

POLICY ISSUE INFORMATION

July 10, 2001

SECY-01-0126

FOR: The Commissioners

FROM: William D. Travers
Executive Director for Operations

SUBJECT: EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY (EEO) BRIEFING

PURPOSE:

To inform the Commission of the status of the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Program at the NRC.

BACKGROUND:

The Energy Reorganization Act of 1974, as amended, requires the NRC Executive Director for Operations (EDO) to report to the Commission, at semi-annual public meetings, in the problems, progress, and status of the Agency's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Program. For the next briefing, scheduled for August 15, 2001, the staff is providing a discussion on the impact of affirmative employment and workplace initiatives on EEO, consistent with the four guiding principles listed in the NRC's 5-Year Affirmative Employment Plan (AEP). The four guiding principles are: a) create a discrimination-free work environment, b) ensure that Agency policies, processes, and procedures provide employees the opportunity to participate in the Agency's mission and enable fair and equitable competition for career enhancement and advancement, c) employ a competent, highly skilled and diverse workforce in a positive work environment, and d) recognize and value diversity, thereby demonstrating trust, respect, and concern for the welfare of all employees within the Agency. The discussion will specifically address new initiatives related to targeted recruitment, hiring and retention, management and leadership training and an update on use of the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Process for resolving allegations of discrimination. The Paper will also discuss new human resource management strategies put in place to enhance diversity at the NRC, and address issues that may continue to impact the our EEO/diversity program.

Contact:

Irene P. Little, SBCR
(301) 415-7380
Paul E. Bird, HR
(301) 415-7516

Following the last briefing on January 9, 2001, the Commission requested, through a Staff Requirements Memorandum (SRM) dated February 1, 2001, that the staff respond to seven issues: 1) expand requirements for training on the EEO complaint process, including ADR, to all managers, 2) develop a process to improve the availability of opportunities, especially upward mobility opportunities, for eligible women, minorities, those with disabilities, and persons over age 40, 3) continue creative initiatives to support diversity in the workplace, 4) ensure that these initiatives are effectively communicated to all employees, 5) assist current employees in enhancing their careers at the NRC, 6) implement the education pay-back (tuition reimbursement) program and discuss at the next briefing, and 7) expedite contract support that would facilitate employees attending scheduled training and/or participate in rotational assignments. These issues were addressed in our response dated May 25, 2001. A copy of the SRM and our response are provided in Attachment 1.

This report includes a statement by Mr. Luis Reyes, Regional Administrator, Region II, on implementation of the EEO program within his region (Attachment 2). Also included are EEO complaint data and workforce profile data by grade, ethnicity, gender, occupation, and age for FY 1997 - FY 2001 (Attachment 3); and a joint EEO committee statement from the five EEO Advisory Committees and the Joint Labor Management Equal Employment Opportunity Committee (Attachment 4).

DISCUSSION:

1. Create a discrimination-free work environment.

A discrimination-free work environment is shaped by sound and objective management and leadership practices that support effective communication and facilitate early resolution of issues. Training on EEO and diversity management is provided to managers and supervisors to ensure that they have the appropriate tools to successfully manage a diverse workforce and respond effectively to issues that give rise to EEO complaints. As indicated in the response to the SRM, the updated course, *EEO and Sexual Harassment Prevention for Managers and Supervisors*, was piloted with the SES Candidates and will be offered to all supervisors and managers over the next three years.

A separate subelement for evaluating EEO performance of non-SES supervisors and managers is being added for the rating period beginning October 2001. This criterion is similar to the subelement established for evaluating EEO performance of senior executives which was effective July 1, 2000. Accomplishments under this new subelement will be evaluated in performance appraisals due at the end of FY 2002.

The Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) process has been in place approximately 18 months. The staff of SBCR and the EEO counselors, during the counseling process, discuss with employees use of the ADR process as an option for resolving informal allegations of discrimination. Individuals seeking EEO counseling may request ADR in lieu of traditional EEO counseling. When a request is made, SBCR contracts for an outside mediator to meet with the employee and a management official to discuss the issues and attempt a resolution acceptable to both parties. Any resolution agreed to is put in writing and signed by the parties. ADR has

been used to successfully resolve several issues. As a result, ADR is increasingly requested by employees to resolve EEO allegations. To ensure that all employees are well-informed, the EEO complaint process including ADR, is available on SBCR's website and on EEO posters located in the lobbies of each building in headquarters, the regions, and at each resident site. The goal of the ADR process is to achieve a win-win solution in EEO related issues early in the discrimination complaint process. Our assessment to date is that ADR is achieving its goal. The following data depict an overview of the complaint activity for FY 2001:

ADR Activity

12 individuals requested ADR
 5 settled
 2 withdrew, no formal complaint filed
 1 withdrew complaint upon completion of ADR
 1 reached no settlement, no formal complaint filed
 1 withdrew, filing of a formal complaint is pending
 2 reached no settlement, formal complaint filed

Informal Counseling Activity

Pending at end of FY 2000	4
Initiated in FY 2001	24
Closed in FY 2001	23
Pending as of March 31, 2001	5

Formal Complaint Cases

Pending at end of FY 2000		19
Filed in 2001	10	
Closed in FY 2001	6	
Pending as of March 31, 2001	23	

Since the last EEO Briefing, HR has developed standardized procedures to process requests for reasonable accommodations. These standardized procedures will be implemented during the last quarter of this fiscal year pending appropriate discussion with the union. These procedures will make it easier for employees to understand the process and requirements for accommodations. Additionally, the Agency has established an inter-agency agreement with the Department of Defense to participate in their reasonable accommodation program which is administered by the Computer Electronic Accommodations Program (CAP). CAP provides assistive technology, devices, and services for employees with disabilities at no cost to the agency. It is anticipated that use of this liaison will enhance the services available to NRC employees who need accommodation.

As a follow-up to the ongoing Managing Diversity process in the Agency, during the last six months, SBCR has facilitated several office-specific strategies to address issues identified during managing diversity sessions. SBCR has assisted offices in formulating goals to address the issues. Contract assistance has been used to support this effort.

