

**Achieving Employment Equity
in the Public Service:**
a study of changes between 1995 and 2001

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Abstract

This paper will seek to analyse the performance of the public sector in implementing affirmative action policies intended to promote employment equity. This will be done primarily by examining the pattern of changes in public sector employment over the past five years. Wherever possible, public sector employment data will also be benchmarked against the performance of the economy as a whole, as well as the public sector targets set by the South African Government.

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1. Introduction

The Presidential Commission, appointed to investigate labour market policy in 1996, recommended that “the state as employer should be catalysing and encouraging the progress of employment equity by its own performance” (Restructuring the South African Labour Market: 15). More recently, the Employment Equity 2001 Executive Summary (Department of Labour 2001: 13) concludes that the nationwide implementation of employment equity has been “slow but steady”. Two questions that consequently arise are: What contribution has the public sector made to the improvement in employment equity in South Africa? Has the public sector led the way in implementing employment equity?

The value of these questions is not merely academic. If the state does not lead the way in implementing employment equity, there is little reason to believe that the private sector will take up the path. This paper will seek to analyse the performance of the public sector in implementing affirmative action policies intended to promote employment equity. This will be done primarily by examining the pattern of changes in public sector employment over the past five years. Wherever possible, the public sector employment data will also be benchmarked against the performance of the economy as a whole, as well as the public sector targets set by the South African Government. Before the data can be analysed, it is important to discuss exactly what is meant by affirmative action and employment equity in the South African context.

2. Employment Equity

The term employment equity is often used carelessly. The Presidential Commission to Investigate Labour Market Policy defined employment equity as a term that reflects a labour market that is both non-discriminatory and socially equitable (Restructuring the South African Labour Market: 2). A non-discriminatory labour market is one in which all participants have an equal opportunity to achieve and prosper. Social equity is a more demanding term, as it requires the benefits arising from employment to be broadly and equitably spread throughout the labour market (Restructuring the South African Labour Market: 2).

A non-discriminatory labour market has been legislated into existence in South Africa. The Labour Relations Act (1995: 3.186) explicitly sets out what constitutes discrimination and the Employment Equity Act (1998: 2.5 – 2.6) contains provisions that are intended to promote and ensure non-discrimination. The current legislation recognizes that discrimination can occur on the basis of race, gender, pregnancy, marital status, family responsibility, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, political opinion, culture, language and birth. It is, however, important to note that the Employment Equity Act (1998: 2.6.2) states that it is not unfair discrimination to: exclude any person if they do not meet the inherent requirements of a job; or to implement affirmative action measures consistent with the Employment Equity Act. Finally, it is also important to be aware, that the presence of legislation cannot ensure that no discrimination will take place.

Even if a labour market is perfectly non-discriminatory, labour market outcomes can still be impacted by discrimination from outside the marketplace. This 'extra-market' discrimination can affect the labour market by conditioning the supply and demand of labour. Thus it is possible for a labour market to be non-discriminatory, while still being socially inequitable. This lack of social equity may arise from several sources. Those most relevant for South Africa include: previous labour market policies that restricted access to skilled work for certain groups, and various forms of socio-economic disadvantages (including inadequate education and training) that impact negatively on labour market access. The Commission for Employment Equity (Annual Report 2001: 3) notes that most disparities in the South African workplace are a direct result of past laws that were aimed at excluding Blacks, women and people with disabilities from key positions, property ownership and opportunities for skills development. The Commission goes on to note that this has resulted in a large-scale under representation of these groups in important job areas, particularly the technology sector and top management.

Unfortunately, there is no surety in South Africa that a policy of non-intervention in a non-discriminatory labour market will enable and ensure social equity. Many of the previous discriminatory policies, which have resulted in the current inequities in the labour market, tend to be self-perpetuating. A good example is the past differences in spending on black and white education. Persons with poor education are often unable to secure sufficient resources to ensure a good education for their children. The children are then, in turn, unable to provide their own offspring with an education that will allow social and economic advancement. It is for this reason that the Presidential Commission to Investigate Labour Market Policy (1996: 2) believed that a non-discriminatory labour market would be unable to ensure employment equity in a reasonable time frame. Thus, it was the position of the Commission that corrective measures, to ensure a socially equitable labour market, were justified. These corrective measures, or affirmative action, were seen as being policies and programmes aimed at improving labour market conditions for groups who were previously discriminated against. The Commission believed that the groups that should be targeted for affirmative action were Blacks (i.e. Africans, Asians and Coloureds), women and people with disabilities. This view of affirmative action is echoed in the Employment Equity Bill (1998: 3.15) which defines affirmative action measures as 'measures designed to ensure that suitably qualified people from designated groups have equal employment opportunities and are equitably represented in all occupational categories and levels in the workforce of a designated employer'. Earlier, the Employment Equity Bill (1998: 1) defines designated groups to mean Blacks, women and people with disabilities. It goes further to describe Blacks as a generic term for Africans, Coloureds and Indians. More importantly, while affirmative action measures must include preferential treatment and numerical goals for designated groups, it excludes quotas.

The application of affirmative action in the public sector has a history that dates back to the publication of the White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Sector in November 1995. The White Paper called for affirmative action in the public sector aimed at Blacks, women and people with disabilities. Specifically, the White Paper set targets for all government departments. These targets were to have at least 50% Black representation at management level by 1999. Furthermore, to ensure that 30% of all new recruits to middle and senior management were female by 1999 and to ensure that 2% of the public sector workforce comprised of people with disabilities by 2005. (Transformation of the Public Sector 1995: 10.5). These goals, however, were seen as minimum national targets, as they are not the ultimate transformation goal for the public sector. That goal is to create a public sector that is truly representative of the broader society at all levels of government service (Affirmative Action in the Public Sector 1998: 17).

Finally, it is worthwhile noting that the Employment Equity Bill specifically excludes the National Defence Force, the National Intelligence Agency and the South African Secret Service from its definition of the public service (Employment Equity Bill 1998: 1).

The success of the public sector in achieving its minimum targets, as well as its progress towards achieving full representation will be discussed below. Furthermore, the efforts of the public sector will be benchmarked against the overall implementation of affirmative action in the South African economy. The analysis will be conducted using the three groups identified in the Employment Equity Bill; namely Blacks, women and people with disabilities.

