

# CIVIL SERVICE RACE FORUM STRATEGY

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MARCH 2017

DELIVERING TO FIX THE SYSTEM

**VISION** To promote race equality for all Civil Service BAME colleagues,  
making our Civil Service the UK's most inclusive employer by 2020.

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**Civil  
Service  
Race  
Forum**

# INTRO

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## **Civil Service Race Forum**

The Civil Service Race Forum (CSRF) is a collaborative group of staff networks working towards advancing diversity and equality for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) colleagues in the Civil Service and its agencies. The forum membership is open to all Civil Service chairs of race staff networks (or their appointed representatives) from public, private and third sector.

Our vision:

To promote race equality for all Civil Service BAME colleagues, making our Civil Service the UK's most inclusive employer by 2020.

Our mission and purpose:

To see the increase of BAME SCS representation and other relevant grades by supporting the Cabinet Office and the wider Civil Service in designing and influencing policy that becomes integral to tackle individual and institutional racism in the Civil Service.

## **How we work**

The Civil Service Race Forum (CSRF) is managed by an executive committee of Civil Service volunteers. The committee and forum is chaired by Rob Neil and Deputy Chair, Harsha Savani, both who took on the role from 3 October 2016 from its previous Chair, Kul Bassi and Deputy Chair Iris Anderson. Four drivers have been identified in this strategy to drive forward change under CSRF:

- **Race Culture Change, led by Paul Haughton (MOJ)**
- **Communications, led by Kailesh Sudra (DWP)**
- **Learning and Development, led by Frank Munro (DEFRA)**
- **Leadership and Talent, led by Smita Mehta (MOD)**

# BACKGROUND

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## Where are we now

The Civil Service Race Forum (CSRF) annual Awayday on 23 September 2016 confirmed the election of the new chair Rob Neil and Deputy Chair, Harsha Savani. The CSRF has progressed over the years in terms of influence and reach to a wider audience. We have welcomed networks for Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic (BAME), SCS and G7/6 civil servants taking every opportunity to work together to strengthen our common interests.

Overall more BAME staff at all levels have been engaged in raising awareness and willingness to act on issues that have been identified as unfair or a barrier to progression.

## Where are we going

CSRF priorities and common themes were set and agreed by CSRF's Chair in September 2016. The change in focus was simply necessary now for CSRF to build on the momentum during the transitional period leading up to September 2016 elections.

<b>Priorities</b>	<b>Common themes</b>
Agreeing and publishing a CSRF Business Plan	CSRF strap line 'Unity is Strength'
Agreeing and submitting a CSRF Business Case	Identify opportunities to work with stakeholders with whom we share common issues/interests
Using 'Critical Race Theory' as a core element of CSRF's Strategic Narrative	Open to different ways of working because we are diverse and that demonstrates our openness and strength
Developing an approach that looks to 'fix the system' as opposed to traditional approaches of looking to 'fix BAME' staff	Use departmental Race Champions more effectively
	CSRF executive committee that works to develop solutions

# CSRF WAYS OF WORKING

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## Key achievements

The CSRF has exerted a degree of influence on senior managers, notably the Cabinet Office via the current Civil Service Race Champion (Richard Heaton), which saw some of our representations, reflected in the Civil Service Talent Action Plan (CS TAP). For example, acknowledgement that employee networks play a crucial role in advancing the interests of underrepresented groups but are not always recognised for the valuable contributions they make.

## More to do

The reach of CSRF both within and external to the Civil Service makes it possible to influence proposals put forward that ultimately have the desired improvement and outcome for BAME civil servants.

CSRF have role in shaping and influencing Cabinet Office to encourage departments and agencies to give greater recognition to employee networks, in return for networks contributing to business outcomes. Recognition would include acknowledgement of contributions as part of appraisals and promotion panels, and appropriate support from line managers for members to take part in network activities.

CSRF have a role in supporting representatives from employee networks to bid for a central pot of funding for events and investment in capacity-building, ensuring that employee networks are strengthened and fully representative ([https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/418050/TAP\\_Template\\_260315.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/418050/TAP_Template_260315.pdf)).

Identify influential 'allies' include those outside civil service such as Business in the Community.

Consider whether CSRF should be collating our own evidence? We are uniquely placed as Chairs of networks, to collect data from our members and speak from an informed position.

CSRF to hold annual event to serve to raise awareness and identify role models not always visible within Departments. Increase non-BAME attendance; consider identifying themes in common with other strands, and/or joint events.

# CSRF FOUR DRIVERS

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The four drivers underpin CSRF will deliver against its mission. We have broken these down into practical activities.

## **Race Culture Change:**

- Objective 1. To deliver a demonstrable and recognisable increase in the number of BAME SCS.
- Objective 2. To drive cultural change across the Civil Service that enhances, supports and advances the Civil Service Diversity and Inclusion agenda in respect of BAME staff.
- Objective 3. Increase race awareness of issues that impact BAME civil servants and widen the scope to include non-BAME civil servants who are unaware or resistant to talking about race issues.
- Objective 4. Develop the business case for diversity – draw out key points and back up these up with research/statistics.

Objectives will be delivered by:

- Activity 1. Working in partnership with the Cabinet Office, Civil Service leaders and Race Champions, BAME staff support networks and external organisations.
- Activity 2. Creating a Civil Service Cultural Change Framework for implementation by all Whitehall Departments and their agencies.
- Activity 3. Supporting the implementation of the Framework across Whitehall Departments and their agencies.
- Activity 4. Develop evaluation criteria to evaluate and report progress.