EEO Advisory Committee members continue to play a role in creating a discrimination-free work environment. Committee members are working closely with some program offices to

provide input regarding strategies to enhance career development, communication, and improve the overall work environment. In a Joint Statement, included as an attachment to this paper, the Advisory Committees have identified their most critical issues. The primary issues addressed in this Joint Statement include:

- 1) Continue to encourage management participation in recruitment activities.
- 2) Increase representation of minority employees in supervisor, management, and senior staff positions.
- 3) Hold managers accountable for successful EEO performance.
- 4) Identify strategies to capture corporate knowledge of seasoned workers.
- 5) Encourage continued support for a "family-friendly workplace."

2. Ensure Agency policies, practices, and procedures provide employees the opportunity to participate in the Agency's mission, and enable fair and equitable competition for employee career enhancement and advancement.

Since the last Briefing, the Deputy Executive Director for Management Services convened a group of African American employees to identify issues that may impact equal opportunity for African Americans in the Agency's work environment. This initiative will be discussed in further detail at the August 15 briefing.

SBCR and HR continue to work together to ensure that the Agency's human resource management program is consistent with the goals and objectives of EEO. In FY 2001, several HR initiatives have been enhanced or implemented which should increase career enhancement and advancement for employees.

- a. **Leadership Potential Program** - This program is being offered for employees at grade levels GG-13 through GG-15. Graduates of this program will increase the pipeline for future supervisory and management positions. The purpose of this 12-month program is to (1) prepare high-performing employees for team leader, supervisory, or other positions requiring supervisory, managerial, or leadership skills and abilities; and (2) build and maintain a diverse cadre of managers. Forty-two employees were selected for the program which started in June 2001. Table A, below, reflects demographics of the applicants and selectees.
- b.

Table A- Leadership Potential Program

	Total Applicants	Selections
Totals	206	42
African American	21	9
Asian Pacific American	19	4
Hispanic	8	3
Native American	1	1
White Female	33	11
White Male	124	14

- c. **Executive Leadership (ELP) Program** - This Program is designed for full-time permanent employees at grade levels GG-11 through GG-12 who have demonstrated supervisory and management potential. Participants remain in their current positions while completing training and development activities over a 12-month period. Three applicants were accepted in the 2002 Program: 1 African American woman, 1 Asian woman, and 1 Hispanic man.

- d. NRC Nuclear Safety Intern Program** - This two-year Program is designed to attract a diverse group of exceptionally well-qualified college graduates at the GG-7, 9, or 11 grade level. Participants will be placed in a reactor, materials, or administrative training and development track. They will complete a minimum of two rotational assignments, attend a common set of core courses to provide a broad perspective of the NRC, and design customized Individual Development Plans. As of May 31, 2001, 35 technical and 11 administrative entry-level applicants have been selected. The 35 technical selectees include: 13 Hispanic men, 6 Hispanic women, 1 Asian man, 8 white women, and 7 white men. The 11 administrative selectees include: 1 Hispanic man, 1 Asian woman, 3 white women, 4 white men, and 2 African American women. Many of these new hires will be placed in the Intern Program.
- e. Graduate Fellowship Program** - HR has requested funding to re-establish the Graduate Fellowship Program for implementation during FY 2002. The HR plan calls for annually placing three students in this program.

3. Employ a competent highly skilled and diverse workforce in a positive work environment.

Employing a highly skilled and diverse workforce requires implementation of an aggressive recruitment plan. Since the last EEO briefing, we have engaged in several initiatives.

HR has established a recruitment team to assist offices in developing recruitment strategies and to manage the Agency's recruitment efforts. A permanent managerial position has been established and filled, and a full-time recruiter is expected to be hired by the end of this fiscal year. SBCR will continue to work with HR to facilitate diverse recruitment teams.

The FY 2001 recruitment schedule was increased from 35 in FY 2000 to 65 events (college career fairs and professional conferences) in FY 2001. Forty-nine of these events target minorities, women, or persons with disabilities. These events contributed to a total of 63 hires by mid-year in FY 2001. Forty-seven additional hires will enter on duty later this fiscal year. Forty-six of the new hires are entry-level. Table B below shows the demographics and hiring activity during FY 2001.

Table B - Agency Demographics and Hiring Activity

	On Board As of 9/30/00	FY 2001 Hires	On Board As of 3/31/01
Total	2828	63	2811
African American	368	9	368
Asian Pacific American	196	4	195
Hispanic	71	7	74
Native American	7	0	7
White Female	731	18	730
White Male	1455	25	1437

During FY 2000, HR participated in a successful recruitment effort at the University of Puerto Rico. The success of this event led to several innovative changes in the Agency's recruitment program as follows:

Preview of resumes - Prior to attending a college recruitment event, HR requests resumes of candidates for pre-screening, determines their level of interest, and works with the manager to schedule interviews. This process was followed for recruitment events at the University of Maryland, Howard University, Penn State, and Clemson University.

On-the-spot job offers - Office Directors may designate a management official to work with HR staff in making "on-the-spot" job offers at recruiting events. This recruitment tool gives NRC an advantage in attracting applicants seeking early job offers.

Establish liaisons with universities - HR will work with offices to establish ongoing and effective relationships with targeted universities that provide the greatest potential for attracting highly qualified, diverse applicants.

Automated vacancy announcement system (QuickHire) - As discussed in the response to the SRM, HR will soon begin using an automated web-based vacancy announcement system called QuickHire. This system will support online review of applications, electronically pre-screen candidates, and employ user-specified criteria to rank, rate, and select candidates. Implementation of this system could increase the number and diversity of our applicant pool.

The Agency has had an aggressive recruitment schedule for its Honor Law Graduate Program. During FY 2001, a total of 304 applications were received from students attending 76 schools: 61 (20%) minorities, 69 (23%) white women, 79 (26%) white men, and 95 (31%) unknown. To date, 5 offers have been accepted: 3 white men, 1 white woman, and 1 African American woman.

In December 2000, recruitment bonuses were authorized for new hires for permanent, entry-level, professional positions in engineering, physical science, computer science, accounting, and auditing at grades GG-5 through GG-11. Selectees for these positions are paid a recruitment bonus of 10% of base pay if they have a grade point average (GPA) of 3.5 or higher in their major or 2.9 overall. Those with a GPA less than 2.9 overall or less than 3.5 in their major receive a recruitment bonus of 5%. In either case, the employee is subject to a continued service agreement depending on the percentage of the bonus.

