

January 13, 2003

Mr. R. Edison Elkins, Director  
Federal Sector Programs  
Office of Federal Operations  
U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission  
1801 L Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20507

Dear Mr. Elkins:

I am pleased to enclose the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC's) "FY 2003 Affirmative Action Program Plan Update and FY 2002 Report of Accomplishments" for hiring, placement, and advancement of individuals with handicaps.

During FY 2002, the NRC continued to make progress in the area of hiring individuals with handicaps. The total number of agency employees with handicaps increased from 184 at the end of FY 2001 to 194 at the end of FY 2002, and increased the number of employees with targeted disabilities increased from 31 to 34 during the same period.

In FY 2003, the NRC will continue its efforts to recruit disabled individuals by using methods and strategies similar to those used successfully last year. NRCareers, a new automated recruitment system, will facilitate the targeting of institutions that provide appropriate candidates for NRC positions. Because NRCareers also makes it easier to apply for positions at NRC, the Commission anticipates that NRC will receive more applications from disabled individuals.

The NRC's contact for this plan and report is Mr. James E. Horn, Manager, Human Resources Services and Benefits, Human Resources Services & Operations, Office of Human Resources, 301-415-7703.

Sincerely,

*/RA/*

Richard A. Meserve

Enclosure:  
As stated

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is fully committed to the hiring, placement, and advancement of individuals with handicaps. These individuals represent an important potential resource for many NRC positions, and I encourage all selecting officials to give handicapped individuals full consideration when they apply for positions.

During FY 2002, the NRC continued to make progress in the area of hiring individuals with handicaps. The NRC grew by 100 permanent employees (from 2826 to 2926), a 3.5 percent increase. Included within the additional staff were 10 individuals with handicaps. This raised the number of handicapped NRC employees from 184 at the end of FY 2001 to 194 at the end of FY 2002 (a 5.4 percent increase). The number of employees with targeted disabilities (TD) increased from 31 to 34 (a 9.7 percent increase) during the same period. We also hired two handicapped employees on a temporary basis. NRC experienced no losses of employees with targeted handicaps.

NRC employees with TD are well represented in the agency's higher pay grades (19 of the 34) and in the Professional and Administrative job categories (22 of the 34). A majority of additional disabled individuals hired at the agency are expected to fall into these categories. It is anticipated that our recruitment strategies for hiring handicapped individuals will result in gains this year similar to last year's.

The NRC has determined that, at this time, there are no problems or barriers that prevent the hiring, development, or retention of handicapped individuals. Nonetheless, the NRC has attempted to make various access items more accessible by installing assistive devices and adjusting the "stay-open" time on many key card doors. Removal of Electronic and Information Technology (EIT) barriers under Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act include both technical and acquisition activities. The agency recently revised its external web page to bring it into compliance with Section 508. All covered acquisitions include language requiring compliance, and detailed internal standards are under development. Staff and members of the public are provided case-by-case assistance should they encounter any remaining EIT barriers. NRC's EEO Officer (Director, Office of Small Business and Civil Rights) is always available to the disabled staff through her open door policy as well as monthly meetings with the NRC's EEO employee advisory committees.

The NRC continues to address reasonable requests for accommodations for employees. These requests are handled in a fair and open manner. All employees are afforded fair opportunities for advancement and those requiring an accommodation to be considered are given the appropriate accommodation.

During FY 2003, the NRC will continue its efforts to recruit disabled individuals by using methods and strategies similar to those used successfully last year. The new automated recruitment system (NRCareers) will allow the agency to continue to target institutions that can provide appropriate candidates for NRC positions. Because NRCareers also makes it easier to apply for positions at NRC, we expect more disabled applicants to apply.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PROGRAM PLAN UPDATE  
AND REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PROGRAM FOR  
INDIVIDUALS WITH HANDICAPS

(Plan update for the period Oct. 1, 2002, through Sept. 30, 2003 - Report for the period Oct. 1, 2001, through Sept. 30, 2002.)

U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
AGENCY

Washington, D.C. 20555  
ADDRESS

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES COVERED BY THIS PLAN 3035

James E. Horn  
NAME OF PERSON PREPARING THIS FORM

301-415-7703  
TELEPHONE NUMBER

\_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE OF RESPONSIBLE OFFICIAL

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

Irene Little, Director, Office of Small Business and Civil Rights  
NAME & TITLE OF RESPONSIBLE OFFICIAL

\_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE OF AGENCY HEAD

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

Richard A. Meserve, Chairman  
NAME AND TITLE OF AGENCY HEAD (CERTIFIES THAT THIS REPORT IS IN COMPLIANCE  
WITH EEO-MD-713, "AFFIRMATIVE ACTION FOR HIRING, PLACEMENT, AND ADVANCEMENT OF  
INDIVIDUALS WITH HANDICAPS")

PLAN FOR SPECIAL RECRUITMENT PROGRAM

Agencies are to establish and maintain special recruitment programs for individuals with handicaps with specified severe disabilities. The purpose is to obtain applications from qualified individuals with handicaps. A revised and improved plan for a special recruitment program is required unless:

A. The agency met its previous year's employment objectives

(If so, check here: ( **XX** )

OR

B. The number of applications received from persons with targeted disabilities was at least two times the number of accessions that would have been necessary to achieve the objectives.

