

UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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BRIEFING ON HUMAN CAPITAL AND EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

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TUESDAY,

JUNE 18, 2019

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ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

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The Commission met in the Commissioners' Hearing Room at the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, One White Flint North, 11555 Rockville Pike, at 10:00 a.m., Kristine L. Svinicki, Chairman, presiding.

COMMISSION MEMBERS:

KRISTINE L. SVINICKI, Chairman

JEFF BARAN, Commissioner

ANNIE CAPUTO, Commissioner

DAVID A. WRIGHT, Commissioner

ALSO PRESENT:

ANNETTE VIETTI-COOK, Secretary of the Commission

MARIAN ZOBLER, General Counsel

NRC STAFF:

SUSAN ABRAHAM, Associate Director for Human

Resources Training and Development, Office of
the Chief Human Capital Officer

PAMELA BAKER, Director, Office of Small Business and
Civil Rights

MIRIAM L. COHEN, Chief Human Capital Officer, Office
of the Chief Human Capital Officer

MARGARET DOANE, Executive Director for Operations

JASON SHAY, Associate Director for Human Resources

Operations and Policy, Office of the Chief
Human Capital Officer

P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

(10:03 a.m.)

1
2
3 I would ask the Staff Members who are going to be presenting
4 to us today to please take their seats.

5 And while they're doing that, I will just mention that the
6 Commission convenes this morning for one of our, roughly six months apart, twice
7 a year Commission meetings and updates on significant human capital initiatives
8 and equal employment opportunity programs and various status updates that the
9 Staff provides.

10 So we will hear from only one Panel this morning, which will be
11 the NRC Staff on a number of topics, as noted in the Commission Scheduling Note.
12 After that we will hear, Commission will have question and answer period and then
13 we will hear remarks from the Executive Vice President of the National Treasury
14 Employees Union here at the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

15 So, before we begin, let me just say that this is an exciting day,
16 not just because we're having this meeting, which is always really super
17 interesting, but the Agency-wide JAM, and if you don't know what that is, I consider
18 it kind of like a virtual dialogue between employees at NRC looking at our future,
19 looking at the generation of good ideas and topics and vision for us going forward.

20 So, that will be going on and happening here for three days, so
21 that those of us who are here are not missing the JAM, we will have our
22 opportunities to go back to our desks and participate from there. So that's very
23 exciting.

1 And I would be remiss, I know that she's the type of person who
2 hates being put in the lime light, but today, she already gave me a look, which
3 won't show up on the webcast, but today is Pam Baker's last opportunity, her great
4 pleasure of presenting to the Commission.

5 I'm sure it's one of the highlights of your year, but will be with us
6 longer at NRC, but this is the last time that you will be presenting to the
7 Commission in the kind of capacity that you will do here very shortly.

8 And Pam has a long and impressive career as a federal
9 employee. She's a relative newcomer to NRC, as am I. We both joined the NRC
10 in 2008, and I think I first met you, Pam, down in Region II.

11 That might have been the first time that I had an opportunity to
12 meet you. But I am just very, very grateful for your long federal service. For all
13 the really vast contributions that you have made here.

14 You're one of our, some people, we all have different styles, and
15 some people are just more noisy about what they're doing and some people are
16 very quiet about what they're doing, but you have been just a kind of, one of those
17 people that has quietly been making a tremendous impact and contribution to the
18 NRC, and I've observed that over the course of over ten years now.

19 So, thank you for all of that. And with that, I would offer, if any
20 of my colleagues wanted to make any opening comments?

21 COMMISSIONER BARAN: Well, I would just agree with you,
22 Chairman, that we really are going to miss you, Pam, and you've just been doing
23 a spectacular job here and we appreciate everything.

1 CHAIRMAN SVINICKI: Thank you. Commissioner Caputo.

2 COMMISSIONER CAPUTO: So, we will have only overlapped
3 for a year or so, but my notice of your efforts and support of diversity and our
4 diversity groups has just been very, very impressive. And I have enjoyed
5 attending those with you and appreciate all of your work in support of those efforts.

