicate expectations.
- Address issues.
- Promote fairness.
- Commit to their own development, competence, and understanding of EDI issues.

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- Provide opportunities for their personnel to develop a greater competence in EDI uses.
- Embrace and model the desired culture for the workforce.

Management:

- Champion Inclusion.
- Integrate into plans and measures.
- Ensure accountability.
- Provide the necessary learning opportunities for staff and managers to ensure an understanding of the issues and their individual and collective roles in culture change.
- Embrace and model the desired culture for the workforce.
- Commit to their own development, competence, and understanding of EDI issues.

Partner Agencies:

- Champion inclusion.
- Integrate into plans and measures.
- Support and encourage accountability.
- Provide the necessary learning opportunities for staff and managers to ensure an understanding of the issues and their individual and collective roles in culture change.

Sending Agencies:

- Champion inclusion.
- Address issues.
- Support and encourage accountability.
- Provide the necessary learning opportunities for staff and managers to ensure an understanding of the issues and their individual and collective roles in culture change.

Receiving Agencies:

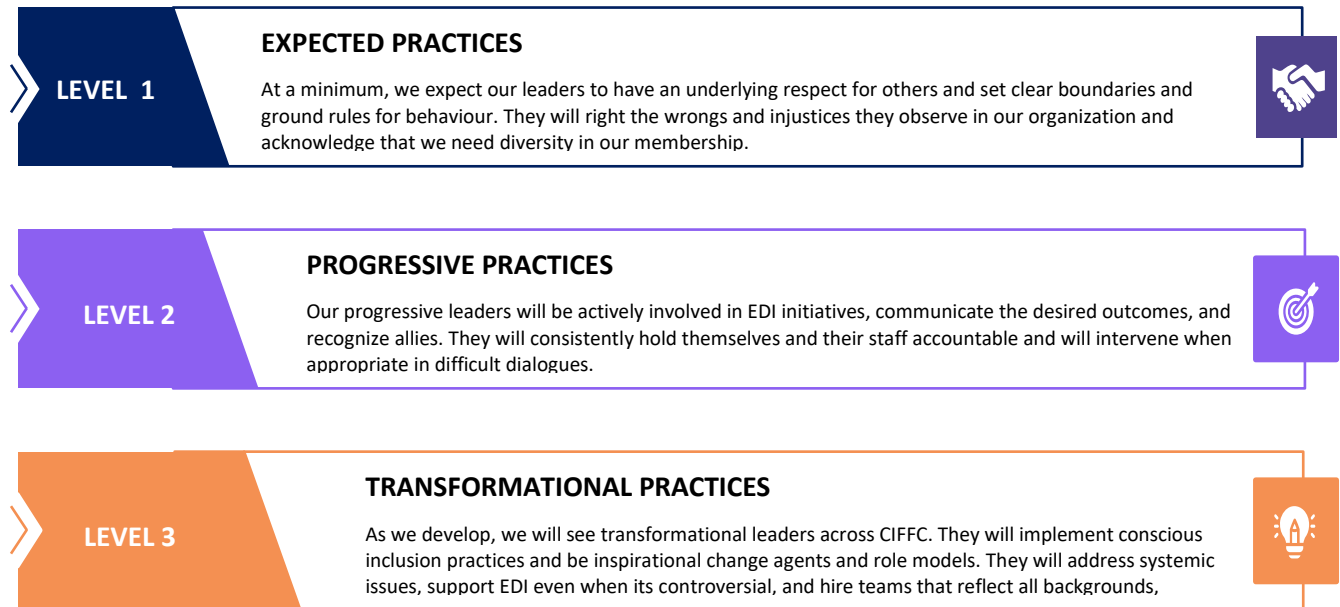
- Communicate local expectations.
- Address issues immediately.
- Respect partner policies, and practices.
- Where applicable, provide the necessary learning opportunities for staff and managers to ensure an understanding of the issues and their individual and collective roles in culture change.

“The Directors of Wildland Fire Management in Canada find that there is no place in our organization for discrimination or harassment and are committed to eliminating it from the Canadian Wildland Fire Community”