The Agency has implemented a new Student Loan Repayment program to attract highly qualified applicants, especially women and minorities. The regulations specify an annual maximum of \$6,000 per employee and a lifetime maximum of \$40,000. Repayment of a student loan obligates the employee to government service for a period of at least three years. NRC will put in place procedures for implementing these provisions when the Office of Personnel Management issues final regulations to authorize excepted service agencies, such as NRC, to repay student loans.

As discussed in the response to the SRM, approximately 25 employees in clerical and administrative positions competed and were selected for positions that offered promotions or career enhancing lateral reassignments. HR representatives continue to encourage selecting

officials to redesign positions when possible, to broaden the pool of candidates to include clerical and support staff.

During FY 2000, the Agency increased the number of cooperative agreements with educational institutions from 5 to 13. Three additional agreements in FY 2001 increased that number to 16. Effective relationships with these institutions have resulted in the hiring of seven coop students to date.

NRC's FY 2001 Summer Program was successful in attracting women and minority students. A total of 51 summer employees were hired to fill positions in five categories: 30 technical, 7 legal, 2 information technology, 1 finance, and 11 clerical. Summer hires include 3 Asian men, 6 Asian women, 4 African American men, 7 African American women, 1 Hispanic man, 3 Hispanic women, 10 white women, and 17 white men. This group of temporary employees provides a diverse pool of potential full-time hires.

d. Recognize, appreciate, and value diversity, thereby demonstrating trust, respect, and concern for the welfare of all employees within the Agency.

We continue to emphasize to managers the need for ongoing, candid feedback to employees regarding their performance. To stimulate employee participation in this objective, NRC recognizes the accomplishments of employees through fair evaluations, and appropriate recognition of employee performance. During FY 2001, a total of 1417 awards have been given to non-SES employees. The percentage of awards given to employees in each group, including minorities, is close to their respective representation in the NRC workforce, with the exception of Asian Pacific Americans (APA), white women, and white men. The percentage of awards given to APAs remains at 5%, while their representation in the NRC workforce is 7%. The percentage of awards for white women increased to 30% while their representation in the NRC workforce is 26%. The percentage of awards for white men decreased to 49% while their representation in the workforce is 51%. Efforts will continue to encourage managers to be sensitive to providing equal opportunity for employees, including minorities and women, to succeed and excel. Detailed awards data are included in Attachment 3, Chart 4.

The performance appraisal process is the most common tool used to provide feedback to employees regarding job performance. HR continues to provide advice and guidance to managers on writing performance plans and evaluations. During FY 2001, the Performance Appraisal Refresher course was conducted for NMSS, NRR, RES, CFO, CIO, and Region 1.

A review of the performance appraisal data for FY 2000 indicates that the percentage of employees within each group who received "outstanding" and "fully satisfactory" ratings this year is closer to the overall Agency percentage rating. Employees age 56 and above continue to receive "outstanding" ratings at a percentage rate significantly lower than the Agency's average. Additional information regarding performance appraisal ratings is provided in Attachment 3, Chart 15.

The Office of Small Business and Civil Rights (SBCR) continued to sponsor poster exhibits for each national heritage month observance. Following a pilot Diversity Day celebration in FY 1999, SBCR is coordinating NRC's First Annual Diversity Day scheduled for July 12, 2001. This event is designed to celebrate the nation's racial, gender, cultural, and ethnic diversity and recognize the contributions of all NRC employees. Staff has planned a diverse group of participants, including ethnic food, arts and craft vendors, and cultural performances by people from different backgrounds.

Summary and Conclusion

Since the last briefing, implementation of new affirmative employment and workplace strategies, coupled with enhanced efforts to improve outcomes of existing initiatives, have helped to enhance diversity in the Agency's workforce and to sustain a discrimination-free workplace. We have utilized succession planning strategies such as the new Leadership Potential Program, Reactor Safety Intern Program, and the Honor Law Graduate Program to broaden our pool of highly qualified, diverse candidates. These programs are expected to increase the number of highly qualified employees in our feeder groups to fill future management and SES vacancies. We enhanced promotional opportunities for clerical and support staff by posting vacancies for para-professional and professional positions. The total number of women and minorities in the Senior Executive Service (SES) increased, and entry-level/intern hires also increased. However, the number of African American entry-level technical hires has decreased significantly. Management accountability has been enhanced through application of a separate EEO subelement for evaluating SES managers. And beginning in FY 2002, this requirement has been expanded to include non-SES supervisors and managers. Most importantly, we have continued to recognize and appreciate the contributions of the staff and we seek ways to improve communication throughout the NRC.

Overall success in the EEO Program rests on our ability to continue to work together toward the common goal of maximum contribution of a highly qualified diverse workforce. Office directors, regional administrators and the entire management team must continue to integrate EEO into their day-to-day management decision making, and maintain a positive work environment that supports maximum staff productivity.

William D. Travers
Executive Director for Operations

Attachments:

1. SRM & Staff Response
2. Statement by Luis Reyes, Regional Administrator
3. Equal Employment Opportunity Workforce Profile Data
4. EEO Advisory Committees Joint Statement

The Office of Small Business and Civil Rights (SBCR) continued to sponsor poster exhibits for each national heritage month observance. Following a pilot Diversity Day celebration in FY 1999, SBCR is coordinating NRC's First Annual Diversity Day scheduled for July 12, 2001. This event is designed to celebrate the nation's racial, gender, cultural, and ethnic diversity and recognize the contributions of all NRC employees. Staff has planned a diverse group of participants, including ethnic food, arts and craft vendors, and cultural performances by people from different backgrounds.

Summary and Conclusion

Since the last briefing, implementation of new affirmative employment and workplace strategies, coupled with enhanced efforts to improve outcomes of existing initiatives, have helped to enhance diversity in the Agency's workforce and to sustain a discrimination-free workplace. We have utilized succession planning strategies such as the new Leadership Potential Program, Reactor Safety Intern Program, and the Honor Law Graduate Program to broaden our pool of highly qualified, diverse candidates. These programs are expected to increase the number of highly qualified employees in our feeder groups to fill future management and SES vacancies. We enhanced promotional opportunities for clerical and support staff by posting vacancies for para-professional and professional positions. The total number of women and minorities in the Senior Executive Service (SES) increased, and entry-level/intern hires also increased. However, the number of African American entry-level technical hires has decreased significantly. Management accountability has been enhanced through application of a separate EEO subelement for evaluating SES managers. And beginning in FY 2002, this requirement has been expanded to include non-SES supervisors and managers. Most importantly, we have continued to recognize and appreciate the contributions of the staff and we seek ways to improve communication throughout the NRC.

