

Managing Diversity Report April 2008 – March 2009

The Big Life Group

Managing Diversity Report - April 2008 to March 2009

Introduction

The organisation continues to prioritise equal opportunities and ensures that the management of diversity remains high on the agenda. Our approach to achieve this is to concentrate on both the attraction and the retention of a diverse range of people.

The management of diversity is essential for a number of reasons – moral, legal, financial and also business related motives. It is also important as it enables us to monitor our compliance with legislation.

The Big Life group currently has the following equal opportunities measures in place: -

- An Equal Opportunities policy that is promoted throughout the organisation.
- An Equal Opportunities monitoring form as part of the recruitment procedure.
- Equal Opportunities training – for example Challenging Discrimination.
- Equal Opportunities monitoring of staff on an annual basis.

This report will review the diversity of the workforce currently and compare it to the three years previous. It will also review the diversity of the applicants attracted by our recruitment advertising over the year. Where necessary recommendations for improvement will be put forward.

METHOD

Workforce

During March 2009 all managers were provided with monitoring information and guidelines. They were asked to do a survey of current staff in their department by asking them to complete an Employee Monitoring Form. Managers were then asked to collate the information together on a Team Monitoring Record Sheet and submit this to the HR department. The information was then collated centrally by HR and group figures produced. We have achieved a hundred percent response rate from managers this year, however some managers did not receive forms from every team member.

Employee Monitoring Returns

	08- 09	07-08	06-07	05-06
No. of employees	256	205	223	223
No. of returns	189	162	156	189
% of returns	74%	79%	70%	85%

Recruitment

Throughout the year there have been 53 vacancies advertised across the group. For every vacancy, the application pack sent out to potential applicants should include an equal opportunities monitoring form. When applications are received with the monitoring forms, these are passed onto HR and the results from these forms are then collated by HR for each vacancy. It should be noted that recruiting managers only returned the monitoring forms to the HR department for 24 of these 53 vacancies which means that for 65% of last year's vacancies we

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are not able to assess the diversity of the applicants we are attracting. However, this is a 15% increase on the returns we received the year before.

Recruitment Monitoring Returns

	07-08	08-09
No. of Vacancies	37	53
No of returns	11	24
% of returns	30%	45%

FINDINGS

AGE

Employees

CATEGORIES	08-09	%	07-08	%	06-07	%	05-06	%
UNDER 18	1	1	1	0.6	0	0	0	0
18-25	32	17	32	20	33	21	35	18
26-35	57	31	44	27	45	29	53	28
36-45	53	29	55	34	51	33	66	35
46-55	32	17	26	16	24	15	33	17
56-65	8	4	4	2.4	4	2	4	2
OVER 65	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Legislation on age discrimination introduced in 2006 covers employees of all ages. This means employers can no longer recruit, train, promote or retire people on the basis of age, unless it can be objectively justified. Our age profile as a percentage of staff employed has remained roughly consistent over the last 3 years, the main differences this year are as follows, 3% decrease in the 18-25 category, 4% increase in the 26-35 category and 5% decrease in the 36-45 category.

Applicants

CATEGORIES	08-09	%	07-08	%
UNDER 18	1	1	n/a	5
18-25	56	30	n/a	30
26-35	64	35	n/a	26
36-45	38	21	n/a	25
46-55	21	11	n/a	8
56-65	1	1	n/a	6
Over 65	3	2	n/a	0

The biggest increase since last year is a 9% increase in the 26-35 category, which is in line with our highest category of people we employ. The biggest difference in the people we are attracting and who we employee is the 18-25 category, we have attracted 30% in this category but only 17% of our employees are within this age profile.

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GENDER

Employees

CATEGORIES	08-09	%	07-08	%	06-07	%	05-06	%
FEMALE	131	69	123	76	121	78	124	66
MALE	58	31	39	24	35	22	65	34
TRANSGENDER	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
NO ANSWER	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

As in previous years, our workforce is made up of a higher proportion of females than males. However, we have seen a 7% increase since last year in the number of males in the workforce.