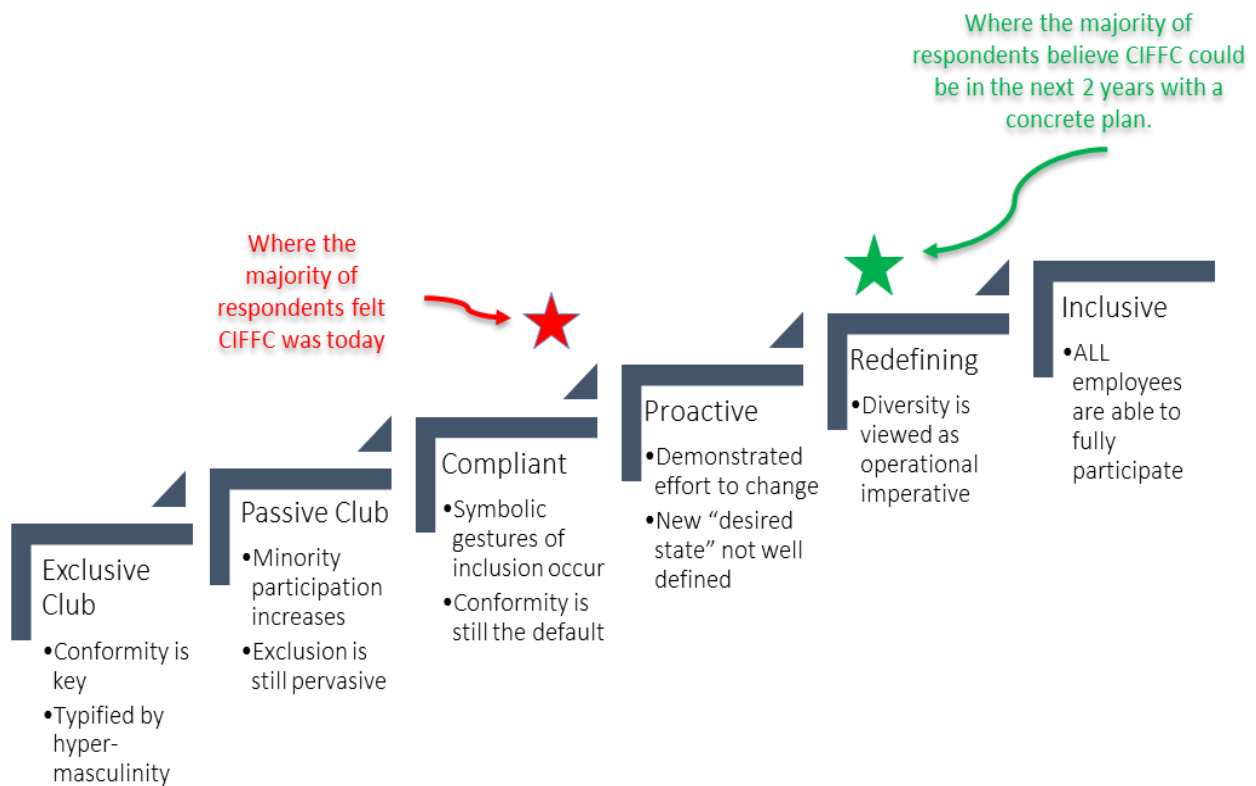
CIFFC Management Committee, 2015

Leadership Expectations and Aspirations

The following three levels show a progression from the minimum expected of CIFFC leadership to a truly aspirational form of leadership. The more advanced CIFFC and its member agencies can help their leaders become in this transformation, the greater likelihood of success in advancing the EDI Framework.



In several of the engagement sessions held with various CIFFC employees, personnel, and stakeholders, we referenced the work of Dr. Angela Workman-Stark (2017), who designed a change management model with emergency services in mind. In all those sessions, we asked participants to rate where they thought CIFFC was at, and where they thought CIFFC could realistically be in one to two years.



For CIFFC and partner agencies to mature, and to create lasting change, there are a number of factors that must be present:

- The change process and related strategies must be undertaken with clarity of purpose, a clear understanding of the starting point, and a clear vision of the ideal, inclusive end state.
- Ownership of the plan by all levels of the organization, not just management.
- The process must be continually monitored, measured, and assessed.
- Communication must be constant, open, and timely.
- Small successes must be acknowledged and celebrated.
- The plan must remain nimble and able to be changed as improvements are identified.

There is great hope amongst CIFFC partner agencies and deployed personnel that this maturation will begin with the CIFFC EDI Framework, and a strong desire on the part of many to be involved in the change. That desire should be celebrated and leveraged at every possible point along the journey. A workforce that has been engaged in the planning and execution of the plan is much more likely to buy into it.

Step 3: Readyng

Identify how the framework will prime the organization and its stakeholders to ensure readiness for change.

A diverse, inclusive, and respectful workplace is an essential element of a psychologically safe and mentally healthy work environment. The mental wellbeing of deployed members is just as important as their physical health, and resources and efforts must be applied to ensure a holistic approach to staff health and safety.

As mentioned previously, to achieve the benefits of diversity, the workplace must be primed for the change. CIFFC has begun this work through the 2020 survey, subsequent consultation and engagement sessions, and the communications on expectations from the Executive Director and Management Team. More work will be necessary for CIFFC to continue to clearly articulate their values, expectations, and consequences moving forward. As traditional norms and values evolve to incorporate societal expectations, mistakes and conflicts will occur. Creating the understanding that collectively, CIFFC and its partner agencies are committed to learning from them and helping personnel understand what behaviours are not acceptable and why, is critical in moving forward. We believe most members act in good faith and mistakes that occur are a result of changing workplace expectations to which the traditional culture is adapting. Behaviours once considered acceptable may no longer be, and it is critical to focus first and foremost on creating awareness and clarity among all members regarding respectful, appropriate workplace behaviours and expectations.