Overall success in the EEO Program rests on our ability to continue to work together toward the common goal of maximum contribution of a highly qualified diverse workforce. Office directors, regional administrators and the entire management team must continue to integrate EEO into their day-to-day management decision making, and maintain a positive work environment that supports maximum staff productivity.

/RA/

William D. Travers
Executive Director for Operations

Attachments:

1. SRM & Staff Response
2. Statement by Luis Reyes, Regional Administrator
3. Equal Employment Opportunity Workforce Profile Data
4. EEO Advisory Committees Joint Statement

DISTRIBUTION:

SBCR R/F

SBCR SF

*See Previous Concurrence

DOCUMENT NAME: G:\EEOBRIEFINGS\EEOBBrfg2001\Barbara815Final.wpd

ACCESSION #: ML011840467

ADAMS DOCUMENT TITLE:

To receive a copy of this document, indicate in the box: "C" = Copy without attachment/enclosure "E" = Copy with attachment/enclosure "N" = No copy ***SEE PREVIOUS CONCURRENCE**

OFFICE	AEDPM	N	D/SBCR		D/HR		OGC		DEDM	
NAME	BWilliams*		ILittle*		PBird*		DHassell*		PNorry*	
DATE	7/03/01		7/06/01		7/06/01		7/06/01		7/09/01	

OFFICIAL RECORD COPY

Staff Requirements Memorandum (M010109)
February 1, 2001

and

Staff Requirements Response
May 25, 2001

Attachment 1

IN RESPONSE, PLEASE
REFER TO: M010109

Revised

February 1, 2001

MEMORANDUM TO: William D. Travers
Executive Director for Operations

FROM: Annette Vietti-Cook, Secretary **/RA/**

SUBJECT: STAFF REQUIREMENTS - BRIEFING ON EEO PROGRAM
(SECY-00-0229), 9:30 A.M., TUESDAY, JANUARY 9, 2001,
COMMISSIONERS' CONFERENCE ROOM, ONE WHITE FLINT
NORTH, ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND (OPEN TO PUBLIC
ATTENDANCE)

The Commission was briefed by the NRC staff and a representative of the EEO advisory committees on the EEO program. In addition, the Acting Chief Information Officer provided the status of EEO efforts in that office and representatives of each EEO advisory committee and the NTEU were provided an opportunity to speak. The Commission requested the staff consider expanding the requirement for training on the EEO Complaint Process to all managers.

The Commission encouraged the staff to develop a process to improve the availability of opportunities, especially upward mobility opportunities, for eligible women, minorities, those with disabilities, and persons over 40 and to continue with creative initiatives to support diversity in the workforce. The staff should ensure that these initiatives are effectively communicated to all employees. The staff was also encouraged to focus on efforts to assist current employees to enhance their careers at the NRC. The Commission expressed interest in the implementation of education pay-back programs which are planned for discussion at the next EEO briefing. Within overall budgetary restrictions, staff should expedite consideration of contractor support that would facilitate employees attending scheduled training and/or participation in rotational assignments.

cc: Chairman Meserve
Commissioner Dicus
Commissioner Diaz
Commissioner McGaffigan
Commissioner Merrifield
OGC
CFO
CIO
OCA
OIG
OPA
Office Directors, Regions, ACRS, ACNW, ASLBP (via E-Mail)
PDR - Advance

May 25, 2001

MEMORANDUM TO: Chairman Meserve
Commissioner Dicus
Commissioner Diaz
Commissioner McGaffigan
Commissioner Merrifield

FROM: William D. Travers */RA by William F. Kane/*
Executive Director for Operations

SUBJECT: STAFF REQUIREMENTS MEMORANDUM (SRM M010109) FOLLOWING
THE EEO COMMISSION BRIEFING

In response to the Staff Requirements Memorandum (Attachment 1), the staff is providing the following information:

1. Expand EEO training for new supervisors (including training on the complaint process and the Alternate Dispute Resolution Process), to all managers.

The Office of Human Resources (HR) and the Office of Small Business and Civil Rights (SBCR) are updating our Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) course, *EEO and Sexual Harassment Prevention for Managers and Supervisors*, to respond to changes in law, regulation, and processes at the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC). This two-day course is required for new supervisors. The revisions will include a discussion on Managing Diversity and on use of alternative dispute resolution to resolve EEO complaints. The objective is to give supervisors the tools they need to successfully manage a diverse workforce and respond to issues that give rise to EEO complaints. All supervisors and managers will be encouraged to take this course within the next three years.

2. Develop a process to improve the availability of opportunities, especially upward mobility opportunities, for eligible women, minorities, those with disabilities, and persons over 40.

The process to improve availability of opportunities for NRC employees includes several strategies. Our goal is to focus on the strategies that provide good results. The formal upward mobility program is one strategy. It is designed to move a person from a non-professional to a para-professional or professional position. Use of this Program requires a very structured approach that incorporates use of extensive training plans. During FY 2001, two positions were filled under this Program. However, using a slightly different strategy, 23 employees competed and were selected for positions that offered upward mobility in the form of promotions or lateral reassignments to paraprofessional and professional positions. This approach gives managers more flexibility in staffing the positions, and broadens the pool of potential applicants. HR

representatives continue to encourage selecting officials to redesign certain administrative positions (e.g., management analyst, budget analyst, personnel management specialist) to broaden the pool of clerical and support staff that might qualify and apply for these positions.

The Federal Women's Program Advisory Committee recently formed a subcommittee to assist secretaries and support staff in developing career strategies for the future. Two general career planning sessions were held in April 2001 and one in May 2001. Strategies, such as developing a useful IDP, working with a mentor, and preparing clear and persuasive application packages, were discussed. Participants were offered an opportunity to followup with individual career counseling sessions.

The *Leadership Potential Program* is being offered for employees at grade levels GG 13-15. The purpose of this program is to (1) prepare high-performing individuals for positions requiring supervisory, managerial, or leadership skills and abilities; thereby creating a more diverse supervisory and managerial team within the agency. The program will begin in June 2001, and will include individual needs assessments, group training, and developmental assignments. Each participant selects a senior advisor to assist the participant, provide guidance, review the IDP, and participate in program activities. When the participants successfully complete the program they may be non-competitively assigned to a supervisory position at their current grade level.