Applicants

CATEGORIES	08-09	%	07-08	%
FEMALE	130	71	n/a	79
MALE	50	27	n/a	19
TRANSGENDER	0	0	n/a	0
NO ANSWER	3	2	n/a	2

This information shows that the gender imbalance portrayed by the workforce is even more pronounced in terms of the percentage of males to females applying for positions with the organisation.

ETHNIC ORIGIN

Employees

CATEGORIES	08-09	%	07-08	%	06-07	%	05-06	%
WHITE BRITISH	113	60	88	54.4	65	42	104	55
WHITE IRISH	1	1	1	0.6	3	2	4	2
WHITE OTHER	4	2	7	4.4	9	6	5	3
BLACK CARIBBEAN	11	6	14	8.6	20	13	34	18
BLACK AFRICAN	10	5	9	5.6	5	3	6	3
BLACK OTHER	19	11	6	3.8	6	4	7	4
INDIAN	6	3	4	2.4	4	2.5	7	4
PAKISTANI	9	5	18	11.2	11	7	8	4.5
BANGLADESHI	3	2	2	1.2	2	1	2	1
ASIAN OTHER	0	0	0	0	5	3	2	1
CHINESE	1	1	1	0.6	1	0.5	1	0.5
CHINESE OTHER	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
WHITE & BLACK CAR.	2	1	2	1.2	0	0	1	0.5
WHITE & BLACK AFR.	0	0	4	2.4	3	2	3	2
WHITE & ASIAN	2	1	3	1.8	2	1	2	1
MIXED OTHER	3	2	1	0.6	0	0	2	1
OTHER ETHNIC GROUP	4	2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

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NO ANSWER	0	0	2	1.2	20	13	1	0.5
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The figures for 2008-2009 once again reveal that the organisation's employees represent diverse ethnic groups and covering almost all of the categories used by the Commission for Racial Equality. We need to continue to ensure that our recruitment advertising reaches all areas of the community. The biggest difference is the 7.2% increase in the 'Black Other' category, however, these people did not state what the other ethnic group they are. The other differences are a 6.2% drop in the 'Pakistani' category and an increase of 5.6% increase in the 'White British' category.

	2008-09	2007-08	2006-07	2005-06
BME Percentage	39%	39.4%	37%	39%

The BME percentage for 2008 – 2009 is 39%. This is well above the BME percentage of the population as a whole which is 7.9% according to the last Census (Office for National Statistics).

Applicants

CATEGORIES	08-09	%	07-08	%
WHITE BRITISH	87	47	n/a	50
WHITE IRISH	4	2	n/a	3
WHITE OTHER	7	4	n/a	5
BLACK CARIBBEAN	11	6	n/a	9
BLACK AFRICAN	16	7	n/a	3
BLACK OTHER	2	1	n/a	4
INDIAN	7	4	n/a	0
PAKISTANI	27	15	n/a	14
BANGLADESHI	10	5	n/a	1
ASIAN OTHER	3	2	n/a	5
CHINESE	0	0	n/a	0
CHINESE OTHER	0	0	n/a	0
WHITE & BLACK CAR.	2	1	n/a	3
WHITE & BLACK AFR.	4	2	n/a	0
WHITE & ASIAN	0	0	n/a	1
MIXED OTHER	1	1	n/a	1
OTHER	5	3	n/a	n/a
NO ANSWER	1	1	n/a	1

This information is very similar to the previous year, it shows that the diversity of the applicants attracted by our adverts is similar to the ethnic diversity of our employees. We do however need to consider the mediums we use for displaying our adverts in order to continue to attract an ethnically diverse range of applicants.