Step 4: Clarity on the End State

Identify what the desired future state, and its success, will look like.

Many EDI initiatives fail because the workforce is unclear on the new expectations, and what the end state is supposed to look like. For CIFFC, it will be critical to clearly articulate what has changed, what is expected of the workforce and stakeholders, and what success looks like. Part of defining success includes celebrating small wins along the journey and acknowledging where things have not gone well, or a course correction is necessary.

As mentioned, mistakes will be made, resourcing and operational changes occur, and sometimes plans need to be altered in some way. These changes or alterations in timelines should not be considered failures, but rather the sign of a healthy, functioning project team that is able to recognize the pinch points or off ramps that may come up during the project. Remaining committed to the overall end state is the goal, but how CIFFC gets there is a fluid process that may require change along the way.

Step 5: Articulating and Implementing the Framework and Action Plans

Identify and communicate what the actual plans are, and then implement them across the organization.

It will be necessary for CIFFC and its leadership to be able to clearly articulate the plans to all employees and deployed personnel. The messaging around the framework and action plans is critical to its success and a strong communications strategy will be necessary to ensure everyone involved understand the change that is happening, why it is happening, what is expected of them, and what that end state will look like.

That communications will need to be ongoing and in multiple formats to meet the needs of a diverse and dispersed workforce.

While creating plans for improving EDI and moving the needle on culture are difficult, in many ways that is the easiest step in the process. Implementing such plans is difficult, time consuming, resource intensive, and not without its obstacles.

Strong leadership is vital in the implementation of such plans. Committing the necessary resources to implementation is key to its success. Many plans fail because people are working on them “off the corner of their desks.” As a result, as operational issues arise, this work is often the first to be pushed to the back burner. It is critical that leadership understand that moving these issues forward IS part of making operations more robust and service delivery better. A truly diverse and inclusive workforce will create stronger teams that function at a higher level. They are the high octane that fuels the work CIFFC does. This work must not be viewed as a special project, but rather as part of regular business that runs concurrent to operational and strategic work. It must be threaded through all CIFFC’s remaining work. To do that, it must be properly resourced and supported with the necessary personnel and funding to see the plan to completion.

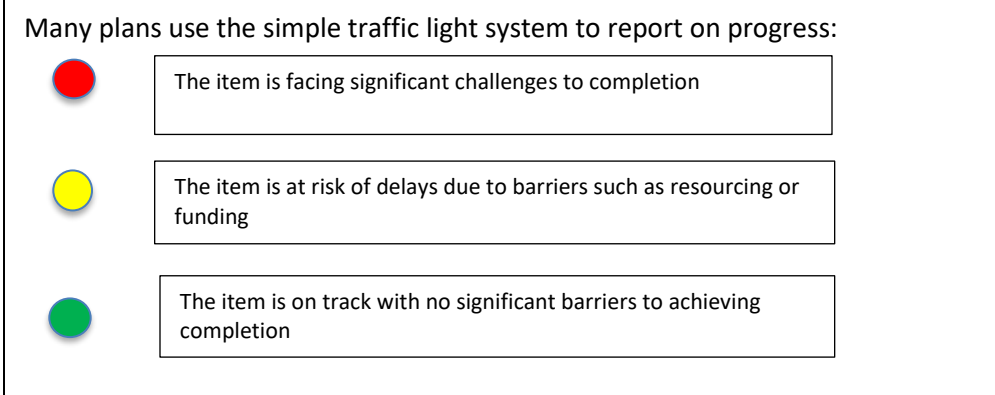
Absent such a commitment, many will view the framework and action plans as the “flavour of the day” and not as the serious commitment to change that CIFFC is undertaking.

Step 6: Monitor, Assess and Revise the Framework

Identify how the framework and action plans will be monitored and assessed, and what the metrics for assessment are, and then develop a process of continuous improvement to reflect the changing landscape.

To determine the progress and success of the plans, and to determine if any course corrections are required, it will be necessary to create a monitoring mechanism for the framework. This phase will need to consider the following:

- Regularly assessing the objectives to ensure they remain relevant and necessary.
- Identifying any obstacles or barriers that are preventing progress on the plans, and solutions for overcoming those.
- Identifying any changes in the internal or external landscape that may require an adjustment in the plans.
- Regular intervals for assessing the work of the plans.
- A mechanism for measuring the success of the plans beyond just it’s completion. Having metrics in place in advance of executing the plans will help with reporting to stakeholders.