The Graduate School, *USDA 2002 Executive Leadership Program* (formerly the Executive Leadership Program for Mid-Level Employees) is designed for employees at grade levels GG-11-12 who have demonstrated supervisory or management potential. NRC fully supports participation in this program and expects to select three to five candidates for the program.

3. Continue creative initiatives to support diversity in the workplace.

The staff is committed to continuing the use of several initiatives implemented over the past few years to support diversity in the workplace. The Office of Small Business & Civil Rights (SBCR) has conducted managing diversity sessions for all employees and supervisors. SBCR has also facilitated follow-up action with some offices to develop office-specific goals consistent with agency goals for managing a diverse workforce.

The Agency continues to promote diversity in the workplace in its recruiting program. Approximately 50% of the NRC's recruitment events this year were specifically targeted to institutions with a diverse applicant pool. Beginning in fiscal year 2001, the Agency began using new recruitment strategies, including making on-the-spot job offers.

Elements of the University of Puerto Rico recruitment initiative have been used at the University of Maryland, Howard University, Clemson University and Pennsylvania State University, including reviewing applications prior to on-campus visits. Following an initial interview some on-the-spot offers have been made for positions in headquarters and the regions. We have also begun to use several pay incentives in order to be more competitive in the job market. Recruitment bonuses have been used this fiscal year, and student loan repayments should become available later this year or early in fiscal year 2002.

The Office of Human Resources is proposing the use of an automated vacancy announcement system called QuickHire. This web-based system supports online applications, electronically pre-screens candidates, and employs user-specified criteria to rank applicants. QuickHire could streamline the process for preparing vacancies, processing application, rating, ranking, and selecting applicants. This system could increase the number of applicants as well as the diversity of applicants by enhancing our ability to process application and make selections more swiftly.

4. Ensure that these initiatives are effectively communicated to all employees.

Staff is ensuring that information regarding new and continuing initiatives is communicated timely and clearly to employees. Recent examples of effective communications include:

- ! The Federal Women's Program Advisory Committee (FWPAC) issued a Network Announcement on March 22, 2001, explaining that FWPAC had formed a subcommittee to assist secretaries and support staff in becoming more competitive for higher-level positions. The announcement identified the members of the subcommittee, invited secretaries and support staff to provide input to their representative, and announced the career planning sessions.
- ! HR issued a Network Announcement on March 23, 2001, describing the purpose of the *Career Planning Sessions for Secretaries*, the schedule for the sessions (April 17, 2001 and April 24, 2000, 10 a.m. to noon), the process for enrolling, and the individual to contact for additional information.
- ! HR issued Yellow Announcement No. 009 on February 5, 2001, describing the purpose of the *Leadership Potential Program*, the audience for the training, the application process, and the individuals to contact for additional information. An amended announcement was issued to clarify that this program was open to employees at GG-13, 14 and 15 grade levels.
- ! HR issued a Yellow Announcement No. 008 on February 1, 2001, describing the purpose of the *2002 Executive Leadership Program*, the targeted audience, the application process, and the individual to contact for additional information.
- ! All vacancies, including vacancies for upward mobility positions, are announced on the HR internal web-page. In FY 2001, one formal upward mobility position was advertised.
- ! SBCR issued a network announcement describing the purpose of the managing diversity sessions, coordinated the schedules for all offices and regions, and the individual to contact for additional information. Participant handbooks were prepared for use in these sessions.

5. Assist current employees in enhancing their careers at the NRC.

The Office of Human Resources provides professional career counseling to any employee who wishes to develop career strategies for the future. Employees may explore career-related issues and strategies in a confidential manner during five, one-hour private sessions with a career counselor. Career counseling is tailored to meet the individual's specific counseling needs and to:

- ! Heighten employee awareness of qualifications for positions of interest, including experience and education, and the ability to communicate them to others.
- ! Provide information and resources related to career and occupational planning and job requirements for the position an individual holds or aspires to attain.
- ! Assist employees in understanding career opportunities and limitations at the NRC, other Federal agencies, and in the private sector.
- ! Provide employees with the knowledge and skill to prepare a resume and participate in an interview.
- ! Assist employees in establishing short-term and long-term goals to achieve optimum career and personal growth.
- ! Assist employees in increasing their knowledge of job search techniques.
- ! Provide assistance and guidance in developing an Individual Development Plan.

SBCR continues to provide career guidance and assist in brokering rotational opportunities for interested employees.

6. Implement the education pay-back program and discuss at the next briefing.

The Office of Human Resources has developed a policy in Management Directive 10.49 (currently in comment/concurrence circulation) to implement the Student Loan Repayment Program for current and new employees. Under the proposed policy, certain types of federally-insured student loans could be repaid by the agency if needed to facilitate recruitment and retention of highly or uniquely qualified employees, or employees with essential skills. A potential employee could be authorized a loan repayment as an incentive to accept NRC employment; or a current employee could be authorized a loan repayment as an incentive to remain with the NRC if the employee possessed skills needed by the NRC for mission-critical work. The maximum allowable amount of a student loan repayment is \$6,000 per employee per year, and there is a lifetime maximum of \$40,000. A loan repayment of any amount obligates the employee to three years of continued government service.

The NRC will authorize student loan repayments as necessary to attract and retain highly qualified applicants and employees. However, as funds for this incentive may be limited, student loan repayments will be made judiciously and in the context of the agency's overall strategic human capital framework.

7. Expedite contract support that would facilitate employees attending scheduled training and/or participate in rotational assignments.

HR has initiated a procurement to provide Secretarial and Office Assistant support to offices on an as needed basis, and as provided in applicable regulations. The contract will be administered by HR and will be "pay-as-you-go" by individual offices. It will be available for short-term needs. It is expected that the contract will be awarded in fiscal year 2001.

Attachment: As stated

cc: SECY
OGC
OCA
OPA
CFO

Statement by Luis Reyes, Regional Administrator

Attachment 2

EEO PROGRAM POLICIES AND PERFORMANCE IN REGION II

Luis A. Reyes, Regional Administrator

I am pleased to have the opportunity to provide the Commission an overview of Region II's (RII) Equal Employment Opportunity Program. RII fully supports the Agency's EEO and Diversity Policy and we are very proud of our accomplishments in this important area. After a brief summary of RII's demographic profile, I will discuss the recruitment and staff development, and accomplishments, and challenges associated with our EEO Program.