3. The Data

The bulk of the information used below comes from the public service payroll database and will be referred to as PERSAL. The February 2000 Labour Force Survey (conducted by Statistics South Africa) will also be used to give information on the population in general and the size of the labour force. A final important source of information that will often be referred to is the 2001 Employment Equity Report (EER). The values shown in the report will be used as an estimate for the current pace of transformation in the South African economy as a whole. For this reason, it is important to discuss the composition and limitations of the figures published in the report. The basis of the EER data is the reports that all firms of greater than 150 employees, and designated firms of less than 150 employees, are required to submit to the Department of Labour.

A total of 12 980 were submitted by 31 March 2001 to the Registry Database System set-up by the Department of Labour. Of these 12 980 reports, only 8 250 were included in the analysis. The other 4 730 reports were excluded on the grounds that it had not properly complied with requirements, or had been received after the cut-off date. From the total of 8 250 reports, 7 906 reports were received from the private sector and 49 reports from academic and parastatal bodies. The remainder of the reports were submitted by national government (25), provincial government (62) and local government (208). It is important to bear this in mind, as this means that public service figures are included and influence the EER values.

The EER covers a total of 3 336 784 employees, with the bulk of these employees (2 033 868) working in firms of greater than 1000 employees. Since the 2000 Labour Force Survey sets the total number of non-agricultural formal sector workers at 6 678 000, the EER covers approximately one-half of this total.

4. Characteristics of the National Labour Force

Clearly, in order to measure representativity, it is necessary to benchmark this relative to national demographics. It is not immediately apparent whether we should be comparing the profile of the public sector to the profile of the workforce, the economically active population (EAP) or even the "potential" EAP, that is, all persons aged 15-65. Table 4.1 shows that the racial and gender

profile of these three groups is significantly different. For example, 67% of male workers are Africans, but 75% of males aged 16-65 are African.

Table 4.1 National Demographics, by Labour Market Status

	Workers			Economically active population (broad)			Persons aged 15-65		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
African	4214447	3909450	8123897	6779099	7030712	13809811	9511894	10531521	20043415
%	67.0	70.1	68.5	73.4	76.6	75.0	75.4	76.2	75.8
Coloured	685608	632449	1318057	905500	901396	1806896	1153003	1296787	2449790
%	10.9	11.4	11.1	9.8	9.8	9.8	9.1	9.4	9.3
Indian	248559	146191	394750	307196	235626	542822	379504	384582	764086
%	4.0	2.6	3.3	3.3	2.6	3.0	3.0	2.8	2.9
White	1146392	885349	2031741	1248532	1012665	2261197	1565962	1616419	3182381
%	18.2	15.9	17.1	13.5	11.0	12.3	12.4	11.7	12.0
Total	6295006	5573439	11868445	9240327	9180399	18420726	12610363	13829309	26439672
%	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: own calculations on February 2000 Labour Force Survey, Statistics South Africa

It may appear reasonable to compare the racial and gender profile of the public sector to the working population, but this would be to ignore the additional barriers faced by certain groups in finding employment at all. Alternatively, some may argue that the appropriate benchmark is the potential workforce, that is, all persons aged 16-65. There are, however, some people (e.g. students) who choose not to participate in the labour market and the distribution of these people may differ across groups. Consequently, all comparisons in this paper are with the economically active population, broadly defined. In other words, the economically active population is taken to include all workers and the *broadly* unemployed since all these people desire work, even if they are not actively seeking it.

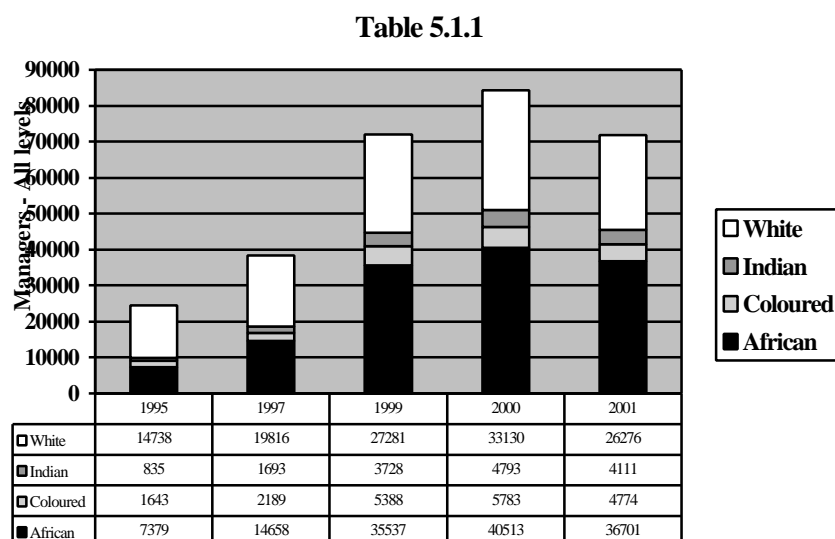
5. Labour Transformation - Blacks

This report will follow the definitions for Blacks as contained in the Employment Equity Bill viz. Africans, Coloureds and Indians.

A number of pertinent questions arise: How successful has the South African public service been in improving the representation of Blacks as a whole? Furthermore, at what level have these changes, if any, taken place? This section will examine the overall changes regarding race groups in non-managerial, middle management and senior management level.

5.1 Transformation at Management levels

Table 5.1.1 The Racial Breakdown of all Managers in the Public Service



Source: Public service payroll information (PERSAL)

The most striking feature of table 5.1.1 is the large increase in the total number of managers employed by the public service, and the sharp increase in the absolute number of Africans employed. Although the managerial level numbers are taken from the PERSAL database (level 13 and above), it does indicate some change in the level descriptors during this period and not a mass employment drive by the public service.

As the datasheet in the table shows, all groups have experienced an absolute increase in total numbers of managers between 1995 and 2001. Africans have shown the greatest absolute increase of 29 322, followed by Whites with an increase of 11 534 managers. Both Indian and Coloured groups lag far behind, with increases in managerial personnel of 3276 and 3131 respectively.