(If so, check here: (    )

IF NEITHER OF THESE CONDITIONS HAS BEEN MET, list new recruitment strategies that will be instituted so that the agency can meet its current employment objectives.

NEW RECRUITING STRATEGIES

NRC recruitment strategies are sufficient to meet its employment objectives.

FACILITY ACCESSIBILITY

- A. List any unmet objectives for barrier removal that were established in previous submissions but have not been accomplished. Removal strategies are to be revised so that these objectives can be accomplished prior to the end of the fiscal year covered by this plan.

<u>OBJECTIVES</u>	<u>ORIGINAL TARGET DATES</u>	<u>REVISED TARGET DATES</u>	<u>REVISED REMOVAL STRATEGIES</u>
Not Applicable			

- B. List any additional objectives for barrier removal during the period covered by this plan.

<u>OBJECTIVES</u>	<u>TARGET DATES</u>
None	

ALTERNATIVES TO PERSONNEL OR MANAGEMENT POLICIES, PRACTICES, OR  
PROCEDURES WHICH RESTRICT HIRING, PLACEMENT, AND ADVANCEMENT OF  
INDIVIDUALS WITH HANDICAPS

A. List barriers which were identified in previous submissions but for which alternatives have not yet been instituted.

<u>BARRIERS</u>	<u>ALTERNATIVES</u>	<u>PLANNED ACTIONS</u>	<u>CURRENT TARGET DATES</u>	<u>DATES INDICATED PREVIOUSLY</u>
None				

B. List barriers not previously identified for which alternatives should be instituted.

<u>BARRIERS</u>	<u>ALTERNATIVES</u>	<u>PLANNED ACTIONS</u>	<u>TARGET DATE</u>
None			

(Enough of the target date indicated should be prior to the end of the fiscal year covered by this plan so that substantial progress toward elimination of barriers will have been made by that time. All barriers that are listed in item "A" above should be removed prior to the end of the fiscal year covered by this plan.)

PART 2: REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

FOR THE PERIOD OCT. 1, 2001, THROUGH SEPT. 30, 2002

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PROGRAM FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH HANDICAPS

STAFFING COMMITMENTS

Provide data indicating staffing commitments for the end date of this report. Include selective placement coordinators, handicapped program managers, and other key staff assigned to the affirmative action program for individuals with handicaps. Do not include EEO counselors and other personnel processing complaints of discrimination on the basis of handicap.

A. Headquarters personnel with nationwide responsibility:

1. Agencywide responsibility (Departmentwide, if applicable)

Number of persons 1 HQ-Disability Program Manager  
 Total staff years (FTE allocated to the program) 1

2. Responsibility for major operating components:

Number of persons 4 Regional Human Resources Team Leads  
 Total staff years (FTE allocated to the program) .25

B. All other personnel (not accounted for above) responsible for management and coordination of the program:

PERCENTAGE OF TIME ALLOCATED TO THE PROGRAM	INDICATE NUMBER IN EACH GROUP
1-5%	
6-10%	
11-25%	
26-75%	
76-100%	
TOTAL	

C. Number of agency personnel offices with appointing authority 5.

## **EEO-MD-712 Checklist: Basic Disability Program Elements**

### **1. Establish a Special Recruitment Program (MD-712, section 7c(3))**

The NRC has a Disability Program Manager (DPM) whose job it is to see that all disabled applicants are fully considered based on their skills, knowledge, and accomplishments. The DPM receives copies of all applications from disabled applicants to review. The DPM has worked with the Recruitment staff to place ads for our vacancies in periodicals that cater to the disabled. A couple of these periodicals were the "Diversity/Careers in Engineering" and "Careers and the Disabled". We are also exhibitors at the "National Training Conference on Employment of Government Employees Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing" and the "Career Expo 2003 for People With Disabilities".