## **Communications: Design, Digital Media, Engagement and Membership**

- Objective 1. To develop an approach to CSRF communications that aligns with both broader Civil Service communication principles in delivering innovative, digital driven, insight based communications.
- Objective 2. To ensure the approach and delivery of communications is inclusive and no one gets left behind by offering alternative channels driven by the users need.
- Objective 3. To act as a role model for CSRF executive committee and wider Civil Service Race networks in design and delivery of network communications.

Objectives will be delivered by:

- Activity 1. Conduct a review of known CSRF communications channels, branding and process.
- Activity 2. Develop a CSRF communications approach setting out recommendations for rebrand, refresh of existing channels, introduction of new channels and ways of working across CSRF executive committee and wider Civil Service Race networks
- Activity 3. Design and issue communications user needs to CSRF executive committee and wider Civil Service Race networks
- Activity 4. Rebrand CSRF by designing new logo & banners, including refresh of @CSRaceForum, Gov.UK and mail shots.
- Activity 5. Introduce new channels and process by setting up CSRF centralised email account, e-news feed and website.

## **Learning & Development: Building capability for all**

- Objective 1. Increase in the number of BAME civil servants successful in gaining promotions and/or progress their careers by other means.
- Objective 2. Mentoring and bespoke training to ensure BAME access to development opportunities.
- Objective 3. Develop a central store and access for essential BAME reading documents to inform CSRF executive members.
- Objective 4. Build up a picture of the positive action BAME Learning and Development (L & D) opportunities across Government Departments, Agencies and NDPBs.

Objectives will be delivered by:

- Activity 1. Survey CSRF members on L & D.
- Activity 2. Review BAME L & D opportunities across Government Departments, Agencies and NDPBs to build a comprehensive view.
- Activity 3. Commission L & D info from each represented CSRF member within a six week time frame.
- Activity 4. Collate assess and evaluate the L & D data.
- Activity 5. Produce a report for the CSRF Executive Committee on L & D opportunities across Government Departments, Agencies and NDPBs.
- Activity 6. Set up database for 'Essential Reading documents.
- Activity 7. Set up database for L & D BAME opportunities across Government Departments, Agencies and NDPBs.

## **Leadership & Talent management:**

Objective 1. Increase numbers of BAME G7 & SCS.

Objective 2. Optimise departmental Race Champions and to encourage practical sponsorship of BAME civil servants.

Objective 3. CSRF to sit substantively on the cross Government Race Champions forum chaired by Richard Heaton.

Objective 4. Skills mapping.

Objective 5. Engage with decision makers and influencers

Objective 6. Mixed panels.

Objectives will be delivered by:

Activity 1. All CSRF members to engage and establish regular 1:1 with own Department's Race Champion to make them aware of CSRF and encourage seeing this forum as a resource.

Activity 2. Members to encourage their Departmental Race Champion to engage with CSRF and invite to Departmental Diversity meetings (Rob, Harsha or Executive Committee).

Activity 3. Map skills, experience & qualifications of Executive Committee and CSRF. Why? Because we need to offer examples of where resources have not been used effectively and provide an alternative. Potential to be used as an example of better practice and rolled out wider.

Activity 4. Engage with Cabinet Office re workforce action plan, consideration of the plan and how we can align thinking and activity.

Activity 5. Identify and establish a process for identifying talent.

Activity 6. Mixed panels – offer CSRF members as a pool to be used across Whitehall, may require budget to train as panel members.



# HOW CSRF IS ORGANISED

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## **Chair, Vice-Chair**

Establish a strong, committed executive committee to deliver key priorities. Focal points for key stakeholder engagement and drivers for delivery. Not least the Cabinet Office and civil service Race Champion. Identify key plans, proposals and decisions that CSRF should be engaged in and broker CSRF as a key stakeholder to development of plans, proposals and decisions. Drive a solution focussed agenda.

## **Executive Committee**

More joined up working, identifying common strands that will make a difference. Identify and pool together to achieve agreed outcomes. Agree to commit 2/3 hours a week? Avoid working in stove-pipes. Our strength is in unity, therefore this is an opportunity to showcase and demonstrate successful working together of a diverse team across Departments. Key themes include 'it's ok to talk about race', mixed selection panels, identify and raise profile of common strands of areas for concerns and develop solutions.

## **Civil Service Race Forum**

Engage and build strong links with own Departments' Race Champion, this is one of our key game-changers.

- Establish regular meetings with own Departments' Race Champion to influence/agree Race Champion action plan/deliverables/diversity/objectives. This should form the basis of your own network action plan.
- Pick actions that will make a difference to your members. Pick 2/3 actions, better to deliver a small number than over-reaching and showing some as not delivered. Articulate the outcome and ensure they are recognised in annual reports.
- The role of Race Champions is critical to influence changes we have identified, therefore establish a good working relationship as a priority. Consider how you can help to widen interest BAME staff by engaging BAME staff within your department and scope e.g. introduction to other Race Champions and encourage involvement with 'Race to the top' SCS forum, this in turn supports our range of influence.

# CSRF RECAP OF OUR DELIVERABLES

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## What good looks like

In a year, our ambition is realistic, small steps. Main indicators have been identified in this paper; each of the work streams will continue to work as identified in their action plans. The key outcomes and our success will be measured through the following outcomes:

- 1.CSRF to sit substantively on the Cross Government Race Champions forum.**
- 2.CSRF to input into the Cabinet Office Workforce Plan.**
- 3. All CSRF members to have regular monthly 1-2-1s with their departmental Race Champion along the lines of a structured debate.**
- 4. CSRF to have influenced Richard Heaton to set his Civil Service Race Equality priorities.**
- 5. The top five Departments to be undertaking practical activity to address some of the seven Race Game Changers.**
- 6. CSRF to have influenced the growth of more Race Networks across departments and the whole of the Civil Service.**
- 7. CSRF to have hosted a Race event with an objective for Departments to pledge how they will deliver race equality.**

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