Part of the ongoing assessment and reporting on the various action plans is to ensure the continued relevancy of the action items. Project managers must be sufficiently engaged to ensure they are aware of when changes are necessary. These changes often occur in such plans, particularly during implementation, and are often the result of unrealistic timelines, lack of appropriate resources, or a significant shift in the landscape/environment that requires an amendment. It is critical that the project manager and leadership be open to identifying and making necessary changes in order to ensure success.

Employees, personnel, and stakeholders expect to see this level of commitment to the plans in order to gauge the commitment from CIFFC. Absent that, it is unlikely they will have any confidence in the plans, and it is even more unlikely they will buy into it.

Having metrics in place in advance of launching a plan is key to measuring success. This part of the plan is different than assessing the *status* of the progress of the work. This area involves establishing criteria to know if the work has had the desired outcomes. A robust plan has both qualitative and quantitative outcomes. It can involve measuring against existing data or creating new metrics for baseline reporting moving forward.

To measure the *success* of the plan, CIFFC could consider using a modification of the Workman-Stark model to evaluate their work against industry best practice. In the “Benchmarks for Success” section of this Framework we have offered some benchmarks for success using this modified model.

CIFFC will need to continue to engage members through a variety of means to ensure they are keeping a pulse on the workplace and deployment culture, understanding where members are experiencing difficulties and providing direction and guidance on issues concerning to those who are deployed through CIFFC. The goal is to achieve a workplace or deployment in which every member can be comfortable coming forward to express concerns or report issues without fear of humiliation, scapegoating or retaliation. To achieve that, it is necessary to support both victims and members accused of inappropriate behaviours through intervention and support systems designed to provide counsel, help, and growth. We firmly believe in the responsibility and power of leaders and bystanders to step in any time inappropriate behaviours are witnessed. It is imperative to equip supervisors and people at all levels of the organization in identifying, preventing, and stopping inappropriate workplace behaviours.

Building an inclusive workplace that supports members and reflects the diversity of the communities served requires a multi-faceted approach and distinct initiatives. To ensure we have considered the comprehensive scope of inclusivity, a multi-pronged approach is required.

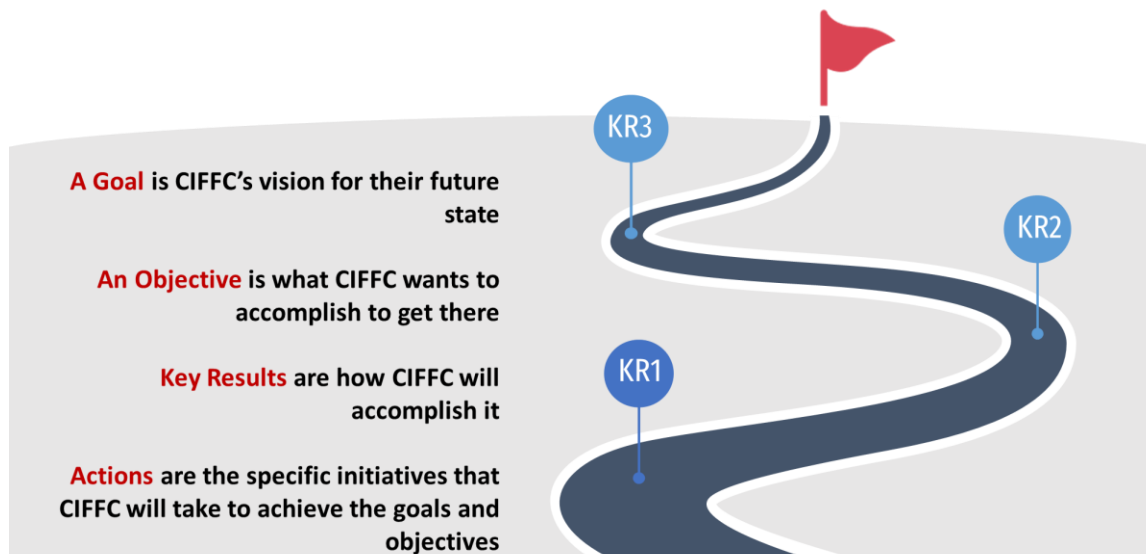
Step 7: Reporting on the Framework and Action Plans

Identify how the results of the plan will be reported, internally and externally.

Regularly reporting on the EDI framework and action plans will be a critical piece of the project. Reporting must not only be to the CIFFC Executive and Management Committee, but also to all interested parties. Stakeholders, contractors, and deployed personnel must see a transparent, regular reporting of progress and of setbacks. This ongoing dialogue serves several purposes. It shows a continued commitment to the work, an honest acknowledgement of successes and setbacks, and it serves to keep the messaging about the change in the forefront. The more people hear about the change, the more they are likely to understand it and become invested in it.