Current Demographics

RII currently has 215 full and part-time employees. Thirty-one percent of the staff are minorities and thirty-one percent are women. The table below depicts Region II's workforce by ethnicity and gender:

Staff Diversity (As of 4/30/01)

Total	215
African American	51 (24%)
Asian Pacific Amer.	5 (2.5%)
Hispanic	9 (4.5%)
American Indian	1
White Female	29 (13%)
White Male	120 (56%)

Since July 2000, RII has filled 15 positions, 5 (33%) of which were entry level. The hires include two African American men, one African American woman, one Hispanic man, one Hispanic woman, one white woman, and nine white men.

Recruitment

Recruitment emphasis for Region II has been twofold: 1) attracting and maintaining the skills mix to carry out the Agency's mission and 2) enhancing the Region's workforce. To this end, we systematically determine our current and future skill needs and use this information to develop our recruitment approach. Targeting schools and organizations located in our general geographic area improves the job acceptance rates. We have targeted Georgia Tech, Alabama A&M, University of Puerto Rico, and North Carolina State. We have developed an effective working relationship with the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers and the National Society of Black Engineers on Georgia Tech and University of Puerto Rico campuses. A direct benefit of these networking efforts has been greater access to a more diverse candidate pool for scientific and engineering positions. Additionally, the summer hire program serves as a bridge to future entry level hiring. Summer hires for this year includes 2 African American men, 1 Hispanic man, 1 Hispanic woman, and 1 white woman from Georgia Tech, University of Puerto Rico, and Florida A&M.

Staff Development and Training

RII employs skills matrices to determine employee skills needs. Using these skills matrices, training needs are identified and training is conducted. During the past year, course offerings have included Managing Change for all employees; a Cable Failures course and a Fire Protection course for technical staff; Customer Service Excellence for Administrative Staff; and Risk Communications and Communicating with the Public for managers and supervisors.

To develop and diversify our potential management pool, we have established several GG-14 Team Leader positions in the Division of Reactor Safety. These Team Leaders will participate in Level I supervisory training and will gain experience in providing oversight to staff. These positions are posted and filled competitively for a period of two years, and will help to create a larger, well qualified pool of candidates from which selections may be made for future supervisory vacancies.

Rotational assignments are used creatively as a significant tool for developing staff. For example, a branch chief was assigned to assist in a Headquarters project. A woman team leader was rotated to act as branch chief during his absence. A Hispanic man senior specialist was promoted to the team leader position and an African American man was temporarily promoted to the senior specialist position. Rotational assignments are used to backfill during planned absences of senior resident inspectors from sites. Two secretaries were rotated to the Human Resources Staff for six months, and two administrative support staff backfilled the secretarial positions. To assist in ensuring that rotational assignments are benefitting the individual as well as the Agency, at the close of each rotational assignment the Regional Administrator or Deputy Regional Administrator obtains feedback from the participant. RII encourages rotations into the Region. During FY 2001, we sponsored rotational assignments for an African American woman from the Office of Nuclear Materials Safety and Safeguards and an African American man from the Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation. Our Director of the Division of Resource Management and Administration was shadowed by a Department of Labor (DOL) Hispanic woman who was a participant in a DOL development program.

Awards and Recognition

We strive to reward those employees who exemplify the Agency values of Performance, Integrity, Excellence, Service, Respect, Cooperation, Commitment, and Openness. During the February 2001 Awards Ceremony, 46 employees received awards, 5 African Americans, 2 Asian men, 1 Hispanic man, 8 white women, and 20 white men.

In FY 2001, 10 employees have been selected as Employee of the Month, including 7 African American women, 1 white woman, 1 African American man, and 1 white man. During the same period, 4 African American women, 3 white women, 1 Hispanic man, 1 Native American man, and 13 white men received Instant Cash Awards. To further support our appreciation of employee efforts, we present an NRC logo shirt to "Employees of the Month" and to employees nominated for the Atlanta Federal Executive Board Award (non-monetary). To reinforce noteworthy performance which may not rise to the level of a cash award, the Regional Administrator personally presents employees with ink pens bearing the logos "Attitude is Everything" or "Teamwork." This practice has increased comradery among staff, and healthy competition to achieve high performance.

Challenges

I am committed to the Equal Employment Opportunity Program and to employing a highly motivated, skilled workforce. The Region II management team has been given the tools to accomplish both. However, we must remain committed to our goals. As we come close to reaching our hiring goals, we must focus on retention and development to ensure that the Region has the proper skills mix while improving workforce diversity. We must continue to devote time and resources to a successful recruitment, development, and retention program. Most importantly, we must emphasize that diversity is not a separate, distinct goal, but an integral part of our overall management mandate. Our challenge lies in providing the work environment necessary to help all employees feel valued as contributing, worthwhile members of our organization. By meeting regularly and encouraging open dialogue, we here in Region II, attempt to identify any workforce concerns at an early stage and address impediments to our success.

Equal Employment Opportunity Workforce Profile Data

Joint Statement by:
The Equal Employment Opportunity Advisory Committees

Statement by:
The Joint Labor Management Equal Employment Opportunity Committee

EEO Joint Statement August 2001 Briefing

The purpose of the EEO Joint Statement is for the Equal Employment Opportunity Advisory Committees (Committees) to inform the Commission of their perspectives regarding Agency progress related to EEO. The EEO Joint Statement summarizes issues that have been identified by the Committees and provides recommendations for addressing these issues.

The Office of Small Business and Civil Rights (SBCR) and the Office of Human Resources (HR) continue to work with the Committees and Office Directors to address the EEO issues confronting the Agency. Subsequent to the last EEO briefing, senior managers in the Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation (NRR) met with members of the individual Committees to discuss and develop resolutions to EEO issues within NRR. Also, the Director, Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards (NMSS) has assigned a senior NMSS manager to each committee representative within NMSS to help champion issues specific to NMSS. In addition, NMSS has hired a consultant to work with NMSS staff to help identify and address specific NMSS diversity issues. Finally, some of the Committees have held separate meetings with the Chairman and the Deputy Executive Director for Operations for Management Services to address EEO issues.

