

POLICY ISSUE **(Information)**

October 9, 2002

SECY-02-0182

FOR: The Commissioners

FROM: William D. Travers
Executive Director for Operations /RA/

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, on the problems, progress, and status of the Agency's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Program. For the next briefing, scheduled for October 31, 2002, the staff will focus on five aspects of the agency's EEO programs: (1) management accountability; (2) the results of recruitment and retention initiatives; (3) EEO and Diversity training; (4) EEO Complaint Activity including use of the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Process for resolving allegations of discrimination; and (5) successes and challenges in achieving EEO goals.

Providing the context for the discussion are the four guiding principles that underpin the NRC's 5-Year Affirmative Employment Plan (AEP): (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.

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Following the last briefing on February 6, 2002, the Commission requested, through a Staff Requirements Memorandum (SRM) dated March 12, 2002, that the staff respond to nine actions:

- (1) study how the attrition rate at NRC generally, and within specific offices, compares with other federal agencies and the private sector, and what best practices might be adapted at NRC;
- (2) examine how Federally-mandated outsourcing may impact diversity at NRC;
- (3) consider how the Commission itself can contribute to the staff efforts to manage diversity;
- (4) reexamine the issue of whether Waste Fund monies could be used to fund students and faculty at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) for projects at the Center for Nuclear Waste Regulatory Analyses (CNWRA) and other national laboratories;
- (5) seek legislative authority, similar to that granted by Congress to the Department of Defense, to fund incentive programs to attract students and faculty at Hispanic-serving colleges and universities;
- (6) explore how to take advantage of an anticipated near-term growth in staff to improve the age imbalance in the NRC workforce;
- (7) examine through yearly reviews how to ensure that managers nurture new hires in ways that positively affect the retention rate;
- (8) focus on improving communications with all employees about the agency's personnel and EEO processes;
- (9) continue to work toward the elimination of any backlog through the use of the ADR process.

These issues were addressed in our response dated June 30, 2002. A copy of the SRM and our response are provided in Attachment 1.

This report also includes a statement by Samuel Collins, Director, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation (NRR), on implementation of the EEO program within NRR (Attachment 2); workforce profile data by grade, ethnicity, gender, occupation, and age for FY 1998 - FY 2002 (Attachment 3); and a joint statement from the five EEO Advisory Committees (African American Advisory Committee, Hispanic Employment Program Advisory Committee, Federally Employed Women's Program Advisory Committee, Asian Pacific American Advisory Committee, Committee on Age Discrimination) (Attachment 4).

DISCUSSION:

(1) Management Accountability

The principal objective of an EEO program is to create a discrimination-free work environment, shaped by sound and objective management and leadership practices that support effective communication and facilitate early resolution of issues. The NRC leadership is continuously seeking ways to enhance management accountability in the EEO program. An EEO sub-element was included in the performance plans for SES managers effective July 2001, and incorporated into the elements and standards of non-SES managers and supervisors, effective October 1, 2001. In a memorandum dated December 7, 2001, the Deputy Executive Director for Management Services (DEDM) advised all office directors and regional administrators of the EDO's objective to strengthen the emphasis on management accountability in the Agency's equal employment program. To further enhance awareness and obtain commitment from the management team, the EDO discussed the issue of management accountability, feedback, employee development and EEO expectations with all office directors and regional administrators at the Senior Management Meeting on April 11, 2002.

Additionally, in a memorandum dated May 16, 2002, the Director of Human Resources (HR) reminded rating officials to address EEO accomplishments when completing supervisors' and managers' performance appraisals. A review of SES performance appraisals by the Director, Office of Small Business and Civil Rights (SBCR) indicates that rating officials are effectively addressing EEO activities which reflect enhanced awareness and commitment to the agency's EEO goals.

The DEDM convened a team composed of staff from SBCR and HR to work with members of the Hispanic, African American, and Asian employee groups to solicit their input on strategies to increase diversity in the workforce. A focused approach was pursued with each group. Specific action plans were developed, consistent with the goals and objectives of the agency's Affirmative Employment Plan. The plans include strategies to enhance representation of Hispanic, African American and Asian employees in supervisory and SES positions, enhance focused recruitment efforts, enhance mentoring of all groups, and encourage rotations to positions in the Commission and EDO offices, and in high visibility positions in program offices.

The EEO Advisory Committees have increased their involvement in working with management to create and maintain a discrimination-free work environment at the NRC. In addition to their activities with SBCR, committee members are working closely with the major program offices to provide input regarding office-specific strategies to enhance career development and communication, and improve the overall work environment. As stated above, Committee members met with the DEDM to discuss EEO issues and possible solutions. Committee members have also increased their level of involvement in the recruitment process. In a Joint Statement, included as Attachment 4 to this paper, the Committees have identified their most critical issues and recommendations.