THE PLANNING APPROACH

In developing the EDI Framework, CIFFC has adopted a Goals, Objectives, and Key Results Planning Model, which is designed to create alignment and engagement around measurable goals by clearly defining Objectives and Key Results.



In this model, all stakeholders within CIFFC will work collaboratively towards a unified goal while increasing transparency and discipline. By working towards the same purpose, goals are continually monitored, tracked, and re-evaluated so that the organization can set challenging, ambitious goals with measurable results while quickly adapting as needed.

To ensure significant and longstanding change, increasing diversity alone will not be sufficient. Attempting to *only* change individual behavior is unlikely to create the desired outcomes for long term, organizational change. While individual awareness training *is* necessary to ensure understanding of new expectations, it must be part of a larger plan that also addresses both systemic and individual barriers. The complexity of creating sustainable change cannot be understated. In creating any plan, it is necessary to consider the interconnectivity of the varied systems in which change is necessary. For example, change in leadership activities and expectations is necessary. Those changes require training, performance management, and reporting changes as well. Likewise, creating a respectful deployment culture is an ultimate goal, but that requires changes to recruitment, reporting, support, and accountability systems. It is this overlap that creates the complexity of the change desired, and why it is necessary for such a thoughtful approach. Targeting only one system or area is unlikely to create lasting change.

Through this planning model, and this Framework, CIFFC can work collaboratively with all stakeholders to bring ownership and alignment of goals and create self-imposed accountability for success. Through this partnership model, CIFFC can create a foundation for new thinking, new action, and new results because committed people will challenge assumptions and processes, enable others to act, share knowledge and hold themselves and others accountable.

Goal

Through the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Framework, by 2025, CIFFC is a global leader in creating and influencing safe, inclusive, and equitable workplaces and cultures in the Canadian Wildland firefighting community.

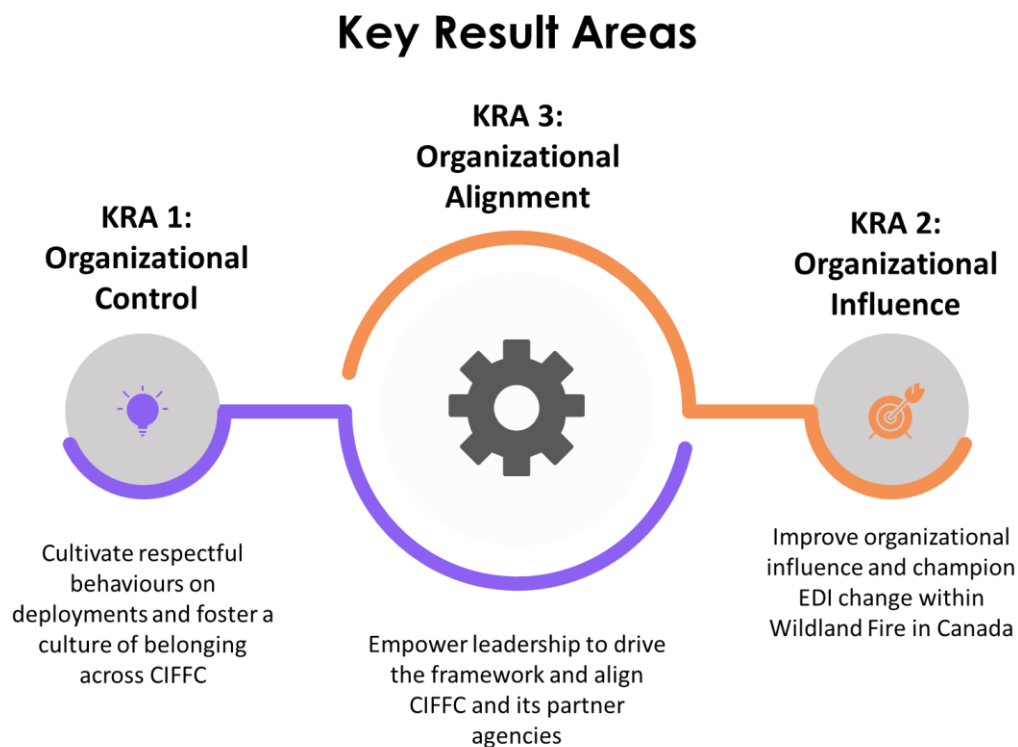
Objectives

Through the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Framework, CIFFC will:

1. **EQUITY** - Align and assess efforts across partner agencies to create opportunities to establish a process for capturing, tracking, analyzing, and reporting issues and opportunities.
2. **DIVERSITY** - Identify ways to maximize participation of underrepresented populations in CIFFC programs and establish a recruitment process that eliminates barriers, sets measurable goals to attract a workforce that reflects the dynamic diversity of our society and establishes strategies for attracting, developing, and retaining them.
3. **INCLUSION** - Assess policies and programs, establish a plan to modify and innovate, foster intentional culture building by establishing EDI learning and development opportunities, and ensure inclusion of diverse perspectives and practices.