Overall, the Committees recognize that there has been some effort in identifying EEO initiatives and potential resolutions. However, progress will be better measured for specific office initiatives when results are known. The common, over-arching, issues from the Committees are stated below. It should be recognized that some of these issues have been essentially the same for the last three years, documenting the need for continuous emphasis in these areas.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ADDRESSING SIGNIFICANT EEO ADVISORY COMMITTEE ISSUES

- ! Management should continue to use enhanced recruitment efforts for minority groups by actively participating in the recruitment process and by using creative hiring practices.
- ! The Agency should strive to increase representation of minority employees in senior staff, supervisory, and management positions.
- ! The Agency must ensure that the performance appraisal system is used to hold managers and supervisors accountable for success in EEO.
- ! The Agency should establish a formal process through which it can capture and retain the potential loss of "corporate" knowledge due to retirement of senior staff and managers.
- ! The agency must continue to press forward on initiatives to provide a "family friendly workplace."

The attached statements of the individual Committees elaborate further on these issues and recommendations. The EEO Advisory Committees appreciate the support of the Commission and recommend that the Commission set the standards and the climate within the Agency that would support a more successful EEO program.

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR AFRICAN AMERICANS
AUGUST 2001 EEO BRIEFING STATEMENT**

The Advisory Committee for African Americans (ACAA) would like to encourage the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) management to take a more direct approach towards enhancing the state of EEO within the Agency. We would like to bring to the attention of NRC management the need to develop an overall agency strategy to address diversity issues at the NRC. Recruitment, hiring, retention and career advancement strategies should address near and longer term issues and be inclusive of African Americans, Asian Americans, Native Americans, and Hispanics. These strategies should be incorporated into the Agency's strategic objectives and measured for effectiveness and results. In our view such a strategy has to be endorsed by the Commission, and supported and promoted by the EDO, Office Directors and Regional Administrators in order for it to be effective.

During the year 2001, the ACAA will focus on and suggest that NRC management focus on undertaking activities related to two key areas that, in our view, would result in significant gains in EEO for African Americans the Agency. These areas, as highlighted in bold, are discussed as follows:

- 1. Increase the number of African Americans in (1) supervisory, management, SES, and senior level positions; and (2) the feeder groups (Grades GG-13 - 15) that support these levels.**

Senior staff positions, as well as supervisory, management, SES, and SLS level positions continue to be elusive for many African Americans and some minorities particularly in the major program offices. As stated emphatically in briefings on EEO, over the next 3-5 years, most of the (9) African Americans who are currently in SES positions could retire. Similarly, the Agency is losing African American employees in the GG-13 through GG-15 grade levels. Therefore, its conceivable that, over the next three to five years, representation of African Americans at the senior and managerial levels within the Agency could be non-existent. In addition, its conceivable that the feeder groups which serve as the pipeline for senior and management levels could be reduced by 30 percent. Measures for addressing these possible future conditions include but are not limited to: 1) developing existing staff for supervisory and managerial positions, and 2) hiring entry level and experienced mid-level staff at grade GG-13 through GG-15. This should help to increase representation at the supervisory and management levels and enhance the number of highly qualified African Americans for senior staff level positions.

- 2. Increase the number of African Americans hired at the entry and experienced levels.**

During FY 1996 through FY 2000, the number of African Americans hired decreased significantly. We encourage NRC management to determine the rationale for the decrease and implement measures to help maintain a level of hiring that would increase the overall number of entry level employees as well as increased the number of African Americans hired in grades GG-13 and above. The Agency's recruitment strategies could be improved. We recommend use of similar strategies as applied in recent recruitment efforts at the University of Puerto Rico. This bold approach which incorporates on-the-spot offers, early review of resumes, and management participation would help to enhance recruitment efforts to identify and hire highly qualified African Americans. Accordingly, we will continue to participate in the Agency's recruitment efforts with a focus on expanding the recruitment to new sources, including job fairs, conventions, and outreach to academic and professional institutions.

The Asian Pacific American Advisory Committee (APAAC)
August 2001 EEO Briefing Statement

In the past year, we put forward a set of recommendations to enhance EEO objectives and diversity goals. To some extent, our recommendations helped facilitate a successful outreach program that resulted in a large increase in Hispanic American representation in the Agency. However, we note that while the Agency is improving its targeted EEO objectives, recruiting efforts aimed at targeted minority groups such as Asian Americans and African Americans were not as effective.

We acknowledge the Agency's current efforts in the areas of recruitment and retention, succession planning, and open communications. However, we note that the number of APAs in the feeder groups for management advancements and in the SES ranks continued to be historically low compared with the available pool of highly qualified APAs. We would like greater management focus on the issue of advancement of APAs to management positions.

We recommend that management focus in the following areas:

- Improve APA representation in senior management assignments.
- Encourage active participation in formal/informal sponsorship between SES managers and APA employees to enhance help develop career advancement potential.
- Broaden APA experience and participation in leadership and management assignments as part of the retention effort.
- Active participation of all Program Offices to increase efforts in targeted recruitment and in career development of APAs.

Absence of APAs in senior level management positions critically undermine the agency diversity goals. Therefore, we urge that these recommendations be effectively addressed in the near future.

**Federal Women's Program Advisory Committee
August 2001 EEO Briefing Statement**

FWPAC would like NRC management to continue supporting the FWPAC's Secretarial Initiative and to continue promoting women, particularly minority women, into senior and management positions.

While NRC has increased the overall percentage of women in senior positions, these percentages are mostly improved by a decrease of senior men, and not necessarily a significant increase in women chosen for leadership positions. Minority women were less likely to have been chosen for management positions in the past and are, therefore, still under represented.

FWPAC is also examining whether parity exists at NRC for rewarding male and female staff for performance. We hope to identify specific issues regarding awards in the next few months.

FWPAC believes the following recommendations are necessary to improve the NRC workplace and equal employment opportunity for women and minorities:

- Promote career development and advancement of women and minorities into management positions.
- Continue to provide high-quality formal managing diversity training to managers and staff to enhance awareness of cultural and organizational differences that may impact individual and organizational success.
- When implementing flexiplace, managers should be encouraged to use alternative work schedules and work sites to accommodate temporary and permanent needs of the staff.
- Continue career planning training that targets clerical and administrative support staff similar to the recent Career Planning Sessions sponsored by FWPAC, HR, and SBCR.
- Review and update secretarial position descriptions consistent with the actual work performed. Reclassify jobs as appropriate to reflect the appropriate position title, series, and grade.