Table 5.1.2 Managers at all levels, by Race Group, as a Percentage of Total Managers

	Managers at all levels, by race group, as a percentage of total managers				
	1995	1997	1999	2000	2001
African	30.0%	38.2%	49.4%	48.1%	51.1%
Coloured	6.7%	5.7%	7.5%	6.9%	6.6%
Indian	3.4%	4.4%	5.2%	5.7%	5.7%
Total: Blacks	40.1%	48.3%	62.1%	60.7%	63.4%
White	59.9%	51.7%	37.9%	39.3%	36.6%

Source: Public service payroll information (PERSAL)

Table 5.1.2 tells an interesting story. Despite increases in absolute numbers, White participation in public service management has dropped by over 20% between 1995 and 2001. The group that has gained the most from this drop is undoubtedly Africans, as their level of representation has increased by 21.1% in the same period. The Indian group has also benefited slightly, with a 2.3% increase. Although the increase is a modest percentage, it does represent a substantial improvement, given the low representation of Indians in 1995. Furthermore this level of participation is significantly higher than the percentage of Indians in the economically active population (3.0%). The representation of Coloureds at management level has remained fairly static over the period. Looking at the total for Blacks, a definite positive trend can be confirmed. It can be seen that the public service did meet its 50% black representation target for 1999. Nevertheless the representation of blacks at management level is still some 20% below their representation in the overall economically active population.

Table 5.1.3 Net change in the number of Managers by Race Group

	Net change in the number of managers by race group			
	1995 to 1997	1997 to 1999	1999 to 2000	2000 to 2001
African	7279	20879	4976	-3812
Coloured	546	3199	395	-1009
Indian	858	2035	1065	-682
Total: Blacks	8683	26113	6436	-5503
White	5078	7465	5849	-6854
Overall	13761	33578	12285	-12357

Source: Public service payroll information (PERSAL)

The net change in the number of Black managers has generally been positive. The large increase between 1997 and 1999 would appear to be due to a change in level descriptors associated with management and not just an increase in employment at this level. Anecdotal evidence seems to indicate that some of this occurred. Unfortunately, detailed information about level descriptor changes could not be obtained from PERSAL. It is interesting to note that the period 2000 to 2001 saw a decrease in management numbers across all groups. This probably reflects a moratorium on employment in certain sectors of the public sector.

Table 5.1.4 Percentage of the Total Increase/Decrease in a Particular Time Period due to a Particular Race Group.

	Net change in management as a percentage of total change in management (per race group)			
	1995 to 1997	1997 to 1999	1999 to 2000	2000 to 2001
African	52.9%	62.2%	40.5%	30.9%
Coloured	4.0%	9.5%	3.2%	8.2%
Indian	6.2%	6.1%	8.7%	5.5%
Total: Blacks	63.1%	77.8%	52.4%	44.5%
White	36.9%	22.2%	47.6%	55.5%

Source: Public service payroll information (PERSAL)

The data in Table 5.1.4 should be viewed carefully as the period (2000 to 2001) reflects a decrease in absolute public service management numbers. It can be seen that Blacks played an ever-increasing role in the net increase in management up from 1995 to 1999, although this dropped substantially in the period 1999 to 2000. Because the data for 2000 to 2001 reflects a contraction in numbers, the greater component filled by Whites reflects a greater attrition in this race group and hence increased participation by Blacks at management level. Cause for concern is the significant contraction in Coloured managers observed in the last period. A net 1009 Coloured managers left the public service which as a percentage exceeds their representation at management level.

It is important to examine how far up the management structure transformation reaches. For this reason, the information in tables 5.1.1 to 5.1.4 has been decomposed into senior and middle management levels. The information with respect to senior management and racial groups is shown in tables 5.1.5 to 5.1.8, while middle management is displayed in tables 5.1.9 to 5.1.12.

Table 5.1.5 Senior Management by Race Groups

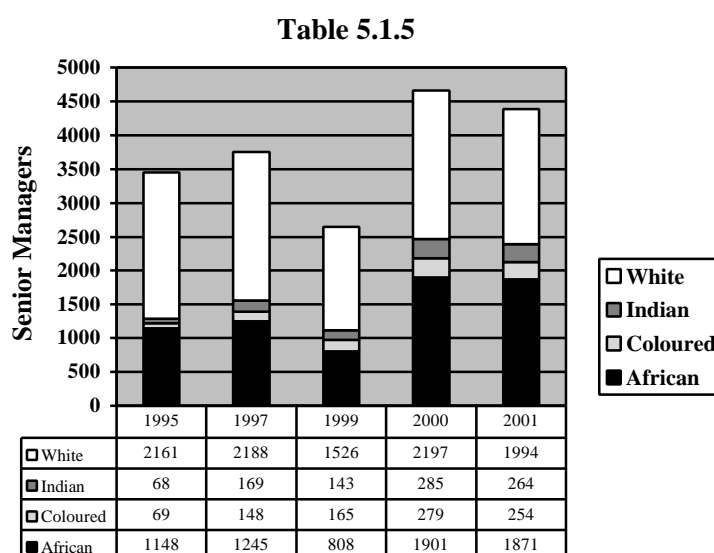


Table 5.1.6 Senior Management by Race Groups, as a Percentage of Total Senior Management

	Senior management by race group, as a percentage of total senior management				
	1995	1997	1999	2000	2001
African	33.3%	33.2%	30.6%	40.8%	42.7%
Coloured	2.0%	4.0	6.3%	6.0%	5.8%
Indian	2.0%	4.5%	5.4%	6.1%	6.0%
Total: Blacks	37.3%	41.7%	42.2%	52.9%	54.5%
White	62.7%	58.4%	57.8%	47.1%	45.5%

Source: Public service payroll information (PERSAL)

It is immediately apparent from the above two tables that Whites occupy a strong position in senior management. This position is out of proportion with their representation in the economically active population of 12.3%. The dominance of whites in senior management, however, has been whittling away slowly, with the most substantial reduction happening between 1999 and 2000. The direct result of this has been a slow increase in the representation of Blacks at senior management level. This has led to a public service that is definitely more representative than much of the rest of the economy. This can be seen, as the 2001 EER reported, that Whites represented 87% and 81% of top and senior management respectively. Despite this, there is still a substantial distance to go before the public services senior management reflects the racial demographics of South Africa. It is also apparent that the decrease in White representation at senior management level has been slower than at overall management level (this can be seen by comparing the data in Table 5.1.2 and 5.1.6). Interestingly, absolute senior management numbers underwent a decrease between 1997 and 1999 which is at odds with overall management (see Table 5.1.1) and again is likely to be due to adjustments to level descriptors during the period.

