

Results at a glance

Evaluation of the Anti-Racism and Anti-Discrimination Secretariat (ARADS)

ARADS was established in November 2020 to address issues of systemic racism and discrimination at Justice Canada. The work of ARADS supports Justice Canada's commitment to answer the Clerk of the Privy Council and the Secretary to the Cabinet's Call to Action on Anti-Racism, Equity, and Inclusion in the Federal Public Service. ARADS is responsible for:

- Providing strategic advice on approaches to anti-racism and equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) and on human resources policies, initiatives, and strategies.
- Creating and delivering Justice Canada's Anti-Racism and Anti-Discrimination Results Framework (Results Framework) and Employment Equity Plan.
- Co-ordinating the work of five equity and diversity advisory committees.
- Organizing departmental learning and professional development activities and initiatives to raise awareness and develop skills related to diversity, inclusion and other interrelated topics.

WHAT WAS FOUND

- ARADS' activities are closely aligned with government priorities as well as departmental roles and responsibilities relating to anti-racism, diversity and inclusion. They are also aligned with the Clerk of the Privy Council's Call to Action on Anti-Racism, Equity, and Inclusion in the Federal Public Service.
- ARADS and its activities are also mostly perceived to be relevant as they reflect the increased focus on EDI-related topics within the Government of Canada as well as society at large over the last few years.
- The context within which ARADS operates is evolving. Some trends support the ongoing relevance of ARADS (e.g., institutional commitments), although others suggest that there are trends that may decrease its relevance (e.g., societal shifts).
- ARADS actively delivered several activities aligned with its Results Framework, which was created as an important early output of ARADS to guide its efforts on anti-racism and anti-discrimination in the Department.
- The level of coordination, communication and collaboration between ARADS and internal partners increased over time to manage ongoing overlaps between the role of ARADS and other areas within Justice Canada (such as Human Resources Branch.) However, ARADS' roles and responsibilities are unclear. This affected ARADS' effectiveness,

particularly as it relates to providing strategic advice; coordinating and collaborating with its partners; and ensuring it only addresses issues within its mandate.

- The design and delivery of ARADS' activities, which focus on representation, career development, training and culture change, and accountability, are consistent with those of comparable initiatives across the Government of Canada. ARADS also actively works to assess and innovate on existing practices to be responsive to changing needs and demands.
- ARADS is effective in tracking progress to measure achievement of expected results. It places a large focus on collecting and reporting on data to inform its own decision-making as well as the decision-making of the Department. No major data gaps were identified.
- ARADS effectively contributed to Justice Canada's response to anti-racism and EDI priorities through each of its four main activities. However, its expanded role and the increased number of requests received over the evaluation period impacted its capacity to support activities in a timely and consistent fashion.
- There is a need for ARADS to provide additional support to the equity-seeking and diversity advisory committees such as: providing strategic advice; supporting forward planning efforts; and providing guidance to transitioning co-chairs of the committees.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Recommendation 1:** ARADS, in collaboration with its partners, should clarify and communicate its mandate, roles and responsibilities to improve coordination and collaboration in the area of anti-racism and EDI-related matters.
- **Recommendation 2:** ARADS should strengthen the support it provides to the equity-seeking and diversity advisory committees and ensure it is consistently applied to enhance ARADS' relevance and effectiveness.

ABOUT THE EVALUATION: The Evaluation of ARADS was conducted by Justice Canada's Evaluation Branch and covered fiscal years 2020-21 to 2024-25. Its main objectives were to examine the relevance, design and delivery and effectiveness of ARADS, in accordance with the Treasury Board's *Policy on Results* (2016).