Committee on Age Discrimination (CAD)
August 2001 EEO Briefing Statement

The Committee on Age Discrimination (CAD) once again appreciates the opportunity to address the Commission on aging issues. CAD continues to enjoy the active participation of its members, and successful communications with the other EEO committees and the Office of Small Business and Civil Rights (SBCR).

The Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA) applies to employees over the age of 40. In recognition of the NRC's aging population, CAD studies aging issues for several age groupings over the age of forty. The full and productive use of the NRC's older employees is in the best interest of all NRC employees, managers, and the goals of the agency. However, CAD firmly believes that American society consciously, or unconsciously, supports the concept that a youthful workforce is better than an older workforce. CAD believes that, to some degree, this is also reflected in NRC's thinking and practices regarding aging employees. CAD hopes to continue to work with SBCR, NRC management, and the Commission, to make the NRC an example of progressive thinking and innovative actions regarding aging workforce issues in government, industry, and society as a whole.

In working with SBCR, NRC management, and the Commission, the CAD wishes to acknowledge some successes in continuing to meet its goals for 2001. Progress has been made in respect to the CAD goal to participate in SBCR diversity programs to provide focus on aging issues and promote attention and respect for aging issues. A second Diversity Day will be held on July 12, 2001 and a second yellow announcement has been signed by the Chairman acknowledging May 2001 as the Older American Month. These activities have allowed CAD more opportunities to provide emphasis on aging issues, and promote attention and respect for aging issues. Since the last briefing, NMSS has assigned a senior manager as a liaison to CAD to pursue aging issues. The CAD intends to use the NRR and NMSS liaisons as a means to achieve a long term CAD goal of transferring the knowledge and experience from the older NRC workforce to the younger workforce.

The CAD would like to take this opportunity to bring to your attention some opportunities for more active involvement:

A continuing CAD concern and goal is a fair performance appraisal system. Past briefings have identified low ratings in appraisals for older scientists and engineers. The CAD recommends that management continue to be sensitized to ensure fair evaluations and that SBCR continue to provide CAD with data on performance appraisals to determine if past efforts have been successful. This information allows CAD to regularly analyze data and report our insights in order to provide assurance of a fair performance appraisal system.

Another continuing CAD concern and goal is to ensure the transfer of knowledge and experience from the older NRC workforce to the younger workforce. We recognize the complexity of this task, however with a large percentage of the NRC workforce eligible for retirement (over 40% of our senior management is eligible for retirement), we recognize the need to move quickly and effectively to maintain the Agency's corporate knowledge. The NRC has made extensive efforts to hire recent college graduates and the CAD recommends that the same level of effort be considered for hiring personnel with significant industry experience. Competition in the job market is difficult, but with a government-wide problem in this area, new investments need to be developed to make the government competitive with the rest of the industry, not only for recent college graduates, but also experienced personnel.

Again, we thank you for the opportunity to address the Commission on aging issues and look forward to our continual partnering with other EEO committees and the SBCR. We are prepared to address any questions that you may have.

Joint Labor Management Equal Employment Opportunity Committee (JLMEEEOC)
August 2001 EEO Briefing Statement

The Joint Labor Management Equal Employment Opportunity Committee (JLMEEEOC) was established by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the National Treasury Employees Union (NRC/NTEU) to advise the NRC on matters about equal employment opportunity (EEO). The Committee is currently chaired by Rateb (Boby) Abu-Eid and co-chaired by Frank M. Akstulewicz. The current members are: Lisa B. Clark, Frederick C. Combs, Samuel L. Pettijohn, Maria E. Schwartz, Newton (King) Stablein, and Cheryl Trottier. The JLMEEEOC appreciates the opportunity to brief the Commission on EEO matters. The JLMEEEOC acknowledges the EEO progress made since last briefing and summarizes some of the top EEO issues that continue to be addressed and enhance NRC efforts to expedite its resolution.

The Office of Small Business and Civil Rights (SBCR) and the Office of Human Resources (HR) continue to work with the JLMEEEOC to address EEO and diversity issues confronting the Agency. Since the last briefing, the Office Directors and managers of the Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards (NMSS) and the Nuclear Reactor Regulation (NRR) have met with the JLMEEEOC and discussed specific Committee issues. NMSS and NRR have assigned senior managers to meet regularly, and work with the JLMEEEOC to address particular EEO and diversity issues. NMSS management, in coordination with SBCR, conducted a diversity survey and met with all staff to discuss survey results. NMSS established a "Diversity Panel" to tackle EEO and diversity issues within the office and provide recommendations for resolution. Several NMSS divisions conducted staff meetings to discuss diversity and solicited staff suggestions. The JLMEEEOC also acknowledges NRC's continuing efforts to recruit women and minorities and improve communications.

The JLMEEEOC believes that the agency needs to continue to build momentum in addressing EEO and diversity issues, implementing affirmative actions, and pursue the Agency's goal of sustaining a discrimination-free work environment. In this regard, the JLMEEEOC recommends that NRC focus on the following EEO and diversity issues:

- ! Remain diligent in its activities and efforts to increase opportunities for advancement of women, minorities, and disadvantaged groups to professional, supervisory, management, executive, and senior level positions.
- ! Continue to implement the mentoring program and strongly encourage participation of women, minorities, and disadvantaged groups in the program.
- ! Continue to improve internal communications and awareness of EEO, diversity, and affirmative action goals and objectives.
- ! Encourage a workplace where knowledge of the NRC's aging population is rewarded with respect. One way to achieve this is to develop a program to encourage the transfer of knowledge through pairing new employees with experienced staff that have extensive "corporate" knowledge.
- ! Emphasize that a family friendly workplace is essential to retain experienced staff and to establish a more productive working environment. For example, encourage creative alternatives for employees with family obligations, and provide part-time employees similar opportunities for rewards and promotions as full-time employees.

The JLMEEEOC is encouraged by the new initiatives of SBCR, HR, NMSS, and NRR to address EEO and diversity issues and optimistic that further progress will be made. The Committee appreciates the Commission attention and continuing efforts to bring about significant changes to improve EEO and diversity at the NRC.