(2) Results of Recruitment and Retention Initiatives

Outreach and Recruitment - Several ongoing and newly developed initiatives are in place to attract a highly qualified and diverse workforce.

Targeted Recruitment - During FY 2002, NRC attended 22 targeted recruitment events at colleges and universities, and participated in 12 minority professional career fairs. This effort identified a significant number of highly qualified diverse entry-level and intern candidates for technical and administrative positions. As of June 30, 2002, 41 interns (14 African Americans, 2 Asians, 11 Hispanics, 3 white women, and 11 white men) had joined the NRC, and 29 were projected to join by the end of FY 2002. This influx of new hires has resulted in an increase in the diversity of the agency's workforce.

Entry-Level Recruitment and Hiring - The agency's strategies to attract diverse highly-qualified staff have been highly successful. The model used is a team effort for conducting focused recruitment at colleges and universities with significant enrollment of Hispanic, African American and Asian students. The agency has increased its efforts to establish on-going dialogue with several universities including four HBCU's, in an effort to increase the agency's visibility with these institutions and attract the interest of their best students. Recently, agency representatives visited Howard University's School of Engineering and the University of California at Berkeley. A senior NRC executive briefed the university representatives on NRC's mission, the functions of the program offices and possible areas of cooperation between the schools and the NRC. Plans are underway to host a Howard University open house at the NRC during the first half of FY 2003.

As of June 30, 2002, 168 permanent employees have been hired. When compared to permanent hires for 2001, the total number of minority employees increased. Table A below shows a demographic breakout on hiring. See Attachment 2, Chart 9, for additional details on hiring.

**Table A - Agency FY 2002 & FY 2001
Hiring Activity (Permanent Employees)**

	FY 2001 Hires	FY 2002 Hires (As of 6/30/02)	Total On Board As of 6/30/02
Total	158	168	2896
African American	19	30	380
Asian Pacific American	8	14	204
Hispanic	26	17	105
Native American	1	1	9
White Female	42	39	740
White Male	62	67	1458

Cooperative Education Program - The Co-op Program provides study-related work experience for potential entry-level employees during their college years. Tuition reimbursement is available to students in their senior year through the Undergraduate Scholarship Program (USP). Currently 1 white man, 1 African American woman, 1 Hispanic man, and 1 Hispanic woman are participating in the USP. During FY 2002, the agency established new co-op agreements at two HBCUs (Howard University and Morgan State). Co-op program participation increased from 8 in FY 2001 to 13 (10 minorities and 3 women) in FY 2002. Our goal is to continue to increase the number of students working with NRC through cooperative education agreements. This will provide a continuing pipeline of candidates for the Nuclear Safety Intern Program (NSIP) and for entry-level hiring.

Summer Hire Program - Our Summer Hire Program continues to attract and enhance student interest in future employment with the NRC. During FY 2002, 80 students and faculty (15 African Americans, 5 Hispanics, 12 Asians and 48 Whites) were employed through the Summer Hire Program. The Summer Hire Program candidates are encouraged to participate in cooperative education programs at their respective colleges and universities. Through such participation, they may compete for NRC's Undergraduate Scholarship Program, and, if successful in cooperative education assignments, qualify for non-competitive selection to NRC intern and entry-level positions. The goal of the Summer Hire Program is to attract early interest in NRC employment among students in degree programs suited to NRC.

Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) - The HBCU Research Participation Program enables HBCU faculty and students to conduct technical research and development activities on campuses and at Department of Energy facilities where a substantial portion of NRC's research and technical assistance activities are performed. This Program is conducted through a Cooperative Agreement with the Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education. The principal goals of this program are to enhance academic studies in science, mathematics, and engineering and to increase the number of available scientists, engineers, and related professionals in the job market. A total of 12 students and 10 faculty representing 14 different HBCUs participated in the program in FY 2002. Plans are underway to assign one participant to the agency's Center for Nuclear Waste Analyses starting in September 2002.

Career Development and Retention - The agency continues to face a challenge in retaining highly qualified diverse staff. Training, development, and career growth opportunities are among the agency's most effective retention initiatives, along with effective communication, timely feedback, and awards and recognition. The agency uses over-hiring and double-encumbering of positions as a means of assisting new employees to acquire technical perspective and agency-specific knowledge from senior employees before they retire, resign or move on to other positions. Employee development, succession planning, and retention-enhancing programs such as the SES Candidate Development Program (SES CDP), the Leadership Potential Program, rotations and mentoring are also emphasized.

