



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Stephen C. Brich, P.E.
Commissioner

1401 East Broad Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219

(804) 482-5818
Fax: (804) 786-2940

July 1, 2024

The Honorable Glenn A. Youngkin, Governor
Members of the Virginia General Assembly

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

Section 2.2-602 of the *Code of Virginia* and Governor's Executive Order 1 (2022) require the heads of state agencies to develop Diversity, Opportunity, and Inclusion plans and submit annual reports that assess the impact of the plan. The report is to be submitted to the Governor and now, based on amendments pursuant to Chapter 659 of the 2024 Acts of Assembly, the General Assembly.

This submission of the *Diversity, Opportunity, and Inclusion 2023 Annual Report Virginia Department of Transportation* (VDOT) comprises VDOT's report in compliance with § 2.2-602. I would note that the impact of VDOT's 2024 Plan is difficult to assess at this time, given the early stage of its implementation. VDOT will engage in an assessment of the impacts of the plan as the year progresses and will include a full assessment in next year's annual report.

Should you have any questions regarding VDOT's Plan or this report, please do not hesitate to contact me or VDOT's Chief Deputy Commissioner, Cathy McGhee, at 804-916-9508 or by email Cathy.McGhee@vdot.virginia.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Stephen C. Brich".

Stephen C. Brich, P.E.
Commissioner of Highways

Attachment

cc: The Honorable W. Sheppard Miller III

Diversity, Opportunity, and Inclusion 2023 Annual Report Virginia Department of Transportation

2023 Accomplishments

Plan Goal 1: Access and Success

Recruit and retain a diverse workforce by increasing access to diverse populations for recruiting.

Objective 1: Improve hiring process, increase access to applicants from diverse populations.

- Continued to utilize the "Alternative Hiring Process", as described in the Code of Virginia, effective July 1, 2021, for people with disabilities. This process is available to applicants with documented disabilities, as certified by a Department of Aging and Rehabilitative Services or the Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired. Approved applicants may receive priority consideration during the recruitment process.
- Developed and implemented a hiring brand to showcase diversity within the organization. This brand, What Drives You, illustrates a variety of careers at VDOT and highlights employee benefits, agency culture, diversity, and the work environment to attract highly qualified and diverse applicants.
- Created sourcing positions to actively reach out to diverse candidates for hard to fill positions. Ten classified HR positions were repurposed to Talent Acquisition Specialists across the districts and within Central Office.

Objective 2: Continue to retain and promote a diverse workforce.

- Coordinated new employee orientation materials to ensure all employees, no matter the location where they work, are made aware of agency's inclusive principles and practices.
- Rolled out a 90-day onboarding program across the nine Districts to further strengthen connections and demonstrate the agency's commitment to diversity, development, and opportunities within the agency. Central Office will roll-out in Spring 2024. (Supports Plan Goal 2 as well.)
- Collected employee feedback through multiple surveys throughout the employee life cycle, starting with new hire orientation, to address concerns brought forward.

Plan Goal 2: Welcoming and Respectful Culture

Create and sustain a culture that welcomes and embraces diverse opinions, independent thinking, and respectful interactions to deliver optimal results for the organization, its customers, and employees.

Objective 1: Persist in creating and maintaining a culture that is supportive and respectful and that values and integrates differing perspectives and experiences.

- Introduced Civility in the Workplace Policy during new employee orientation.

- Rolled out in person *Civility in the Workplace* training for all people leaders for more than half the organization.
- Offered events such as “Unity Day”, “Veterans Day”, etc. to recognize, value, and honor diversity of thought and background.
- Provided employees with disabilities the necessary accommodations to be successful.

Objective 2: Provide an environment where conflicts, concerns, and complaints are aired and addressed quickly and fairly.

- Quickly addressed inappropriate workplace behavior.
- Identified and implemented activities which can be utilized early in the complaint process to affect positive outcomes (e.g. Conflict Coaching and Mediation.)

Plan Goal 3: State Agency DOI Infrastructure & Training

Maintain a plan and infrastructure that continues to provide individualized skills training and career development for state employees. Agencies report annually on DOI goals and accomplishments.