### **2. Prevent fiscal constraints from affecting provision of reasonable accommodation. (MD-712, section 7c(5))**

The NRC is fully prepared to fund any reasonable accommodation for its employees and job applicants. We have never turned down a reasonable request for an accommodation. Funding for accommodations comes from a central agency funding source. Accommodations are normally made within five workdays if possible. Where specialized equipment must be ordered, or more time is needed, an interim accommodation is made, if possible

### **3. Use alternative selection procedures to eliminate barriers to hiring, placement, and advancement of individuals with disabilities. (MD-712, section 7c(6))**

The NRC is fully committed to using its excepted authority to effect the employment of a disabled employee as the particular case may dictate. There are no barriers to the hiring, placement, and advancement of individuals with disabilities in the agency merit staffing procedures. Each vacancy announcement includes an appropriate statement to encourage disabled applicants to apply and to inform them that, if selected, they will be given an accommodation, if needed. In our capacity as an excepted service agency, we do not use the Title 5, Schedule A authorities but do have sufficient authority to effect an equivalent appointment as warranted.

### **4. Publicize excepted appointing authorities. (MD-712, section 7c(7))**

The NRC uses all appropriate appointment authorities under its excepted service authority in its effort to hire disabled employees. The NRC does not use the Schedule A authorities.

### **5. Provide equitable opportunities for merit promotion. (MD-712, section 7c(8))**

The NRC strives to maintain an atmosphere of fairness in its merit promotion activities. We are committed to making sure that all individuals are treated fairly and that there is not a perception that disabled employees are treated differently. The DPM continually reviews vacancy announcements to insure that there are no hidden barriers to handicapped individuals applying.

**6. Seek to provide other promotional opportunities.** (MD-712, section 7c(9))

The NRC has an automated personnel processing system that produces reports for those individuals who are in career-ladder positions. Our negotiated agreement dictates that all employees in career-ladder positions be considered for promotion after serving for one year in grade. The majority of our positions, thus the majority of our handicapped employees, are covered by this agreement. Further, the NRC allows its employees to use the resources of the internet on their own time to search the web for other promotional opportunities. We also offer classes on completing a resume and enhancing interviewing skills. The NRC is not covered by Schedule A appointment authorities.

**7. Include people with targeted disabilities in upward mobility programs.**

(MD-712, section 7c(10))

Thirteen of our TD population are eligible to apply to upward mobility positions. These positions would be posted on our automated vacancy announcement system and would be available to all employees. Few upward mobility positions have been filled in the last couple of years so participation rates are not available.

**8. Provide opportunities in trades and crafts-related job series.**

(MD-712, section 7 c(11))

With only four Wage Board positions, we have no opportunities in this area.

**9. Evaluate training and career development needs, provide opportunities.**

(MD-712, section 7 c(12))

All NRC employees are provided with a wide array of potential training opportunities. Training for mission related activities is given first priority and all employees needing this type of training receive it. Training for developmental purposes is encouraged of all employees.

**10. Include people with disabilities in special employment programs.**

(MD-712, section 7 c(13))

Employees with disabilities are included in the various special employment programs in ratios that are commensurate with their representation in the NRC population.

**11. In Reduction-in-Force (RIF) situations, minimize effect on people with disabilities, especially those with targeted disabilities.** (MD-712, section 7c(14))

The NRC has not had a reduction-in-force (RIF) in many years. If it should become necessary in the future to have a RIF, disabled employees would be given all due consideration.

**12. Offer alternatives to disability retirement.** (MD-712, section 7c(15))

Fifteen NRC employees took disability retirement in the past two years. Prior to their application for retirement, all of these employees were afforded opportunities to use their skills in some other area but without success.

**13. Foster affirmative attitudes.** (MD-712, section 7c(16))

The NRC has sponsored training sessions to help non-disabled staff understand the burden a disability poses for the disabled employee. Because of the highly accepting attitude of the staff and the agency's policy on reasonable accommodation, less than 1 percent of employees with disabilities have filed complaints on the basis of reprisal/retaliation for requesting reasonable accommodation or on the issue of harassment based on the negative conduct of co-workers aimed at them because of their disability status.

**14. Assure equitable opportunities to win awards.** (MD-712, section 7c(17))

The percentage of agency employees receiving awards during FY 2002 was 61 percent overall. The percentage of disabled employees receiving awards during this same period was 52 percent. The percentage of disabled employees with TD receiving awards during the same period was 44 percent. The DPM checks yearly awards reports to ensure that disabled ratios are in line with their representation in the workforce.

**15. Assure sufficient staffing for the disability program.** (MD-712, section 7d(1))

The NRC has a full time DPM at headquarters and the HR Team Leaders in each of the regions provide onsite assistance, as needed.

**16. Issue periodic guidance to all personnel with responsibilities for the program.** (MD-712, section 7d(2))

During FY 2001, the agency reissued guidance to all of the staff regarding the Disability Program at the NRC.