Senior Executive Service Candidate Development Program (SES CDP) - More than 154 NRC employees and outside candidates applied for the SES CDP in FY 2002. Table B below provides a demographic breakout of applicants and selections. Because only 8 of 22 selections were minorities and women, there is limited potential for

diversity in near-term SES selections. To increase the potential for diversity in future competitions for the SES CDP, managers should encourage their employees to engage in developmental activities, and should serve as mentors to provide career guidance and constructive feedback to non-selected candidates.

**Table B - SES Candidate Development Program
(FY 2002)**

	Total Applicants	Selections
Totals	154	22
African American	16	2
Asian Pacific American	12	1
Hispanic	2	0
Native American	0	0
White Female	24	5
White Male	82	14
Unknown	18	0

Leadership Potential Program - Graduates of the 12-month Leadership Potential Program have developed managerial and leadership competencies to prepare them for non-competitive lateral assignment to supervisory positions. The 40 selections for the latest Program include 17 minorities, 10 white women, and 13 white men. This should enhance the representation of women and minorities for future supervisory positions, and also serve as a potential pipeline for future SES Candidate Development Program applicants.

Rotational Assignments - Rotational opportunities, specifically rotations to high visibility positions, are important to successful career progression. During FY 2002, 176 employees participated in rotational assignments, including 20 African Americans, 21 Asians, 7 Hispanics, 3 Native Americans, 44 white women, and 81 white men.

Mentoring - Our mentoring program provides employees an opportunity to discuss their career goals and aspirations with experienced NRC employees who volunteer to serve as mentors. SBCR sponsored a mentoring session for NRR interns to discuss the roles and responsibilities of mentees and mentors, and provide guidance in establishing effective mentoring relationships. A special mentoring orientation will be conducted for NMSS interns and mentors during the first quarter of FY 2003. In addition to intern and other program office mentoring, SBCR implements a general Facilitated Mentoring Program for all employees. The number of employees participating in the program increased from 98 to 151 in FY 2002.

Collectively, these developmental activities increase the agency's potential to attract highly qualified and diverse employees, develop employees and retain skills needed at all levels in the organization, and contribute to improvements in EEO. Other aspects of retention are recognition and accommodation of employees with special needs.

Awards - NRC continues to recognize its employees for noteworthy and outstanding performance. In FY 2002, 1897 non-SES employees received performance awards. Minorities and women are well-represented among the recipients. The percentage of awards given to each employee group is close to their representation in the NRC workforce. See Attachment 2, Chart 16 for additional details on awards.

Accommodation for Disabled Employees - During FY 2002, HR developed standardized procedures for providing reasonable accommodation for individuals with disabilities. These procedures make it easier for employees to understand the process and requirements for requesting accommodation. Additionally, the agency maintains an inter-agency agreement with the Department of Defense which administers the Computer Electronic Accommodations Program (CAP). The mission of CAP is to provide equal access to the information technology environment, including the procurement of assistive devices, at no cost to the NRC, for employees who require accommodation because of a physical or cognitive disability.

(3) EEO and Diversity Training

The staff continues to assist managers in developing tools to more effectively manage a diverse workforce. To this end, HR and SBCR have planned 13 sessions and conducted 4 sessions of the updated course, *EEO and Diversity Management for Managers and Supervisors*. This course provides managers and supervisors information on current EEO laws, including the ADR process, and NRC's diversity management principles and processes. The objective is to enhance managers' ability to manage a diverse workforce, and respond effectively to issues that give rise to EEO complaints. Sessions are scheduled throughout FY 2003, and periodically thereafter.

Supervisory feedback to employees continues to be of concern to several employee groups. Managers and supervisors have recognized the need to do a better job in providing feedback to employees regarding performance, and in cases where employees are not successful in competing for career advancement. HR has developed a 2-hour seminar entitled, *Feedback Techniques for Non-Selected Internal Candidates*. This seminar discusses constructive techniques for providing feedback to employees. All supervisors and managers are expected to participate in this seminar.

NRC recently subscribed to a bi-monthly publication, "Communication Bulletin for Managers and Supervisors", which is distributed to all managers and supervisors. This Bulletin provides information, case studies, and possible resolutions to real workplace scenarios, and serves as a tool to assist managers in developing more effective communication.

As follow-up to NRC's ongoing Managing Diversity process, during the last two quarters of fiscal year 2002, SBCR assisted several offices in formulating goals to address office-specific diversity management and organizational improvement issues. Additionally, SBCR conducted managing diversity awareness sessions for several offices. These sessions were designed to enhance

managerial and staff understanding of managing diversity and its impact on the agency's mission, and on individual and organizational performance. Additional sessions have been requested by offices.

