

Organization Name: Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission

Project or Program Name: Task Force on Racial and Social Justice

Goal that best reflects your Project or Program's achievements: Promotes diversity, equity, inclusion, and anti-racist policies through our work in the tolling industry

Launch date for the Project or Program

10/22/2020

How many months of proven experience is this submission based upon?

The Task Force on Racial and Social Justice is now in its eighth month lead by a three person Core Team who serves as advisors and facilitators to each of the five sub-committees. The sub-committees meet monthly to identify the prioritization of action items.

Is this Project or Program complete? If no, when will it be completed?

No. It is ongoing

Briefly describe the Project or Program

The Task Force's development was a direct response to the murder of George Floyd and the racial unrest that exists within the United States. With the onslaught of racial injustices and brutality targeting the African American community in 2020 the long existing undertones of systemic racism contributing to the ongoing historical racial unrest became apparent. To work towards sustainable change in addressing racism and racial inequities, the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission (PTC) formed the Task Force on Racial and Social Justice (Task Force) a voluntary, employee-led resource group committed to eliminating systemic racism and discrimination throughout the Commission.

What objective(s) was the Project or Program designed to accomplish?

The Task Force's objective is as follows:

1. To support the PTC's Mission, Vision, Commitment and Values.
2. Collectively determine a solution to de-normalize processes that support exclusivity in PTC practices, policies, and procedures.
3. Proactively seek out solutions to ensure that racial and social justice is at forefront of our decision-making, understanding from the perspective that we have practices and policies that are exclusive.
4. Collectively determine best practices for the PTC and beyond.
5. Set accountability measures and assurances in all that we do.
6. Seek justice based on ethical judgment and doing the right thing.

How did the Project or Program accomplish the stated objectives?

Systemic racism is oftentimes embedded within our workplace in ways that are unconscious, and the impact on values, beliefs and ideologies that contribute to this system are disproportionately experienced by African Americans and communities of color. With the formation of five subcommittees within the Task Force; Transportation Equities, Internal Workforce and Hiring Practices, Environmental Justice, Systems Education, Review & Reform, and Racial & Social Healing and Alliances, 30 dedicated employees focused on evaluating historic practices and policies, identifying areas of improvement, and prioritizing initiatives with

the sole purpose of providing sustainable recommendations to promote racial equity and social justice within the Commission.

What were the successful, demonstrable results of the Project or Program that positively affected the customer, agency and/or the community?

The Task Force on Racial and Social Justice is a newly formed committee created out of the necessity to review and address long-standing racial inequities within the transportation industry. Keeping silent or remaining neutral about racism only exasperates the issue, and the PTC recognizes we cannot achieve equity within our organization by hiding stark realities. Empowering our employees from diverse racial groups, and diverse experiences to explore courageous conversations around racism was a first step in addressing systemic inequities within the PTC. This initiative introduced a measurable action plan. To date, the following action items are of focus: (1) Development of a diversity dashboard to monitor recruitment and retention activities of underrepresented representation; (2) partnerships with DBE/WBE publications to assist in targeting diverse outreach activities throughout Pennsylvania; (3) enhancement of Geofencing capabilities to recruit underrepresented representation in densely populated area; (4) rewriting of the Public Involvement Guidebook to build awareness of PTC projects and activities in diverse communities. These priority action items are the result of a collective contribution from our sub-committee members to address racial equity and to move the PTC forward towards sustainable initiatives.

Is your Project or Program relevant and applicable to the overall toll industry? If so, how?

As a leader within the transportation industry, the PTC recognizes the issues of racism impacting African Americans, inevitably impacts us all negatively as an organization. If we desire sustainable change within our country, then we must be willing to take a hard look at ourselves as a transportation organization and critically examine our processes. This examination is necessary to ensure that the voices of our employees and communities of color are heard as it pertains to, but not limited to employment and hiring, roadway projects that traverse diverse communities, and ongoing dialogues that promote racial understanding and healing. The Racial and Social Justice Task Force serves as a step forward towards building racial equity within the PTC, while serving as a model for others within the toll industry.

How did this Project or Program achieve or demonstrate excellence?

Every day within our Strategic Plan Framework, we ask our employees to demonstrate excellence by living out our five core values: Safety Always, Communicate Openly, Customer Driven, Responsibility Matters, and Teamwork Delivers. The Task Force on Racial and Social Justice realized that our initiative to take steps towards addressing systemic racism is actualized through the value of Responsibility Matters - We embody diversity, integrity, and sustainability in all of our practices. The PTC understands that our employees, our customers, and the communities of color that traverse the PTC matter, and as an organization we want to exemplify our value of Responsibility Matters through the establishment of a Task Force that will help us remain true to that value and demonstrate excellence while doing so.

Describe any innovative aspects of your Project or Program

Our CEO, Mark Compton desired action that moved beyond words of condemnation against racism. The formation of the Task Force on Racial and Social Justice was formed as a meaningful action towards addressing systemic racism within the PTC, and thereby within transportation industry. The innovative format of the Task Force centers around the development of a comprehensive framework centered around the five sub-committees; Transportation Equities, Internal Workforce and Hiring Practices, Environmental Justice, Systems Education, Review & Reform, and Racial & Social Healing and Alliances to review any



TOLLING. MOVING SMARTER.

systemic racism that may be within business initiatives and outcomes. The Task Force empowers employees to elevate the dialogue on racism individually and collectively for the purpose of proposing sustainable recommendations to eradicate racism for our employees and customers.

List individuals worthy of special recognition for this Project or Program

Through the leadership commitment of our Chief Executive Officer, Mark Compton, and our Chief of Compliance, Legislative & Cultural Affairs, Charles Duncan, the Task Force on Racial and Social Justice was developed to address systemic racism within the PTC. Their leadership provided an effective organizational model where racial equity could be developed, achieved, and sustained.