**17. Delegate appropriate authority.** (MD-712, section 7d(3))

The NRC has clearly identified everyone with responsibility for the affirmative employment for people with disabilities program and holds them accountable. This includes the Directors of Human Resources (HR) and Small Business and Civil Rights (SBCR), all managers and supervisors, the DPM, and the Recruitment Team.

**18. Include a line item or other identifiable element in agency management plans, budget, etc.** (MD-712, section 7d(4))

All funds for accommodations come from a central fund that is budgeted each year.

**19. Ongoing system to evaluate program status and achievement.**  
(MD-712, section 7d(5))

The end result ultimately indicates the success or failure of a particular program. In this instance, the NRC is running a successful disability recruitment program. The automated vacancy system captures handicapped data and any EEO complaints are captured in the EEO complaints database.

**20. Collect and report data on selection and non-selection for jobs, promotions, training, awards, development programs, etc. (MD-712, section 7d(6))**

In FY 2001, the NRC went out to its employee population and asked them to update their employee disability status. This resulted in a number of changes to our employee database. The automated vacancy announcement system captures data and allows management to cut the data in a number of ways to allow a thorough analysis of a segment of the population.

**21. Include an element in the performance plan of managers. (MD-712, section 7d(7))**

The agency managers have an EEO sub-element in their performance standards that addresses the equitable treatment of all employees.

**22. Provide training to agency managers and employees regarding the disability program responsibilities. (MD-712, section 7d(8))**

In FY 2002, NRC revised its EEO training for supervisors and managers to include a more comprehensive and up-to-date segment on disabled employees and accommodations in the workplace. NRC has contracted with EEOC to present this training.

**23. Provide leadership, guidance, and resources for an Employees Advisory Committee. (MD-712, section 7d(9))**

The NRC has several EEO committees that interface on an ongoing basis with the Director, SBCR. Committee members are encouraged to contact employee groups and obtain their views on aspects of the agency.

**24. Cooperate with unions. (MD-712, section 7d(10))**

The NRC has a good working relationship with the local union and the DPM is consulted on any proposed changes to the negotiated agreement that may impact the disabled population.

**25. Maintain liaison with outside national and local agencies and organizations concerned with education or rehabilitation and employment of individuals with disabilities. (MD-712, section 7d(11))**

The NRC does not consult with outside groups in regards to its internal policies. The DPM stays abreast of the changes in the field to update management in areas that may have an impact on the disabled population.

## REPORT ON FACILITY ACCESSIBILITY

DESCRIBE YOUR AGENCY'S BARRIER REMOVAL ACTIVITY DURING THE REPORTING YEAR.

A. SUMMARIZE YOUR AGENCY'S BARRIER REMOVAL ACTIVITY.

During FY 2002, there have been two automatic doors installed in the HQ complex. The NRC does not have any other known physical barriers at its facilities that impede access. Removal of Electronic and Information Technology (EIT) barriers under Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act include both technical and acquisition activities. All covered acquisitions include language requiring compliance, and detailed internal standards are under development. Staff and members of the public are provided with case-by-case assistance should they encounter any remaining EIT barriers. The agency just recently, revised our external web page to bring it into compliance with Section 508.

B. IS GSA PROVIDING ASSISTANCE WITH BARRIER REMOVAL?

NOT APPLICABLE       YES  NO; DESCRIBE

C. DESCRIBE ANY DIFFICULTIES THAT HAVE BEEN ENCOUNTERED IN ATTEMPTING TO REMOVE BARRIERS THAT REMAIN IN AGENCY FACILITIES.

Not Applicable

D. DESCRIBE ACTIONS BEING TAKEN TO OVERCOME DIFFICULTIES DESCRIBED IN ITEM "C" ABOVE.

Not Applicable

ALTERNATIVES TO PERSONNEL OR MANAGEMENT POLICIES, PRACTICES, OR PROCEDURES  
WHICH RESTRICT HIRING, PLACEMENT, AND ADVANCEMENT  
OF INDIVIDUALS WITH HANDICAPS

LIST BARRIERS WHICH WERE IDENTIFIED IN PREVIOUS YEARS FOR WHICH ACTIONS WERE TAKEN DURING THE REPORTING YEAR.

BARRIERS	ALTERNATIVES	ACTIONS TAKEN	COMPLETION DATES
Not Applicable			

**OPTIONAL**

**AGENCY INITIATIVES AND NOTEWORTHY ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

In the space below you are invited to describe unique, creative initiatives which your agency has undertaken during this fiscal year and which have proven to be successful in improving employment opportunities for individuals with handicaps. If more space is necessary, additional pages may be appended.