To highlight the value of diversity, SBCR, with assistance from EEO Advisory Committee members and other employees, sponsored the NRC's 2002 Annual Diversity Day. This event celebrated the agency's racial, gender, cultural, and ethnic diversity, and recognized the contributions of the entire diverse workforce. All employees were invited to attend. Regional employees participated in portions of this event via tele-conference. Additionally, Region 1 and Region 3 sponsored regional diversity observances.

(4) EEO Complaint Activity Including the ADR Process

During the past two years, mediation, through the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) process has been increasingly used by complainants and managers to resolve allegations of discrimination. ADR continues to be successful in resolving differences in a non-adversarial manner. Use of ADR, when compared to the traditional EEO complaint process, has resulted in significant savings to the government. Over the past three years, the average cost for investigating an EEO complaint was \$4500 and the average cost of ADR was slightly less than \$1700. The staff of SBCR and the EEO counselors, during the counseling process, discuss with employees use of ADR as an option for early resolution of informal allegations of discrimination. During FY 2002, 9 individuals requested use of the ADR process: 3 cases were settled, 1 was not settled, and decisions are pending in the remaining 5 cases. The most prevalent bases for complaints have been age, race, and reprisal. Listed below is the status of EEO complaint activity in the agency as of the end of FY 2002:

Informal Counseling Activity

Pending at end of FY 2001	
Initiated in FY 2002	35
Closed in FY 2002	37
Pending as of September 30, 2002	3

Formal Complaint Cases

Pending at end of FY 2001	21
Filed in 2002	14
Closed in FY 2002	13
Pending as of September 30, 2002	22

(5) Successes and Challenges in Achieving EEO Goals

Employees are our most valuable resource and the strategies we have put in place are intended to convey that message to all employees. The staff has continued to improve in implementing strategies to recruit, hire, develop and retain a highly-qualified, diverse workforce. We have placed greater emphasis on management accountability and have provided tools for managers to improve communication among all levels of staff. Office directors, regional administrators and other managers are more proactive in the EEO process.

Senior managers in the EDO's Office, as well as some program offices and regions have taken specific steps to solicit ideas from staff, at various levels, regarding ways to increase workforce diversity and improve our workplace for all employees. Many employees have responded enthusiastically and offered ideas and strategies, which have contributed to our success. As a result of these efforts, among permanent employees, the representation of minorities in each group has kept pace with agency growth over the past 5 years. Representation of Hispanics in the workforce and in professional positions almost doubled over the past three years. The number of Asian employees in supervisory positions increased from approximately 4% in 2001 to 5% in 2002. The trending data show that white women in supervisory positions increased steadily from 12% to 15%. The ADR Process is being used by managers and employees to resolve conflicts brought through the EEO complaint process, and the agency is saving resources.

Some areas of our EEO Program remain challenging. The representation of minorities in SES and SLS positions is unchanged. Managers are aware that they need to do a better job providing timely, constructive, and candid feedback to employees regarding performance and career development. There is an ongoing effort to update position descriptions for secretarial and administrative support positions, to insure that complete credit is given to support staff for the skills they use in performing their duties and responsibilities. Some employees feel that they do not understand what it takes to move up the career ladder. Others feel that managers are not assisting them in preparing for career growth, or actively supporting their interests when career opportunities are available. We are training supervisors and managers to be more effective in their coaching and mentoring efforts. Some of the more senior employees have stated that the agency should place more emphasis on knowledge sharing and knowledge transfer between veteran employees and new employees; thereby acknowledging and respecting the contributions of older employees. These challenges directly impact the agency's ability to retain our highly qualified employees, and continue to attract highly qualified and diverse candidates.

Our success in continuing to develop and implement effective strategies for improvement in EEO and diversity lies in our individual efforts to work together to achieve our common goals. We are committed to continuing to explore ways to make NRC the employer of choice for our own employees and for highly qualified applicants.

/RA by William F. Kane Acting For/

William D. Travers
Executive Director for Operations

Attachments:

1. SRM & Staff Response
2. Statement by Samuel Collins, Director, NRR
3. Equal Employment Opportunity Workforce Profile Data
4. EEO Advisory Committees Joint Statement

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Staff Requirements Memorandum (M020206B)
October 31, 2002

and

Staff Response

Attachment 1

Attachment - part of Package # ML022770082

Statement by Samuel Collins, Director
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulations

**Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation
October 2002**

I am pleased to address the Commission regarding NRR policies, practices, successes and challenges related to equal employment opportunity (EEO) and diversity management. NRR is committed to the Agency's EEO and Diversity policies, goals and guiding principles. I would like to acknowledge the NRR management team and staff efforts in these areas, in particular, the Executive Team members. I would also like to acknowledge the support from SBCR management and staff as well as NRR members of EEO Advisory Committees who have collaborated with us in advancing our EEO and diversity initiatives and activities.