Key Results

CIFFC's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Framework is comprised of three key results:



1. Cultivate respectful behaviours on deployments and foster a culture of belonging across CIFFC.

This key result area envisions how personnel are treated while on deployments. It focuses on how CIFFC manages deployments and their interactions with members, clients, communities, and stakeholders. In this area, CIFFC will be proactive in ensuring a fair, equitable, diverse, and inclusive culture and will embed EDI values and require responsible and ethical behaviours of all members. When done successfully, all deployed members will feel a sense of belonging and respect in the workplace.

2. Improve organizational influence and champion EDI change within Wildland Fire in Canada.

This result area is focused on CIFFC supporting and advocating EDI principles and influencing the entire Canadian wildland firefighting community. If successful, CIFFC member agencies will hold each other accountable and will be role models and EDI champions nationally. In this area, CIFFC will facilitate the development of EDI best management practices and will ensure that an EDI lens is used in all training programs, regardless of content. CIFFC will also set benchmarks for themselves that their partner agencies can replicate.

3. Empower leadership to drive the framework and align CIFFC and its partner agencies.

If this area is completed, CIFFC will have developed a strong rationale for its EDI vision, mission and approach and will have aligned it to its organizational goals. They will also have strengthened policies, systems, and processes to advance EDI. In this area, the Management Committee and Board will provide visible, dedicated support and structure, with authority and budget to the organization so that they can effectively implement EDI across the organization.

Please see Appendix 1 for the associated Action Plans to achieve these key results.

Benchmarks For Success

Dr. Angela Workman-Stark’s organizational change model for emergency services envisions a variety of stages that an organization may find itself in while attempting to create a culture shift to a more inclusive and respectful workplace. We use that model as a basis for CIFFC (and its members) to assess where they are in each of the three categories of the plan. CIFFC should be able to use these benchmarks to determine where they are, what level they are striving for, and what is involved in achieving that.

Key Result Area #1: Cultivate respectful behaviours on deployments and foster a culture of belonging across CIFFC.

Inclusive

- Personnel understand and embrace the concepts of equity, diversity, and inclusion.
- People feel fully able to participate in the workplace without having to hide their differences to avoid ridicule, harassment, or discrimination.
- Everyone’s opinions and ideas are openly solicited, respected, and listened to.

- Leaders are rated as trustworthy and personnel report feeling comfortable going to them with issues.
- Leaders are comfortable receiving, actioning, and managing human resource issues.
- Workplaces have been designed with a diverse workforce in mind, taking into consideration the needs of a variety of people.
- Diversity in all its forms is embraced in the workplace for the strength it brings to teams and workspaces.
- There are low levels of conflict amongst personnel.
- Personnel feel comfortable raising workplace concerns and trust that they will be dealt with in a fair and expeditious manner.
- There is a visible commitment to EDI on deployments and throughout the organization, in the form of well-advertised and understood programs, policies, and plans.

Redefining (target for 2024)

- Personnel are aware of the concepts of equity, diversity, and inclusion, but are not fully understanding of how they are to be integrated into their work life.
- Opinions and ideas may be solicited, but they do not feel they have the same value in the decision-making process as some others.
- EDI is a key competency in measuring performance for leaders.
- Personnel feel comfortable raising issues of concern related to existing barriers to being a fully inclusive organization.

Proactive

- The organization has begun to explicitly discuss equity, diversity, and inclusion as a key strategic goal, but the change is not clearly defined.
- Personnel and leaders are unclear on what the changing expectations are and what the key outcomes for the organizational change are. As a result, with no clearly defined new expectations for behaviors, personnel commonly revert back to existing ways of conducting themselves in the workplace.
- There will be overt messaging related to the desired changes, however, it has not been embedded into the systems and structures in the organization. Policies and processes remain the same, or if changed, have not been thoroughly introduced and explained to the workforce.
- Deployments have not been designed with consideration for the needs of a diverse workforce.
- Personnel and some leadership lack the commitment to the necessary changes required to become truly inclusive.
- The focus is predominantly on increased representation of visibly diverse personnel without tying it to the benefits of EDI and may result in members of the dominant group pushing back and accusing the organization of lowering standards or “reverse discrimination.”
- The organization lacks the understanding that increasing the numbers of diverse personnel is unlikely to create longstanding change unless it is coupled with addressing systemic and cultural barriers.

Compliant (current state)

- While recruiting visibly diverse personnel has begun, there is little demonstrated understanding of the value they bring to the organization or to deployments, and they are seen as a “token” hire.
- There is still pressure for diverse personnel to conform to the dominant group norms.