Objective 1: Continue to promote opportunities to advance the goals outlined in the DOI framework.

- VDOT 2024-2026 Business Plan included initiatives tied to Plan Goal 1 and Goal 2
- Implemented sharing of DOI strategies and resources in the monthly District Administrator Council meeting

Objective 2: Continue to create structures and processes of accountability to increase organizational effectiveness.

- Completed review of structure and processes for the Civil Rights Division. VDOT’s Business Integrated Solutions Division conducted the review and offered recommendations.
- Developed behavioral competency model to roll into performance management process.
- Introduced new performance management tool, which incorporates SMART goals, competency development and employee development.

Objective 3: Continue to provide training and educational workshops available to all employees.

- Offer CDL training/licensing through local community college program for new transportation operators.
- Collaborated with industry and the Virginia Community College System to stand up the Virginia Infrastructure Academy. The Infrastructure Academy provides short-term industry training and credentials to enable employment opportunities for thousands of Virginians, and qualified employees for VDOT and our industry partners. Current training/certification programs include Diesel Mechanic, Heavy Equipment Operator, Powerline Worker, Electrical, Plumbing, Carpentry, and CDL. Courses are offered at Community College campuses around the Commonwealth (not all programs are offered at all locations).

2024 VDOT DOI Goals

Plan Goal 1: Access and Success

Recruit and retain a diverse workforce by increasing access to diverse populations for recruiting.

Objective 1: Improve hiring process, increase access to applicants from diverse populations.

- Extend outreach program to include high schools/vocational schools to expand the reach to applicants from diverse populations.

Objective 2: Continue to retain and promote a diverse workforce.

- Expand roll out of 90-day onboarding program to Central Office as a means to further strengthen connections and demonstrate the agency's commitment to diversity, development, and opportunities within the agency. (Supports Plan Goal 2 as well.)

Plan Goal 2: Welcoming and Respectful Culture

Create and sustain a culture that welcomes and embraces diverse opinions, independent thinking, and respectful interactions to deliver optimal results for the organization, its customers, and employees.

Objective 1: Create and maintain a climate that is supportive and respectful and that values and integrates differing perspectives and experiences.

- Expand roll out of in person *Civility in the Workplace* training all people leaders for the remainder of the organization.
- Continue and increase the use of the alternative hiring process for persons with disabilities.

Objective 2: Continue to provide an environment where conflicts, concerns, and complaints are aired and addressed expeditiously.

- Continue to provide trainings and enforce policies (e.g. VDOT Standards of Conduct) to ensure a safe work environment and create a positive workplace culture.
- Continue to implement directives and procedural requirements (e.g. DHRM Policy 2.05 and 2.35) to ensure that issues related to harassment and workplace safety are promptly and effectively addressed.

Plan Goal 3: State Agency DOI Infrastructure & Training

Maintain a plan and infrastructure that continues to provide individualized skills training and career development for state employees. Agencies report annually on DOI goals and accomplishments.

Objective 1: Continue to promote opportunities to advance the goals outlined in the DOI framework.

- Develop leadership development training for the agency, as outlined in the VDOT 2024-2026 Business Plan

Objective 2: Continue to create structures and processes of accountability to increase organizational effectiveness.

- Implement recommended changes from review of structure and processes for the Civil Rights Division. This internal review was conducted by VDOT's Business Integrated Solutions Division and highlighted the need for improved policy and process documentation to ensure optimal effectiveness.
- Train agency on new performance management tool, which incorporates SMART goals, competency development and employee development.

Objective 3: Continue to provide training and educational workshops available to all employees.

- Complete review of pipeline programs to eliminate barriers for diverse applicants.
- Introduce succession planning training to agency leadership. VDOT's new Human Capital Management (HCM) system allows for a formalized process and tracking of critical and/or key positions and internal pipeline of skills that will identify opportunities for professional growth and leadership development.
- Train all employees on agency behavioral leadership competency model. The competency model is a new component to VDOT's performance planning and evaluation process that allows both feedback on and development of behavioral competencies in addition to traditional technical skills.