Since I last addressed the Commission in 1998, we have undertaken several new activities as well as enhanced those that have been successful. I believe we can achieve our goal of having a highly qualified, effective and diverse management team and staff through hiring, staff development, and retention of the best available people we can recruit. As you are aware, in today's job market, attracting highly qualified, experienced people to fill many of our positions is a challenge especially in technical areas where we are competing for the same resources as those entities we regulate. We have taken on this challenge and I will discuss several initiatives we are actively pursuing. We have also challenged ourselves to maintain a healthy and positive work environment. I strongly encourage diversity training and awareness; open door policies and quality communications; interactions with the various NRR members of EEO Advisory committees; mentoring; and management and staff participation in recruitment activities.

I will now expand on these various activities, noting our successes, challenges, and plans.

NRR workforce demographics

As of August 2002, NRR had a total of 577 full and part-time employees. Of the total, 28 percent are minorities and 15 percent are other than minority females. The table below summarizes the demographics of the NRR's workforce by race/ethnicity and gender.

Race/Ethnicity	Total (577)	Percentage
African-American	55	9.5%
Native American	1	0.2%
Asian Pacific American	93	16.1%
Hispanic	20	3.5%
White Female	88	15.2%
White Male	320	55.5%

Since the end of FY 2000, NRR has increased the representation percentages of all minority groups in the office with its representation of Asian Pacific Americans (16%) being among the highest in the agency. In this time frame, NRR has also made significant progress in its Hispanic recruiting nearly doubling their representation in the NRR workforce. Short term challenge areas for NRR recruiting include

increasing representation of women, sustaining the recruiting progress with Hispanics, establishing sustained progress in our African American recruitment efforts, and initiating an entry level pipeline for the Asian Pacific American group.

1. Hiring policies and practices

NRR continues to aggressively recruit at universities and professional minority conferences in an effort to attract highly qualified women and minorities. Specifically, NRR managers and technical staff have been active participants at agency-sponsored focused recruitment events (University of Puerto Rico, FAMU, North Carolina A&T, Penn State). As a result of these actions, we made progress toward achieving our goal to enhance representation of women and minorities at the entry-level.

The Intern Program has been and continues to be, an effective recruitment incentive for recent graduates and students and a key tool towards NRR's goal of a highly qualified, diverse workforce. We have been successful in utilizing the Intern Program to attract and hire a diverse group of high caliber entry-level employees to carry out the agency's mission. Since the program was restarted in FY2001, NRR has hired 29 individuals for this program. The demographics of the program participants (34.4% White males, 41.3% Hispanics, 17.2% African Americans, 6.8% White Females) is very favorable with respect to its diversity.

NRR has also been using the summer hire program to establish a highly qualified, diverse feeder pool for the Intern Program. During FY 2002, NRR hired 11 students (45.4% White males, 18.2% White Females, 18.2% Asian Pacific Americans, 18.2% African Americans) for our summer hire program from various colleges and universities. These students are actively pursuing degrees in engineering or science. NRR is working with its partners in HR and SBCR to better institutionalize these arrangements through the Co-Op program.

Finally, since the last time I reported to the Commission, NRR has made progress in providing opportunities on bridge positions for individuals to transition from the clerical field to administrative positions. NRR has created upward mobility positions in administrative areas of budget, human resources, and work planning. In addition, we now post licensing assistant positions as a career ladder position starting at the GG-7 level so that highly qualified clerical staff can apply. We believe that this practice will be a positive contribution towards retaining our top clerical staff.

2. Support for Staff Welfare

A highly qualified, diverse workforce at all levels of the office helps retain our highly talented and motivated staff. Since I met with the Commission in 1998, representation of minorities and women in the supervisory/managerial ranks was a challenge then and remains so today. Since 1998, the NRR representation of minorities and women in the management/supervisory level has increased from 14 to 27 percent with the most significant increase in the Asian Pacific American group which increased from 4 to 9 individuals. Despite the progress, representation of women and minorities in the supervisory ranks remains a significant challenge and is an NRR focus when it considers the Leadership Potential and SES Candidate Development Programs.

NRR has been instrumental in supporting career development through rotational assignments; a key tool in developing a highly qualified, diverse workforce. More than 10% of the NRR staff has participated in rotational assignments during FY 2002. Management and staff routinely encourage employees to participate in this process. Compared to NRR practices in the past, there has been a significant increase in the number of Asian Pacific American employees participating in rotations. We believe that this is an important factor in reversing trends identified by the APAAC concerning time-in-grade for Asian Pacific Americans.

We continue to encourage and support the mentoring program as a tool to further long term diversity goals. Along with SBCR's support, NRR has incorporated the agency's mentor/mentee program as a key component of its Intern Program. Almost every SES manager in NRR is acting as a mentor for an NRR Intern. I believe the combined support provided by SBCR and NRR will further improve the opportunity for success of our new hires.