Table 5.1.7 Net increase in Senior Management by Racial Group

	1995 to 1997	1997 to 1999	1999 to 2000	2000 to 2001
African	97	-437	1093	-30
Coloured	79	17	114	-25
Indian	101	-26	142	-21
Total: Blacks	277	-446	1349	-76
White	27	-662	671	-203
Total	304	-1108	2020	-279

Source: Public service payroll information (PERSAL)

Table 5.1.8 Percentage of Total Change in Middle Management (per race group)

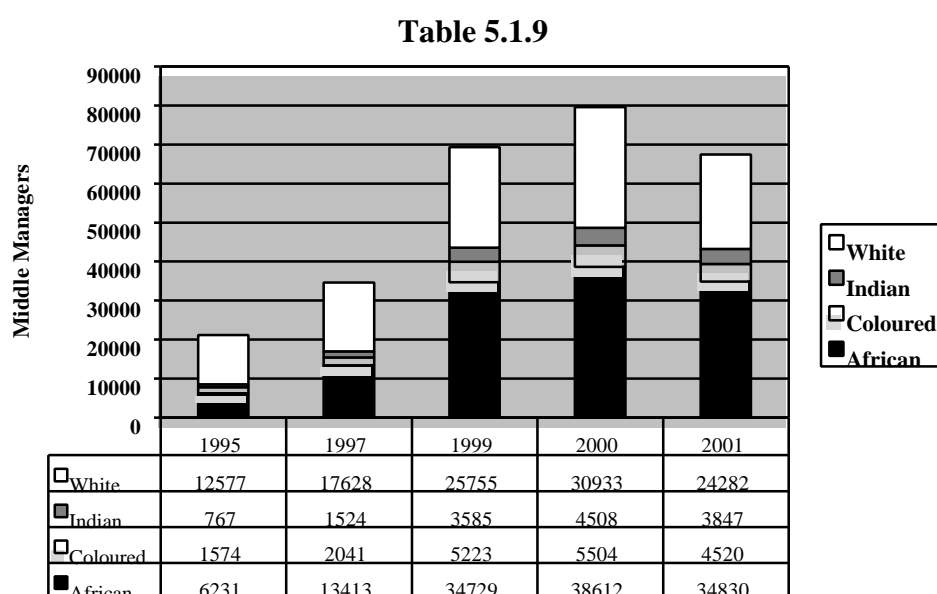
	Net change in senior management as a percentage of total change in senior management (per race group)			
	1995 to 1997	1997 to 1999	1999 to 2000	2000 to 2001
African	31.9%	39.4%	54.1%	10.8%
Coloured	26.0%	-1.5%	5.6%	9.0%
Indian	33.2%	2.4%	7.0%	7.5%
Total: Blacks	91.1%	40.3%	66.8%	27.2%
White	8.9%	59.8%	33.2%	72.8%

Source: Public service payroll information (PERSAL)

Care needs to be taken when reading table 5.1.8, as a negative percentage (for example, Coloureds between 1997 and 1999) could represent an increase in absolute numbers against a backdrop of general decreases. Thus, it is important when reading table 5.1.8 to carefully evaluate it against the direction of the absolute changes in table 5.1.7.

From the above tables we can see that in the two periods the public service had a net increase in the number of senior managers, Blacks made a strong percentage of that increase. This was particularly true just after the first democratic elections of 1994. Between 1995 and 1997, over 90% of all new senior managers were Black. Furthermore, over two-thirds of the increase in senior managers between 1999 and 2000 were also Black. It is not clear whether the period (1997 to 1999) reflects falling absolute numbers or a change in the level descriptors as overall management numbers in fact increased during this period. The large swings in racial composition of the changes indicated in Table 5.1.8 should also be treated with caution. Much of the volatility observed is the result of the rather small absolute changes observed.

Table 5.1.9 Growth in the Total Numbers of Middle Managers across all Racial Groups



Source: Public service payroll information (PERSAL)

Table 5.1.10 Middle Management by Race Group, as a Percentage of Total Middle Management

	Middle management by race group, as a percentage of total middle management				
	1995	1997	1999	2000	2001
African	29.5%	38.8%	50.1%	48.5%	51.6%
Coloured	7.4%	5.9%	7.5%	6.9%	6.7%
Indian	3.6%	4.4%	5.2%	5.7%	5.7%
Total: Blacks	40.5%	49.1%	62.8%	61.1%	64.0%
White	59.5%	50.9%	37.2%	38.9%	36.0%

Source: Public service payroll information (PERSAL)

What is immediately apparent from table 5.1.9 is the strong growth in the total numbers of middle managers across all racial groups. This growth is particularly focused on the three race groups that make up the Black population. The net result is an unsurprising increase in the percentage representation of Black persons at middle management level. This increase is greater than the similar improvements at senior level, although not by any great margin (23.5% improvement against 17.2%).

Furthermore, representation at middle management level was 10% higher than senior management in 2001. Overall, percentage representation of Blacks at middle management level in the public sector betters that of the economy as a whole (44% representation for Blacks at this level according to the 2001 EER). It is interesting to note that the gap between the public service and EER figures is greater at senior management than middle management. Therefore, despite the strides made by the public service, it still has a long way to go before achieving full representation of Africans.

Table 5.1.11 Net change in Middle Management by Race Group

	1995 to 1997	1997 to 1999	1999 to 2000	2000 to 2001
African	7182	21316	3883	-3782
Coloured	467	3182	281	-984
Indian	757	2061	923	-661
Total: Blacks	8406	26559	5087	-5427
White	5051	8127	5178	-6651
Total	13457	34686	10265	-12078

Source: Public service payroll information (PERSAL)

Table 5.1.12 Net change in Middle Management as a Percentage of Total Change in Middle Management (per race group)

	1995 to 1997	1997 to 1999	1999 to 2000	2000 to 2001
African	53.4%	61.5%	37.8%	31.3%
Coloured	3.5%	9.2%	2.7%	8.2%
Indian	5.6%	5.9%	9.0%	5.5%
Total: Blacks	62.5%	76.6%	49.6%	44.9%
White	37.5%	23.4%	50.4%	55.1%

Source: Public service payroll information (PERSAL)

Again caution needs to be displayed when looking at the 2000 to 2001 information in table 5.1.12. This period saw a decrease in middle management numbers and, consequently, the values should be judged accordingly.