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RELIGION AND BELIEF

Employees

CATEGORIES	08-09	%	07-08	%	06-07	%	05-06	%
AGNOSTIC	0	0	4	2.5	3	1.5	3	2
ATHEIST	0	0	4	2.5	1	0.5	2	1
BUDDHIST	2	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
CHRISTIAN	28	16	15	9.3	21	13	22	11
CHURCH OF ENGLAND	7	4	14	8.6	11	6.5	20	10
GREEK ORTHODOX	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.5
HINDU	3	2	3	1.8	3	1.5	2	1
HUMANIST	0	0	0	0	12	7	0	0
ISLAM	0	0	4	2.4	4	2.5	0	0
JAIN	0	0	1	0.6	0	0	0	0
JEDI	0	0	1	0.6	0	0	0	0
JEHOVAH WITNESS	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.5
JEWISH	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
MULTI DENOMINATIONAL	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.5
METHODIST	1	1	0	0	0	0	2	1
MUSLIM	16	9	13	8	11	6.5	11	6
NO REL OR BELIEF	45	25	29	18	32	20	24	13
APOSTOLIC FAITH	0	0	0	0	3	1.5	0	0
PERSONAL BELIEF	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.5
ROMAN CATHOLIC	9	5	14	8.6	21	13	24	13
SEVENTH DAY	0	0	1	0.6	0	0	0	0
SIKH	1	1	0	0	1	0.5	2	1
SOCIALIST	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.5
SPIRITUAL	2	1	5	3	1	0.5	1	0.5
NO ANSWER	65	36	54	33.5	42	26	71	38

The Religion or Belief question is voluntary, pending guidelines regarding monitoring in this area. However, the number of employees choosing not to answer has increased once more to 36% - a third of staff who do not wish to answer this question. There has been a 7% increase in the number of staff who have no religion or belief and a 6.7% increase in the percentage of people who are Christians.

As the workforce is made up of employees with a wide-range of religions and beliefs it is essential that we continue to consider the following: - religious holidays and festivals (no obligation by law for time off but annual leave should be granted where possible), prayer room facilities (no obligation to provide this facility), providing for dietary requirements (at training, review days etc) and Sunday working (where applicable). Overall we must continue to ensure that no employee faces discrimination due to their religion or beliefs.

Applicants

CATEGORIES	08-09	%	07-08	%
AGNOSTIC	0	0	n/a	2
CHRISTIAN	36	20	n/a	23

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CHURCH OF ENGLAND	13	7	n/a	5
HINDU	1	1	n/a	1
HUMANIST	1	1	n/a	1
INTEGRATIVE	0	0	n/a	1
ISLAM	17	10	n/a	n/a
JEWISH	0	0	n/a	0
MUSLIM	22	12	n/a	15
NO RELIGION OR BELIEF	23	13	n/a	14
PENTECOSTAL	0	0	n/a	1
PROTESTANT	0	0	n/a	1
ROMAN CATHOLIC	13	7	n/a	5
SIKH	3	2	n/a	1
SPIRITUAL	4	2	n/a	2
METHODIST	1	1	n/a	n/a
NO ANSWER	44	25	n/a	28

This information shows a diverse range of people in terms of religion or belief are attracted by our adverts and apply for positions with us. The range of religions and beliefs is not as wide a range as those of our employees but is still a diverse range.

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Employees

CATEGORIES	08-09	%	07-08	%	06-07	%	05-06	%
HETEROSEXUAL	141	80	124	76.7	108	73	140	74
LESBIAN	4	2	5	3	6	4.5	8	4
GAY	6	3	5	3	3	2	3	2
BISEXUAL	3	2	1	0.6	2	1	0	0
NO ANSWER	22	13	27	16.7	28	19.5	38	20

Government figures indicate that 5.5% of the working population are lesbian, gay or bisexual. This year we have seen a slight increase to 7%, which is still higher than the government figures. It is worth noting that the percentage of staff not answering this question has decreased year on year thus providing a more accurate result.

Applicants

CATEGORIES	08-09	%	07-08	%
HETEROSEXUAL	128	73	n/a	74
LESBIAN	0	0	n/a	1
GAY	4	2	n/a	1
BISEXUAL	4	2	n/a	1
NO ANSWER	39	22	n/a	18

This information shows that 22% of applicants are choosing not to state their sexual orientation, which may have affected the results shown.