Finally, NRR has been a leader with the agency-wide Flexiplace program which is designed to create a positive workplace environment to help attract and retain a high qualified staff. In coordination with HR and LMPC, NRR developed expanded guidance to help supervisors and participants become better familiar with the program. Currently, NRR has 53 employees (about 10% of its staff) participating in the Flexiplace program. We also encourage the use of the project based Flexiplace option.

3. Diversity Awareness

NRR has worked closely with SBCR to provide managing diversity sessions for NRR managers and staff. The managing diversity sessions are designed to enhance staff awareness and encourage their commitment to create and maintain a positive NRR work environment that supports the contribution of all its members. The sessions have enlightened employees regarding how successfully managing diversity in organizations can impact how we carry out our safety mission. We anticipate that this training be completed with a majority of NRR staff participating by early November 2002.

Individual members of the NRR Executive Team serve as points of contact for NRR employees who serve in each agency EEO Advisory Committee. The Executive Team members meet on a regular basis with the NRR members of each EEO Advisory Committee to discuss NRR employee and organizational issues. This initiative has significantly improved communication with the Agency's EEO Advisory Committees on matters of mutual interest and has led to several innovative changes. For example, an outreach program to Historically Black Colleges and Universities within the Washington, D.C. metro area is being developed to create an opportunity to exchange career development ideas with science and engineering faculty and leaders of engineering student organizations. Additionally, NRR has initiated an open house for Howard University's Science and Engineering Faculty and students in the fall.

4. Communications

Communication and feedback is a key method for motivating a highly qualified diverse workforce. NRR is committed to ensuring that employees receive candid feedback on their job performance through performance appraisals and feedback from the merit promotion process. Since I last addressed you, along with several other program offices, NRR has moved to more standardized elements and standards in its non-SES performance appraisals thereby increasing the consistency and effectiveness of performance appraisal reviews. During this appraisal year, we made considerable efforts to ensure that performance objectives are reasonable; and that employees were invited to participate in discussion on performance expectations in a timely manner. With regard to the merit selection process, it continues to be NRR's policy for supervisors and managers to interview all of the best qualified applicants for job vacancies.

Supervisors and managers are then better positioned to provide constructive employee feedback. This enables the employee to identify areas where additional focus maybe needed and obtain guidance on how to improve their application packages and interview skills to enhance their opportunity for future vacancies.

NRR has initiated several innovative activities to improve communication with NRR staff. The Executive Team electronically transmits a weekly newsletter to communicate key activities, management expectations, and employee achievements. In addition, NRR news, accomplishments, and information are broadcast through illuminated message boards placed in the elevator lobbies on all NRR floors.

In conclusion, I am committed to achieving a high quality diverse workforce. I will continue to be an active and innovative proponent of the agency's EEO Program. I look forward to the year ahead and appreciate the opportunity to present this information to the Commission.

Equal Employment Opportunity Workforce Profile Data

Attachment 3

Attachment - part of Package # ML022770082

Joint Statement by:
The Equal Employment Opportunity
Advisory Committees

Attachment 4

EEO Joint Statement October 2002 Briefing

The purpose of the EEO Joint Statement is for the Equal Employment Opportunity Advisory Committees (Committees) to (1) inform the Commission of their current perspectives regarding Agency progress related to its EEO program and diversity management process; and (2) summarize the common issues identified by the Committees and provide recommendations for addressing them.

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 and diversity management issues confronting the Agency. Subsequent to the last EEO briefing, Office Directors and their leadership teams in the Offices of Nuclear Reactor Regulation (NRR), Nuclear Regulatory Research (RES), and Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards (NMSS) met with members of the individual Committees to discuss and develop solutions to identify issues within their offices. Also, some of the Committees, along with other employees from the groups they represent, have held separate meetings with the Deputy Executive Director for Operations and Management Services to address Agency-wide EEO issues. The results of those two sets of meetings increased management's awareness of the issues and possible ways to address them.

Overall, the Committees recognize and appreciate the Agency's efforts to better identify, understand and address important EEO and diversity management issues. Two clearly notable examples of such efforts are the NRC's (1) targeted recruitment program for highly qualified minorities to obtain entry-level jobs, and positions in its Nuclear Safety Intern Program; and (2) the diversity within the make-up of its current Leadership Potential Program. These efforts have the potential to increase overall agency diversity and reduce the under-representation of women and minorities supervisory and management positions. With that in mind, it remains unclear why the agency's commitment to achieving its EEO goals was not reflected in the recent selections to its Senior Executive Service Candidate Program.