From the tables above, the strong increases in middle management numbers are apparent. This is particularly evident for the period 1997 to 1999, which saw a massive 34 686 increase in middle management. Importantly, 76.6% of this increase came from the designated Black group. It is this period that really improved the representation of black persons in middle management. Since then, little improvement has been made, with new Black appointees only making up 49.6% of the total increase between 1999 and 2000.

5.2 Transformation at Non-managerial Level

As previously mentioned, transformation at non-managerial level also has important future implications, by providing previously disadvantaged groups with a stable income and opportunities for advancement for themselves and their children. Tables 5.2.1, 5.2.1, and 5.2.3 show the changes in non-managerial staff over the past 6 years.

Table 5.2.1 Changes in Non-Managerial Staff over the past 6 years

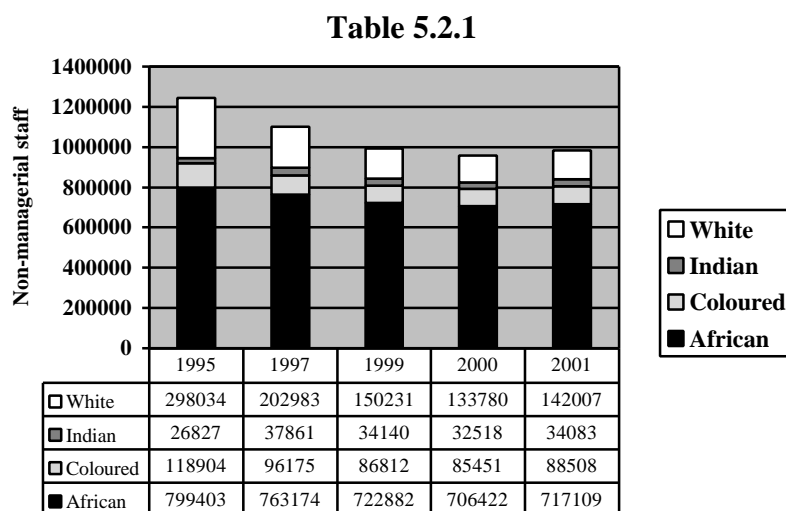


Table 5.2.2 Non-managerial Staff by Race Group, as a Percentage of Total Non-managerial Staff

	1995	1997	1999	2000	2001
African	64.3%	69.7%	72.7%	73.7%	73.1%
Coloured	9.6%	8.7%	8.7%	8.9%	9.0%
Indian	2.2%	3.4%	3.4%	3.4%	3.5%
Total: Blacks	76.0%	81.6%	84.9%	86.0%	85.5%
White	24.0%	18.5%	15.1%	14.0%	14.5%

Table 5.2.3 Net change in Non-Managerial Staff by Race Group

	Net change in non-managerial staff by race group			
	1995 to 1997	1997 to 1999	1999 to 2000	2000 to 2001
African	-36229	-40292	-16460	10687
Coloured	-22729	-9363	-1361	3057
Indian	11034	-3721	-1622	1565
Total: Blacks	-47924	-53376	-19443	15309
White	-95051	-52752	-16451	8227
Total	-142975	-106128	-35894	23536

Source: Public service payroll information (PERSAL)

From the above tables, it appears that percentage changes in non-managerial staff have been more gradual than the changes experienced by management. This is not surprising, given that participation at management level has always been less equitable than at an overall level. Furthermore, the size of the absolute changes is much greater than those of management. Given that the public service has been trimming non-managerial staff between 1995 to 2000, the increased representation of Black persons must have arisen as a result of more White persons leaving the service than Black persons. This statement is borne out by an examination of table 5.2.3, particularly during the period between 1995 and 1997. Looking at the percentage representation in 2001, it is apparent that it closely mirrors the various race group representation in the economically active population. Beyond that, it is impossible to draw any further conclusions, as there is no information on how the race groups are composed amongst the various levels of non-managerial staff. It is also interesting to note that although the public service has on the whole shed jobs during the period under review, management bucked this trend (compare tables 5.1.1 and 5.2.1)

5.3 Conclusions on Blacks in the Public Service

From the picture shown above, it is evident that the levels of representation for Coloureds, Indians and Africans at management level in the South African public service is consistently better than the rest of the economy. The level of representation for Africans and Coloureds is still a way off from their levels of participation in the labour force. A worrying factor is the lack of progress that has occurred since the year 2000. Almost all the improvements in representation occurred before this year.

On a non-managerial level, the transformation appears to have resulted in a broadly representative public service. A lack of detailed information makes it difficult to comment on transformation at varying non-management levels and in different departments.

6. Labour Transformation - Women

The second designated group identified by the Employment Equity Bill of 1998 is women. According to the February 2000 LFS, out of a total EAP of 18,4 million people, half (9,2 million) are women. Out of these, 3,6 million (39.2%) were (broadly) unemployed. This should be contrasted to the male unemployment rate of 31.9%. These values obviously do not reveal the full picture, as they fail to convey an idea of the quality of jobs available to men and women. The changes in the employment of women in the public service will be considered below. The discussion will focus primarily on the managerial level although a short look at transformation at the non-managerial level will also be undertaken.

6.1 Transformation at Managerial Level

How successful has the public service been in including women in managerial positions? From the tables below, it is immediately apparent that in the public service, the current government inherited in 1994, women were woefully underrepresented. In order to fully examine the picture of the last 6 years, the overall image will be looked at first. This will be followed by a study of both middle and senior management levels individually. This will help to determine if the 'glass ceiling' is still in place in senior management positions.