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DISABILITY

Employees

CATEGORIES	08-09	%	07-08	%	06-07	%	05-06	%
DISABILITY	13	7	6	3.7	8	5	10	5

There has been a 3.3% increase in the percentage of employees with disabilities this year and we must aim to obtain Positive about Disability status in order to attract and retain employees who have a disability.

It is worth recapping that, for us as an employer, the DDA means the following: -

- We must not directly discriminate/treat an employee or job applicant less favourably because of their disability.
- We must not fail to make a *reasonable* adjustment.
- We must not victimise or harass disabled employees.
- We are advised to be flexible, not make assumptions, consider gaining expert advice where necessary, plan ahead and promote equal opportunities.

These points must be considered at every stage of the employment relationship from recruitment and induction through to training and career development and during disciplinary and redundancy situations.

Applicants

CATEGORIES	08-09	%	07-08	%
DISABILITY	7	4	n/a	7

This information shows a slight decrease in the percentage of disabled applicants that are applying compared to last year. This is an area that needs work, especially in terms of obtaining the Positive about Disability status as once obtained we can then display the nationally recognized symbol on our adverts which may then attract more disabled applicants to apply.

ENGLISH AS A FIRST LANGUAGE

Employees

CATEGORIES	08-09	%	07-08	%	06-07	%	05-06	%
ENGLISH NOT FIRST LANGUAGE	21	12	28	17.3	28	18	18	9.5

This year we have seen a 5.3% decrease in the number of employees who do not speak English as their first language.

Applicants

CATEGORIES	08-09	%	07-08	%
ENGLISH NOT FIRST LANGUAGE	33	19	n/a	17

This result shows a 2% increase of applicants do not speak English as a first language, which denotes that the group continues to attract diverse groups. However, overall the group has seen a 5.3% decrease in the number of employees who do not speak English as a first language.

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CHILDCARE & CARER RESPONSIBILITIES

Employees

CATEGORIES	08-09	%	07-08	%	06-07	%	05-06	%
CHILDCARE RESPONSIBILITIES	72	40	58	35.8	60	38	66	35
CARER RESPONSIBILITIES	33	19	16	9.8	41	26	28	15

This year the percentage of employees with childcare responsibilities has slightly increased, and a 9.2% increase in the percentage with carer responsibilities. April 2009 has seen the extension of the eligibility for the right to request flexible working for parents with children up to the age of 16. We need to ensure that we are promoting these rights to those of our staff who are entitled to them.

This category is not included on the Recruitment Monitoring Form.

DISTANCE FROM WORKPLACE

CATEGORIES	08-09	%	07-08	%	06-07	%	05-06	%
LIVING WITHIN A 2 MILE RADIUS	78	41	68	42	55	35	80	42

The percentage of employees living in close proximity to their workplace has decreased slightly since last year. However, the results show that we are continuing to attract and retain people from the communities in which we operate.

This category is not included on the Recruitment Monitoring Form. However, it would be worth adding this section on to the Recruitment Monitoring Form to obtain information about where applicants live.

TRAVEL TO WORK

CATEGORIES	08-09	%	07-08	%	06-07	%	05-06	%
CAR	94	50	77	47.7	77	49	79	42
PUBLIC TRANSPORT	55	29	41	25.5	44	28	59	31
BIKE	3	2	10	6	3	2	6	3
WALK	34	17	26	16	31	19	20	10.5
TRANSPORT VARIES	3	2	4	2.4	12	7	24	13
COMPANY PICK UP	0	0	4	2.4	0	0	0	0
NO ANSWER	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.5

The percentage of employees travelling to work by car, walk and public transport has slightly increased and the percentage travelling by bike has decreased. In order to promote employees

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travelling to work by bike, the group is looking at implementing the cycle to work scheme as part of the well being pack.

This category is not included on the Recruitment Monitoring Form.