- Because personnel lack the understanding of the value of diversity and inclusion, they see diversity as a compliance issue.

Passive Club

- All personnel are expected to conform to the dominant group norms and there is little tolerance of different backgrounds, perspectives, or ways of doing things.
- There is a strong reliance on history, the old ways of doing things, and resistance to new ideas.
- There is no understanding of the value of diversity, and it is only seen as a regulatory issue.
- There is no visible sign of an EDI program or commitment or policy for personnel on deployment or within the organization.

Exclusive Club

- All personnel are expected to conform to the dominant group norms and values, that being of a stereotypical hyper-masculine male fire fighter.
- The dominant group sets the norms, values, and practices for managing in the workplace and on deployments and has no tolerance for different perspectives or opinions.
- Bullying and harassment by the dominant group members is commonplace.

Key Result Area #2: Improve organizational influence and champion EDI change within Wildland Fire in Canada.

Inclusive

- CIFFC has a clear, well understood framework for advancing EDI issues both internally, for deployments, and with stakeholders.
- EDI is an integral part of CIFFC's overall organizational strategy, and it is clearly reflected in everything it does.
- CIFFC has clearly articulated its commitment to EDI in all of its documentation, plans, communications, and business dealings.
- CIFFC is consulted and sought out for its internal knowledge and capacity by other organizations wishing to advance EDI.
- CIFFC has created internal competence amongst its leadership and personnel related to EDI principles.
- CIFFC is recognized globally as a leader in EDI in wildland fire fighting.
- All CIFFC employees, deployed personnel, stakeholders, and contractors clearly understand CIFFC's commitment to EDI and their role in achieving that commitment.
- CIFFC regularly assesses and readjusts its EDI strategies to ensure they are meeting their goals and the needs of its employees, stakeholders, deployed personnel, and contractors.

Redefining (target for 2024)

- Most of CIFFC's leaders and personnel are well-versed in EDI principles and understand the value they bring to the organization, stakeholders, and deployments.
- CIFFC is seen to be leading the work in EDI in the Canadian wildland fire fighting space.
- CIFFC has embedded EDI competencies into their performance management system.

- CIFFC has clearly articulated its position on EDI, and has clearly communicated that to all employees, deployed personnel, stakeholders, and contractors.

Proactive

- CIFFC has begun to introduce diversity into its workforce through a variety of strategies.
- CIFFC leadership now understands the value of diversity to its service delivery but lacks a more robust plan for introducing EDI as an overall strategic goal.
- CIFFC leadership has begun to increase its competency related to understanding EDI and understands that change is necessary.
- CIFFC deployed personnel lack the understanding of changes expected of them with respect to EDI and the related action plans.

Compliant (current state)

- CIFFC has begun to understand the value of EDI to the workforce and is beginning to discuss with leadership internally and with stakeholders.
- Overall, there is a lack of willingness to make major structural changes or commit to the long-term work necessary to advance EDI.
- Efforts to advance EDI are limited to small changes with a desire for quick results, lacking the understanding of the magnitude of the changes required.

Passive Club

- EDI is seen as a regulatory issue for CIFFC and does not drive the work they are doing and is not a part of any strategic goals or vision.
- CIFFC employees, personnel, and leaders begin to talk about EDI, but there is no plan in place to advance the concepts beyond discussions about increasing visible diversity in the workplace.

Exclusive Club

- There is no EDI strategy in the organization.
- CIFFC is seen by stakeholders as lacking in leadership in this area.
- CIFFC employees, personnel, and leaders lack an understanding of the basic concepts of EDI.

Key Result Area #3: Empower leadership to drive the framework and align CIFFC and its partner agencies.

Inclusive

- Leaders are trained on, understand, and can articulate the value of equity, diversity, and inclusion in the workplace and can lead with those values in mind, inspiring others to do the same.
- Leaders are open to new ideas, value the input of all personnel, and integrates that input into decision making and actions.
- The organizational culture is one that admits its weaknesses and mistakes and continually strives for improvement.
- Organization's policies and structures allow for equal access to opportunity for all personnel and they all have access to decision making and leadership positions.
- Personnel report feeling comfortable discussing issues or concerns with their direct supervisors.

Redefining (target for 2024)

Leaders understand that change is pending, and have a basic understanding of equity, diversity, and inclusion, but are not fully developed in their personal understanding of these concepts or how they might impact their work and their leadership.

- Leadership understands the value of having a diverse workforce and understands that all personnel should have access to the same opportunities for full participation in the workplace.
- Leadership is committed to making the necessary changes to create a fully inclusive workplace.
- The organization has created a clear vision and message around the change desired, and the value of EDI for the organization.
- EDI competencies are a key performance measure for all leaders.
- Leaders take accountability for EDI and for creating a psychologically and physically safe workplace.