Table 6.1.1 Underrepresentation of Women at Managerial Level (per race group)

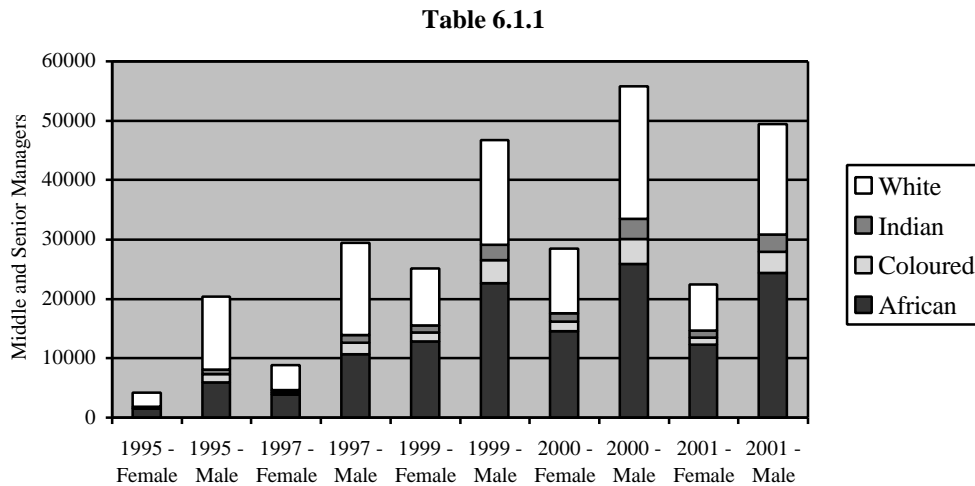


Table 6.1.2 Under Representation of Women at Managerial Level per Race Group

Table 6.1.2	Female					Male				
	1995	1997	1999	2000	2001	1995	1997	1999	2000	2001
Management- All levels										
African	1497	3922	12891	14602	12353	5882	10736	22646	25911	24348
Coloured	162	338	1434	1550	1126	1481	1851	3954	4233	3648
Indian	158	403	1215	1444	1221	677	1290	2513	3349	2890
White	2356	4206	9629	10885	7698	12382	15610	17652	22245	18578
Total	6168	10866	27168	30481	24399	22417	31484	48764	57738	51465

Source: Public service payroll information (PERSAL)

What is immediately apparent from the above two tables is that females are poorly underrepresented at management level. The situation was at its worst in 1995, with increases in female manager numbers from 1995 to 2000. These increases are offset to a degree by corresponding increases in the numbers of male managers. The year 2001 saw a decrease in female managers, but that was a year of general decreases and male numbers also declined. Looking at the proportional representation of female managers can help to develop a better picture of the changes over this period. This information is shown in table 6.1.3.

Table 6.1.3 Women Managers (all levels) as a Percentage of Total Managers (all levels) per Race Group

	1995	1997	1999	2000	2001
African	20.3%	26.8%	36.3%	36.0%	33.7%
Coloured	9.9%	15.4%	26.6%	26.8%	23.6%
Indian	18.9%	23.8%	32.6%	30.1%	29.7%
White	16.0%	21.2%	35.3%	32.9%	29.3%
Total	17.0%	23.1%	35.0%	33.8%	31.2%

Source: Public service payroll information (PERSAL)

As can be seen, starting from a low base, the public service has been able to almost double its female representation over the past six years. This increasing representation has unfortunately not been maintained and the period after 1999 has seen a reversal in female representation. The attrition at management level seen in the period, 2000 to 2001, impacted especially on women managers. A further cause for concern is that representation by female Coloured managers is significantly below the average and has remained so throughout the period under review.

The above trends are also borne out by the changes in absolute terms in table 6.1.4. Here the period, 1997 to 1999, shows the greatest absolute increase in female managers. From table 6.1.5, it can also be seen that the increases in female managers at this time registered 48.5% of total management increases. This figure slowed to 27.0% for the 1999 to 2000 period. During the period 2000 to 2001, decreases in the number in female managers accounted for 49.2% of total decrease. Because this figure is in excess of female representation at management level, the net effect was a decrease in the proportion of managers who are women.

Table 6.1.4 Net change in Women Managers – All Levels

	1995 - 1997	1997-1999	1999 – 2000	2000 - 2001
African	2425	8969	1711	-2249
Coloured	176	1096	116	-424
Indian	245	812	229	-223
White	1850	5423	1256	-3187
Total	4696	16300	3312	-6083

Table 6.1.5 Net change in Women Managers as a Percentage of Total Change in Management – All Levels

	1995 - 1997	1997-1999	1999 – 2000	2000 - 2001
African	33.3%	43.0%	34.4%	59.0%
Coloured	32.2%	34.3%	29.4%	42.0%
Indian	28.6%	39.9%	21.5%	32.7%
White	36.4%	72.7%	21.5%	46.5%
Total	34.1%	48.5%	27.0%	49.2%

Source: Public service payroll information (PERSAL)

Overall, it appears that public service is a long way off from achieving the 44.6% female representation suggested by their representation in the economically active population. Furthermore, unlike racial transformation, the public service lags behind the rest of the economy where 38% of all management levels / professional positions are filled by women. This is amplified by the complete lack of success experienced since the second democratic elections of 1999. Despite this, the public service did seem to meet its goal of having women represent 30% of all new managers by 1999 (using net change as a proxy for new recruits). Unfortunately, it appears to have slipped in this regard for the period after 1999. Furthermore, considering the negative trend observed recently, it is not yet evident whether the public service will continue meeting its 30% goal in both senior and middle management levels.