The Agency is clearly aware of its need and desire to make more and sustained progress toward fulfilling its commitment to the goals and objectives of its Affirmative Employment Plan. To help, the Committees have identified the common, over-arching issues cited below, along with recommendations for addressing them. It should be acknowledged that some of the issues and recommendations have been essentially the same for the last several years,

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ADDRESSING SIGNIFICANT EEO ADVISORY COMMITTEE ISSUES

- ◆ The Agency should increase representation of minority employees in senior staff, supervisory, and management positions. Accomplishing this should include: (1) continued use of targeted recruiting for entry-level and internship positions, and (2) selections of minorities to the Agency's Leadership Potential Program. In addition, employee development strategies such as rotations, mentoring and training need to be used more often and effectively to increase the representation of such groups in the Agency's SES Candidate Development Program.

- ◆ Management should continue to support targeted recruitment efforts for all minority groups by actively participating in the recruiting process.
- ◆ The Agency must ensure that the performance appraisal system is used to hold managers and supervisors accountable for success in EEO.
- ◆ Management should be sensitive to age related issues to ensure fair performance appraisals, rotational assignments, and promotions for staff of age 50 and older.
- ◆ The agency must continue to implement initiatives that foster a "family friendly workplace" environment.

Sustaining corporate knowledge is not directly an EEO issue. Nonetheless, we believe maintaining and sharing such critical knowledge and associated experiences add value to the career advancement potential of all employees, and will strengthen the agency's ability to successfully carry out its mission. Use of effective and efficient strategies for accomplishing this should be increased.

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

Hispanic Employment Program Advisory Committee Statement

October 2002

The Hispanic Employment Program Advisory Committee (HEPAC) thanks NRC management and the Commission for this opportunity to share our perspective on strategies to enhance the diversity of our workforce by increasing the representation of Hispanics at the NRC. We acknowledge recent accomplishments in recruiting highly qualified Hispanics at the entry and intern levels, and the recent promotions of experienced Hispanic employees. We believe to sustain such diversity, focus must remain on recruitment, upward mobility, and retention of employees in the agency.

With respect to upward mobility and retention, there have been a few promotions of Hispanic employees at the administrative and technical levels. In addition, two employees were selected for supervisory rotations as a result of participating in the Leadership Potential Program. However, the outcome of the recent Senior Executive Service Candidate Development Program did not result in any Hispanic selections. Hispanics have applied for many of the senior level opportunities over the past ten years. While we are disappointed this outcome, we noted that many high quality employees were among those selected. We believe more should have been and can be done to provide constructive feedback to Hispanic employees to improve their chances for future opportunities. The overall number of Hispanics in the GG-13-15 pipeline and in supervisory and managerial positions remains low. We therefore encourage managers to consistently identify rotational opportunities and other career enhancing assignments, especially at the higher levels.

With respect to recruitment, HEPAC applauds the tremendous efforts of NRC management over the past two years to hire Hispanics at the entry and experienced levels. HEPAC recommends that NRC management continue to target Universities with significant Hispanic populations to attract highly qualified Hispanic applicants. We also recommend that Hispanic employees continue to be utilized as recruiters, and to provide followup with applicants and new employees. HEPAC members have participated in greeting applicants brought in for interviews; have provided assistance to new employees in their transition to the local area and the NRC. HEPAC members also serve as mentors to new employees to provide career advice, and obtain information from new Hispanic employees about their ongoing work experience and future expectations at the NRC.

HEPAC is confident in NRC management's ability to effect change when challenge arises, as is evident in the agency's recruitment and retention efforts over the past few years. HEPAC believes that the diversity Hispanics bring to the NRC, contributes to the effectiveness of the agency's mission. One significant example of this effectiveness is shown in the recent plan to offer the external stakeholders the first revised 10 CFR Part 35 workshop in Spanish. We offer our continued support to assist management in its efforts to employ a highly competent and diverse workforce in a positive work environment.

Federal Employed Women's Advisory Committee Statement

October 2002

FWPAC's goal for FY 2003 continues to be to enhance opportunities for women to achieve successful advancement at NRC through (1) the development of additional upward mobility positions, (2) increased rotational opportunities, (3) aligning mentors with women, and (4) training opportunities to prepare women for more advanced positions within the agency.

FWPAC would like to highlight some recent progress toward these goals in the development of administrative upward mobility positions. In NMSS, over the last year several positions have been identified as upward mobility in the administrative area.

FWPAC has drafted a report that provides recommendations for potential upward mobility positions and career enhancing opportunities in the administrative support area. The report will be provided to SBCR within the next few weeks. Some of the recommendations include:

- Update position descriptions. A draft updated position description will be attached to the above report and will be available to all offices in order to remove requirements for stenography and include requirements for computer skills and computer programs such as Starfire and ADAMS
- Encourage agency managers to identify or develop positions as Upward Mobility Positions; and
- Identify training opportunities that are key to success for upward mobility in the administrative area.