Proactive

- Leadership understands EDI principles and how they can benefit the workplace but are unclear on how to implement them into their work.
- Leading EDI is a core competency for leadership and there are held accountable for their action or inaction related to issues related to EDI.

Compliant (current state)

- CIFFC has begun to discuss EDI concepts with leadership, however, no formal training related to these issues has been offered.
- Leadership is more accepting of diversity; however, it is not appreciated for its true value. Instead, organizational leadership tries to find ways to assimilate diverse personnel into jobs deemed suitable for their backgrounds.
- Diverse personnel are expected to fit into the existing norms and culture.
- Little tolerance of significant changes in culture or structures.
- Organization promotes equality as the standard, that is, that everyone is treated the same. There is little understanding of the difference between equality and equity.
- While leaders have begun hearing about EDI, they are still not held accountable for their ability to understand and action EDI principles.

Passive Club

- Leaders defer to HR or higher-level managers to lead and/or manage EDI concerns.
- While leaders may accept some responsibility for EDI, they tend to focus simply on the numbers, or on complying with policies and regulations.
- While some policies related to EDI have changed, they are misunderstood as affirmative action and are believed to be in place to meet regulations.
- While leaders accept more people from underrepresented groups, they still expect them to assimilate into existing ways of doing things.
- Conformity is still expected by leaders in the organization.
- There are no expectations on leadership to develop their own competencies around understanding EDI.

CIFFC Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Framework

APPROVED – APRIL 2022



Exclusive Club

- There is no expectation of leadership to be involved or accountable for EDI.
- Leaders do not see the benefits of EDI to themselves or the organization.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Access: The ways in which institutions and policies ensure that all people, regardless of demographic, geographic, or socioeconomic background, have equal and equitable opportunities to lead full and healthy lives, with a full array of choices.

Ally: Someone who makes the commitment and effort to recognize their social advantage (based on gender, class, race, sexual identity, etc.) and work in solidarity with oppressed groups in the struggle for justice.

Culture: Culture is a complex set of shared values, beliefs, language, communication, and behaviours that are taught, learned, and shared by a group of people. Culture also includes the material objects and symbols that are common to that group or society. Culture can refer to organizational culture in addition to national, ethnic, or regional culture.

EDI: Abbreviation for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

Diversity: Individual and group differences and similarities that can be visible or invisible and occur in cognitive and demographic manifestations, including socioeconomic class, race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, physical and cognitive ability, religion, language, national origin, family type, generation, and more.

Diversity Champion: This refers to someone who advocates for the interests and causes of EDI. A diversity champion is usually active in EDI initiatives and is seen as a knowledgeable, tenacious, and tireless advocate of EDI. Ambassador is another term used for Diversity Champion.

Equity: Fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all and the elimination of barriers that prevent the full participation of some groups. It is an acknowledgment that historically underserved and underrepresented populations deserve fairness and justice to remedy systemic conditions that limit their opportunity and access.

Inclusion: Active, intentional, and ongoing engagement with and agency of diverse people and communities with the goal of deepening a culture of belonging, empowerment, and welcome, as well as policies, programs, and practices that mitigate against exclusion and inspire work for a common mission and vision.

Intersectionality: A lens through which to view social issues and see where power and oppression intersect, providing a more holistic view of how individuals are impacted.

Leaders: Everyone in the organization who has the responsibility for showing leadership to accomplish the organization's vision and goals. Leaders are responsible for motivating a group of people to act toward achieving a common goal. In some cases, these leaders will be senior managers, and in other cases leaders will include all managers and supervisors and/or individual contributors.

Lending Agency: An agency lending wildland fire management resources under the auspices of the Canadian Interagency Mutual Aid Resource Sharing agreement.

Management Committee: A committee appointed by the Board to oversee the administration, management, and operation of the corporation.

Partner Agency, also known as Member: A member of the corporation and party to the Operating Agreement.

Receiving Agency: An agency receiving wildland fire management resources under the auspices of the Canadian Interagency Mutual Aid Resource Sharing agreement.

Resource Management Committee: The RMC has been established to act as a forum for routinely engaging the membership on a formal basis focusing on the operational aspects of Wildland Fire Management and specifically, mutual aid. The committee has responsibility for strategic planning to ensure that the national exchange standards, business practices and processes are developed and maintained in order to provide for safe, effective, and efficient, wildland fire management resource sharing nationally and internationally.

Underrepresented: Those groups that have been historically underrepresented in the organization or customer base, or who have been oppressed, marginalized, or ignored in society, whether or not legislation exists to recognize and protect them. This covers protected groups or classes identified in some legal systems and those groups sometimes referred to as disadvantaged, vulnerable, or underprivileged, or as minorities or out-groups.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

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