Table 6.1.6 Senior Female Managers relative to Men per Race Group

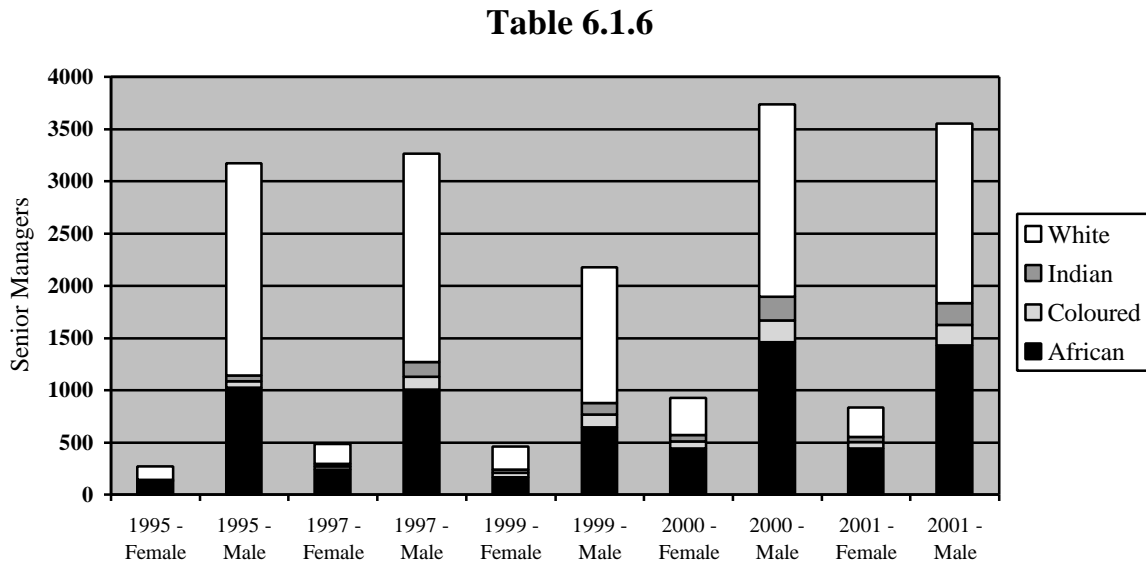


Table 6.1.7 Senior Female Managers relative to Men

Senior Managers	Female					Male				
	1995	1997	1999	2000	2001	1995	1997	1999	2000	2001
African	126	238	166	441	440	1022	1007	642	1460	1431
Coloured	7	29	42	69	62	62	119	123	210	192
Indian	8	28	32	62	52	60	141	111	223	212
White	131	192	222	355	279	2030	1996	1304	1842	1715
Total	272	487	462	927	833	3174	3263	2180	3735	3550

Source: Public service payroll information (PERSAL)

The low number of female managers relative to men displayed in tables 6.1.1 is further amplified in tables 6.1.6 and 6.1.7. A quick glance at the numbers, however, shows that the number of senior female managers has increased 3 times between 1995 and 2001. Again, a better picture can be gained by looking at the proportional representation of female senior managers.

Table 6.1.8 Women Senior Managers as a Percentage of total Senior Managers per Race Group

	1995	1997	1999	2000	2001
African	11.0%	19.1%	20.5%	23.2%	23.5%
Coloured	10.1%	19.6%	25.5%	24.7%	24.4%
Indian	11.8%	16.6%	22.4%	21.7%	19.7%
White	6.1%	8.8%	14.5%	16.2%	14.0%
Total	7.9%	13.0%	17.5%	19.9%	19.0%

Source: Public service payroll information (PERSAL)

The data clearly indicates that women are far less represented at senior management level than lower down. Nevertheless the relative gap between representation at senior level compared to all levels does narrow between 1995 and 2001. One interesting feature is that the increased representation between 1997 and 1999 occurred against a backdrop of lower senior management numbers for both men and women. However, while male senior manager numbers dropped by over 1000, a net of only 25 female senior managers left the public service. It is also interesting that this decrease was only among female Africans, with all other race groups actually gaining female managers. Interestingly that white female senior managers are significantly underrepresented with respect to white male managers.

Table 6.1.9 Net change in number of Women Managers at Senior Management level between 1995 and 2001

	1995 -1997	1997-1999	1999 - 2000	2000 - 2001
African	112	-72	275	-1
Coloured	22	13	27	-7
Indian	20	4	30	-10
Whites	61	30	133	-76
Total	215	-25	465	-94

Source: Public service payroll information (PERSAL)

Overall, the public service does appear to make some progress at senior management, but not the great strides that some may have desired. It is very difficult to make any comments regarding the public service target of 30% new recruits by 1999. Although such a goal was obviously met in 1995-1997, the decrease in senior management between 1997 and 1999 complicate the discussion. It should be noted that post-1999 performance does not seem to match up to the 30% target. Compared to the economy as a whole, the public service does measure up unlike overall female representation. The 2001 EER reported a 13% and 20% level of female representation for top and senior management respectively. The public service matches this with a 19.0% level for top/senior management. The public service, however, is not breaking new ground for senior female managers.

The story of female middle management is related in tables 6.1.10 to 6.1.13. From tables 6.1.10 and 6.1.11, the most dramatic feature is the over 5 times increase in female middle managers. This should, however, be seen against an increase of nearly 2.5 times in the number of male middle managers. Again, a drop-off in female (and male) middle manager numbers can be seen in 2001.

Table 6.1.10 Representation of Female Middle Management

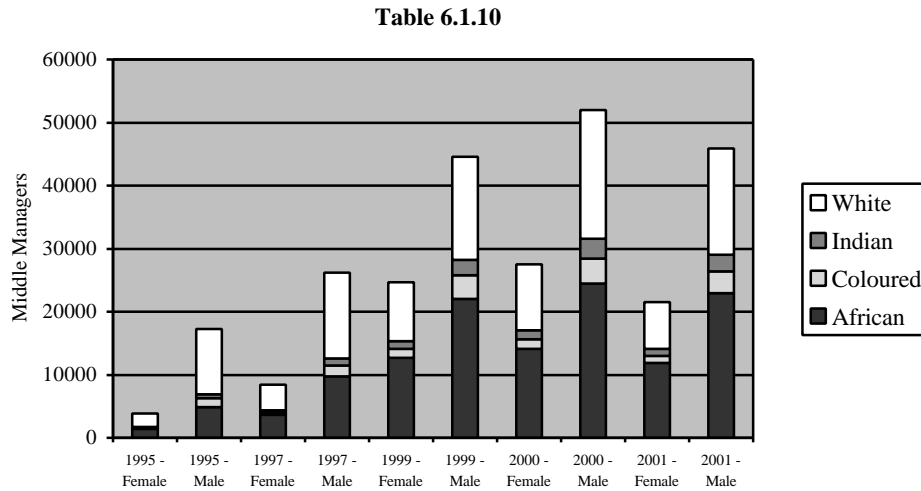


Table 6.1.11 Proportional representation of Female Middle Managers

Middle Managers	Female					Male				
	1995	1997	1999	2000	2001	1995	1997	1999	2000	2001
African	1371	3684	12725	14161	11913	4860	9729	22004	24451	22917
Coloured	155	309	1392	1481	1064	1419	1732	3831	4023	3456
Indian	150	375	1183	1382	1169	617	1149	2402	3126	2678
White	2225	4014	9407	10530	7419	10352	13614	16348	20403	16863
Total	3901	8382	24707	27554	21565	17248	26224	44585	52003	45914

Source: Public service payroll information (PERSAL)

Table 6.1.12 shows the proportional representation story. Unsurprisingly, the figures tell a tale of good increase between 1995 and 1999, followed by a small decrease in 2000 and a slightly larger decrease in 2001. The single most impressive change was from 1997 to 1999, when female representation increased by 11.4%. Looking at table 6.1.11, it can be seen that the numbers of female middle managers nearly tripled over this period.