FWPAC will continue to track progress on various goals that are included in this year's objectives.

The Asian Pacific American Advisory Committee (APAAC) Statement

October 2002

Since the last EEO Briefing, APAAC has been actively supporting targeted recruitment efforts at selected universities. The most recent initiative was at the University of California-Berkeley in September 2002. We recognize the recent selections of Asian Pacific Americans (APAs) in the NRC Leadership Potential Program and the 2002 Executive Leadership Program are positive steps in developing talented APAs for supervisory and management positions and increasing diversity at NRC.

However, the under-representation of APAs in senior level management positions continues to be our concern. Although one APA was selected for the SES Candidate Development Program under-representation of APAs in management and Senior Executive Service (SES) positions continues as evident from the Workforce Profile Data included in this briefing package. We would like to reemphasize our concern and urge greater management focus on advancement of APA employees to SES management positions. In summary, we recommend:

- a) Improved APA representation in management assignments, including SES through increased participation in leadership programs and management assignment.
- b) Active participation in mentoring between SES managers and APA employees to enhance APA employees' career advancement potential.

We urge that Agency management effectively address these recommendations.

Advisory Committee for African Americans

October 2002

The Advisory Committee for African Americans (ACAA) welcomes the opportunity to address the Commission on equal employment opportunity (EEO) related issues that impact African American employees and the NRC. During the past two years, the NRC has taken a number of positive steps to enhance diversity.

It is clear that the NRC has done an effective job of addressing diversity by increasing the number of African Americans hired at the entry-level. However, the NRC should strive to be more effective in recruiting African Americans at experienced-levels and should encourage African Americans that are in the feeder groups to consider supervisory, SES and SLS positions, in order to ensure that there is an adequate pool of qualified African Americans to compete for those positions.

A group of African American employees from various Offices and Regions continued to meet with the Deputy Executive Director for Management Services to discuss workplace issues (i.e., recruitment, retention, feedback, merit staffing, sponsorship) that impact the career development and advancement of African Americans.

ACAA's focus continues to be:

- Encourage and enhance representation of African Americans in supervisory, management, SES, and senior level positions.
- Encourage and enhance representation of African Americans in feeder groups (Grades GG 13-15) for SES, non-SES management, supervisory, and senior level positions.
- Encourage and enhance participation of African Americans in career development initiatives such as SES Candidate Development Program, Leadership Potential Program, Computer Science Program, Administrative Skills Enhancement Program.
- Encourage and enhance representation of African Americans at the entry-and experienced levels.

The Commission should develop a more complete set of metrics to gauge the effectiveness of (1) EEO program and diversity management processes and (2) changes to other programs to address EEO or diversity concerns. The current set of metrics, which seems to be primarily demographic information, is useful in identifying problem areas well after trends have been established, but does not seem to be an appropriate metric for assessing whether the overall EEO program and diversity management processes and changes to other programs to address EEO or diversity concerns are successful.

ACAA will continue working with the Deputy Executive Director for Management Services, Office of Human Resources, Office of Small Business and Civil Rights, and program offices to strengthen the NRC's EEO program and diversity management process.

Committee on Age Discrimination (CAD)

October 2002

The Committee on Age Discrimination (CAD) 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 NRC staff, managers, and the goals of the agency. 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, and society as a whole.

The CAD would like to bring to your attention some opportunities for more active management involvement:

The CAD is concerned about equity in performance appraisals and opportunities for rotational assignments and promotions for staff of age 50 and above. In the upcoming year, CAD, with the assistance of SBCR, would like to perform analyses of rotations and promotions for older scientists and engineers. Currently, CAD is carrying out a longitudinal study to examine the extent to which changes in performance appraisal ratings of individuals over time are correlated with age. We are analyzing the performance appraisal ratings for FY 1988-2000 for all Grade 13-15 Engineers and Scientists (800 and 1300 series). We expect to complete this analysis shortly.

CAD strongly recommends that management continue to be sensitive to age-related issues to ensure equitable treatment for all staff, especially those age 50 and older. To address these issues, CAD has made recommendations to the EDO, SBCR, and HR. These include 1) conduct a seminar for employees and managers which would reinforce, expand, and refine knowledge and skills related to effectively participating in NRC's performance appraisal and promotion systems as related to age issues; 2) encourage participation of the older worker in mentoring programs to reinforce the transfer of knowledge to the new and generally younger employees; and 3) conduct statistical analyses of promotion, and rotational data for scientists and engineers ages 40 and above.

Again, we thank you for the opportunity to address the Commission on aging issues and look forward to our continued interaction with other EEO committees and the SBCR.