



**COMMISSION  
AGENDA MEMORANDUM**

**Item No.** 11c

**BRIEFING ITEM**

**Date of Meeting** January 4, 2022

**DATE:** January 4, 2022

**TO:** Stephen P. Metruck, Executive Director

**FROM:** Bookda Gheisar, Senior Director, Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion  
Jay Doran, Engagement and Communications Program Manager, Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

**SUBJECT: Equity Motion and Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Assessment Final Report**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In accordance with the Port of Seattle Commission’s Racial Bias and Equity Motion (2020-19), staff have been actively working to implement a comprehensive equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) assessment of the Port of Seattle, specifically reviewing workplace culture; operations and processes; hiring, promotions, compensations, and staff development; community engagement; and, contracting and women or minority-owned business enterprises (WMBEs). Also, at the direction of the Equity Motion, staff have created and operated a Port-wide Change Team and have implemented and facilitated racial equity training that all staff are required to complete.

The briefing on January 4 will provide a summary of key findings and recommendations from the EDI Assessment, an update on the work and progress of the Change Team, and an update on the progress of the required racial equity trainings.

**BACKGROUND**

Upon the passage of Motion 2020-19, the Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion hired Equity Matters as its consultant. Working with Equity Matters, OEDI put the Change Team through four months (October 2020 – January 2021) of intensive racial equity training and skill building, teaching Change Team members the foundations of racial equity work, including how to conduct root cause analyses and develop solutions to address complex racial inequities. Additionally, Equity Matters and OEDI developed curriculums for the required racial equity trainings mandated by Motion 2020-19. One curriculum was designed specifically for supervisors, and the other curriculum was designed for individual contributors and front-line staff. Throughout 2021, these trainings have been offered and delivered to Port staff.

In the second quarter of 2021, OEDI collaborated with the Change Team and Business Intelligence to develop a comprehensive Equity Survey to assess the five focus areas listed above in the Executive Summary. For a 30-day period, all Port staff were invited and encourage to complete the Equity Survey. Nearly 61% of the Port’s workforce – 1,306 employees – participate in the

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survey. During June and July 2021, OEDI, Business Intelligence, and OEDI consultant Trang Tu conducted a thorough analysis of both the quantitative and qualitative data from the survey to understand the themes, patterns, strengths, and areas for improvement.

From July 20 to September 17, 2021, OEDI held 18 EDI Assessment Conversations. These 90-minute listening sessions, which were open to all staff, were designed to share data from the Equity Survey with staff; to increase OEDI's understanding of data from the Equity Survey; and, to create opportunities for staff to brainstorm creative solutions to disparities and inequities identified in the Equity Survey. In total, there were 283 employees (including repeats) who participated in the EDI Assessment Conversations, and participants provided OEDI with a wealth of creative, innovative ideas and recommendations for addressing inequities and transforming the Port into an equitable, anti-racist organization.

The ideas generated from the EDI Assessment Conversations, along with input from the Change Team, the Port's Chapter of Blacks in Government, employee resources groups, and the Development and Diversity Council, a represented workers task force, a departmental survey regarding equity in budgeting, feedback from racial equity trainings and anti-racist caucusing, staff from organizationally cross-cutting departments (e.g. Human Resources and Central Procurement Office), and the OEDI team, have all informed the recommendations that the Commission will be briefed on and are include in the public materials for the January 4 Commission meeting.

### **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

The EDI Assessment, including the findings from the Equity Survey, identified patterns of disparities and inequities within the Port's culture and processes. These inequities include, but are not limited to:

- The opinions of Black, Indigenous, and people of color employees are not sought out, valued, and fully considered in decision making.
- The Port's work, programs, and processes are not consistently evaluated in terms of their impact on racial equity.
- Supervisors play a critical role in advancing racial equity, but, they need support and accountability in imbedding equity into their team's work.
- In comparison to women and employees of color, white men receive unfair and unearned advantages with regards to job advancement and promotions.
- There is a need to reduce barriers and create more accessible processes by which WMBEs, small businesses, and community-based organizations can compete for and win Port contracts.
- There is a need for stronger guidance and consistency in how the Port engages and builds relationships BIPOC communities.

The EDI Assessment Final Report and Executive Summary – both of which provided as attachments to this memo – outline a robust set of recommendations to address the identified disparities and to advance racial equity. The recommendations are categorized into six focus

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areas – workplace culture; operations and processes; employment; equity capacity building; engaging WMBEs and small businesses; and, engaging impacted communities – and are a mix of both short-term and long-term tactics and strategies. The intent is for the Port to begin implementing these recommendations in 2022.

**ATTACHMENTS TO THIS BRIEFING**

- (1) EDI Assessment Final Report and Appendices
- (2) EDI Assessment Executive Summary
- (3) Presentation slides

**PREVIOUS COMMISSION ACTIONS OR BRIEFINGS** [\*\[For information and examples, follow this link.\]\*](#)

- September 16, 2021 – The Commission’s Equity and Workforce Development Committee was updated on the progress of the EDI Assessment, including the Equity Survey and EDI Assessment Listening Sessions.
- October 13, 2020 – The Commission approved the Racial Bias and Equity Motion.