Table 6.1.12 Women Middle Managers as a percentage of total Middle Managers per Race Group

	1995	1997	1999	2000	2001
African	22.0%	27.5%	36.6%	36.9%	34.2%
Coloured	9.9%	15.1%	26.7%	26.9%	23.5%
Indian	19.6%	24.6%	33.0%	30.7%	30.4%
White	17.7%	22.8%	36.5%	34.4%	30.6%
Total	18.5%	24.2%	35.66%	34.6%	32.0%

Table 6.1.13 Net change in number of Women Managers at Middle Management Level

	1995 -1997	1997 - 1999	1999 - 2000	2000 - 2001
African	2313	9041	1436	-2248
Coloured	154	1083	89	-417
Indian	225	808	199	-213
Whites	1789	5393	1123	-3111
Total	4481	16325	2847	-5989

Source: Public service payroll information (PERSAL)

Table 6.1.13 shows the net changes in absolute terms. It can be seen how females represented an increasing portion of the net increases between 1995 and 1999. However, this tapered off sharply in the 1999-2000 period. During the decreases of 2000-2001, females accounted for nearly 50% of the middle managers leaving public service. Because most female managers are employed at middle management level (senior management representation is much lower), the trends in middle management dominate overall female management participation.

Overall, women middle managers in the public service do not hold as high a proportion of jobs as the rest of the economy. The 2001 EER showed a 38% level of representation for females in mid-level management and professional employment. The public sector only managed to achieve 31,96% in 2001. Furthermore this value is also below the figures for female participation in the labour force. When measured against the target of 30% of new recruits by 1999 target as a criteria, it seem that the public service has had better success. Unfortunately, the post-1999 experience has been unable to match earlier efforts.

6.2 Transformation at Non-managerial Level

The importance of non-managerial staffing towards employment equity has already been discussed. The information as it relates to females is shown in table 6.2.1 and 6.2.2.

Table 6.2.1 Employment Equity of Non-Managerial Staffing as it relates to Females

Table 6.2.1

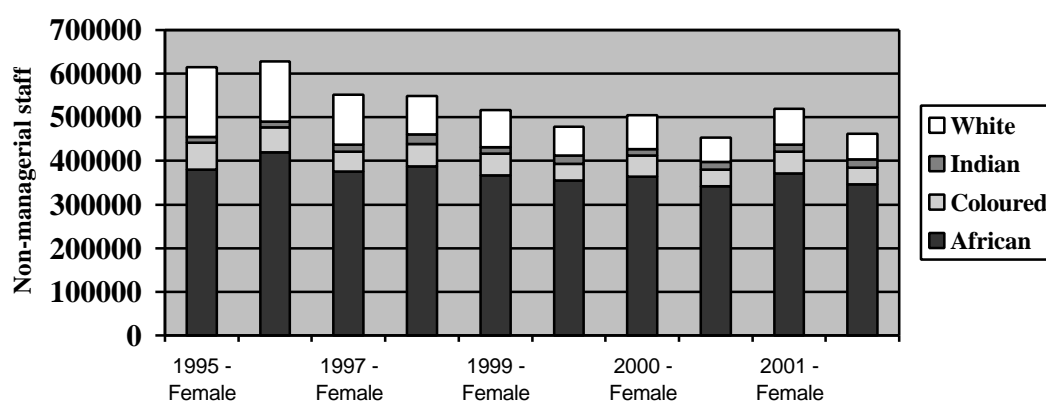


Table 6.2.2 Non-managerial Female Staff as a percentage of total Non-managerial staff per Race Group

	1995	1997	1999	2000	2001
African	47.6%	49.3%	50.8%	51.5%	51.8%
Coloured	51.4%	56.6%	56.1%	56.3%	56.56%
Indian	47.9%	41.4%	43.0%	44.0%	44.6%
White	53.7%	56.6%	56.8%	58.2%	58.3%
Total	49.4%	50.1%	51.9%	52.7%	52.9%

Source: Public service payroll information (PERSAL)

Looking at the tables above, it appears that the public service shows a great deal of equality in non-managerial staffing. In fact, the percentage of females employed in these positions is between 5 to 7 percent greater than the level of female participation in the EAP. Again, little more can be said, as the data does not provide any clues as to the nature of the work done.

One concern about the high level of female representation at non-managerial level is that this is not reflected at managerial level. This would seem to indicate a possible glass ceiling between these two employment strata, limiting the career prospects of women in the public service.

6.3 Conclusions on Women in the Public Service

Public service transformation with regards to women at managerial level has not been nearly as successful as wished. The public sector's experience with female transformation does not match its performance with racial transformation. Even though the public service began in 1995 with very low female numbers, transformation does not appear to have been aggressive enough. The result is a public sector that is lagging behind the rest of the economy at middle management level and is just keeping pace at senior management level. The picture is not one of the government leading the way and providing the catalyst for change.

7. Labour Transformation - Disabled Persons

The final group designated by the Employment Equity Bill was disabled persons. Unfortunately, very little information on the position of people with disabilities is available. This is a view that is found in the government's 1998 White Paper on Affirmative Action and is also echoed in the original Presidential Commission to investigate labour market policy. Furthermore, there are still issues outstanding on the exact definition of who counts as disabled.

Unfortunately, the lack of precise information on persons with disabilities is also a feature of the PERSAL data that has provided much of the discussion above. The PERSAL data's only information regarding disabled persons is that there was a total of 109 disabled persons in public service management in 2000 (95 middle managers and 14 senior managers) and 89 disabled persons in 2001 (87 middle managers and 2 senior managers). Given the small numbers involved, this is insufficient information from which to draw any meaningful conclusions.

8. Conclusion

The overall picture that emerges from all the above is a public service that is making great strides in improving the representation of different race groups, but that is unable to mimic these achievements when it comes to women. Although there have been improvements in female representation, it has not managed to lead the economy-wide experience. A further common thread is the general slowdown, and in some cases, back-pedaling in transformation that has occurred during 2000 and 2001 in particular with respect to female representation.

Finally, the paper raises some questions that require further investigation. These include:

- Do the trends experienced in female representation in 2000-2001 represent the arrival at a glass ceiling?
- What are the achievements of representation within the public service by department and occupational class?
- Will the pace of racial transformation at management level be maintained or will the private sector impact on this representation in order to acquire staff to meet their own equity targets?

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