SMOKING

CATEGORIES	08-09	%	07-08	%	06-07	%	05-06	%
SMOKER	56	30	42	26	40	25	57	30

There has been a 4% increase in the percentage of staff who smoke. This is nearly a third of our workforce who are smokers. In 2007 we saw the introduction of the smoking legislation banning smoking in the workplace. Further promotion of our Smoking Policy and incentive scheme is necessary and promotion of our Well being Policy and the benefits of smoking cessation are needed throughout the next year. We are now surveying staff that smoke on whether this incentive scheme is something they would be willing to try.

This category is not included on the Recruitment Monitoring Form.

PLACEMENT OF ADVERT

Applicants

CATEGORIES	08-09	%	07-08	%
NATIONAL NEWSPAPER	0	0	n/a	16
LOCAL NEWSPAPER	0	0	n/a	14
FREE NEWSPAPER	0	0	n/a	9
BLE JOBSHOP	0	0	n/a	13
WORD OF MOUTH	10	8	n/a	8
ONLINE	28	23	n/a	2
INTERNAL	12	10	n/a	16
THE BIG ISSUE MAGAZINE	20	17	n/a	7
MEN	2	2	n/a	n/a
University	1	1	n/a	n/a
Job Centre	8	7	n/a	n/a
OTHER	2	2	n/a	3
NO ANSWER	0	0	n/a	7

This information demonstrates a huge decline of 16% in the use of National newspapers being used to attract potential applicants and an increase of 21% in the use of online websites. The use of The Big Issue Magazine has also increased by 10% as a way of attracting potential applicants.

However, this information cannot be relied upon as completely accurate as 55% of the vacancies are not reported on. The majority of the vacancies where the monitoring information was missing, were not advertised at a national level.

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Managers can contact HR to discuss and consider the best place to advertise for particular positions as this advice can then be given based on how that position was advertised previously and how well each individual advert did in terms of attraction of candidates.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

- The Equal Opportunities Policy must be promoted wherever possible.
- The Challenging Discrimination training is being reviewed to incorporate some of the wider cultural issues arising from our increased work with diverse range of groups and communities in order to increase awareness. The training is mandatory and runs through the internal training programme. It is important that we ensure all our staff have attended this training and all new staff must undergo training during their probationary period.
- To amend the Recruitment Monitoring Form to include asking for information about the distance potential employees live from the workplace.
- Managers must ensure that every application pack contains monitoring forms when sent out and completed forms forwarded to HR. This will allow HR to collate accurate information and especially the methods of advertising used to attract candidates. It is essential that all sectors of the community continue to have the opportunity to apply for positions within the organisation – and therefore we must carry on monitoring what the best way to reach a diverse audience.
- Northgate or the HR Officer will continue to check all recruitment adverts to ensure they are in line with equal opportunities guidelines in terms of content and language used. Additional support is available, via the Recruitment and Selection training for managers, underpinned by the Recruitment and Selection Policy.
- To add 'The Big Life Group positively promotes diversity in the workforce' to all recruitment adverts in an attempt to address the under represented groups within the organisation.
- To ensure that our Flexible Working, Smoking and Well-being policies are promoted where necessary throughout the year.
- To review the Well-Being pack in order to promote the benefits and incentives that the organisation offers to all employees. This will promote flexible working and smoking cessation.
- To obtain Positive about Disability status.
- Continue to consider the following: - religious holidays and festivals (no obligation by law for time off but annual leave should be granted where possible), prayer room facilities (no obligation to provide this facility but good practice), providing for dietary requirements (at training, review days etc) and Sunday working (where applicable).
- To review the mediums we use for displaying our adverts in order to continue to attract an ethnically diverse range of applicants.
- Consider the possibility of introducing the cycle to work scheme.

CONCLUSION

The Big Life group continues to be a very diverse organisation in a variety of ways. It is clear that the workforce includes representation from a wide range of groups. However, these statistics are just a very positive starting point and there are definite areas of improvement.