6 CHAIRMAN SVINICKI: Commissioner Wright.

7 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Last but not least. I also want to
8 congratulate you. But also for my aid upstairs, for Kimberly Lora, who thinks
9 highly of you, and just I want to be sure that I let you know that she's thinking of
10 you too.

11 CHAIRMAN SVINICKI: Thank you very much. Well, with that,
12 we will begin. And leading off the Staff's presentation today will be our executive
13 director for operations, Margie Doane. Please proceed, Margie.

14 MS. DOANE: Okay, good morning, Chairman and
15 Commissioners. I've been here now in this position for nearly a year. Two weeks
16 away.

17 And I've been at many Commission meetings. But of all those
18 meetings, I have to tell you, this is one of our most important.

19 So, today we are going to, we're going to focus on workforce,
20 both now and into the future. Before I continue though, I too would like to
21 recognize Pam Baker, as this is her last time at the Commission meeting, as we
22 have talked about that.

23 And I just want to say that over the course of this year we have

1 just, I've appreciated her support for every issue that has come before us. And
2 she leaves an incredible legacy here. And not just here but in the federal
3 government.

4 So, I want to thank her personally and on behalf of the Staff,
5 Pam. And we're excited to spend the next time that you have here, but at your
6 last Commission meeting. Thank you for everything.

7 Okay, people are our greatest asset. Since NRCs inception we
8 have had the good fortune of attracting and developing some of the brightest and
9 best people to fulfill our mission.

10 This is an achievement that does not happen randomly. It
11 requires a deliberate investment in human capital. As a high performing
12 organization, we also seek to tap into the collective wisdom of our employees to
13 share ideas and uncover new insights, using both traditional and modern feedback
14 mechanisms.

15 We are now, as the Chairman said, in the midst of a JAM, but
16 had the opportunity to give our views into the federal employee viewpoint survey,
17 which now closes on June 27th.

18 And today, as we were discussing, the JAM is an opportunity or
19 all of our workforce to make their opinions known and to share their voice.

20 The JAM is a multi-day collaborative discussion in a virtual
21 environment where everyone can participate and see what's happening as it
22 unfolds. During the JAM, we will be having a conversation about our future. And
23 specifically, how we can be more flexible and resilient while maintaining our focus

1 on our safety and security mission in a dynamic and uncertain future.

2 These are activities to focus our decision making and
3 communication, contribute to the continuous evolution of our Agency and our
4 strong organizational culture.

5 Meanwhile, it is through our human capital programs that we
6 maintain site of the well-being of our employees. During today's meeting, we will
7 focus on the investments we are making to ensure our workforce is positioned to
8 meet the mission demands, both now and in the future.

9 At the table with me on my right is Miriam Cohen, the chief
10 human capital officer who will provide an overview of the state of the NRCs human
11 capital program.

12 The next presenter will be Jason Shay, associate director for HR
13 operations and policy, who will provide an update on hiring strategies.

14 Following will be Susan Abraham, associate director for HR
15 training and development, who will provide an update on learning and
16 development.

17 And finally, Pam Baker, director of the office of small business
18 and civil rights, who will provide an update on NRCs civil rights and diversity and
19 inclusion program.

20 I'll now turn the presentation over to Miriam.

21 MS. COHEN: Good morning, Chairman, Commissioners and
22 fellow NRC Staff. And I too would like to acknowledge Pam for her contributions
23 and service in the federal government over her long career.

1 As you know, the NRC has undergone substantial changes over
2 the past number of years as a result of reduced budgets and workforce to reflect
3 the changing nuclear power industry. But our human capital programs actually
4 have remained agile to ensure that we have the right people, with the right skill
5 sets, at the right time.

6 Today we're going to focus our presentation on the future and
7 how we can take advantage of what I will call the burgeoning optimism in the
8 organization, as we embark on new initiatives related to transformation,
9 organization restructuring and adoption of new technologies.

10 This morning you're going to hear about some innovative human,
11 strategic human capital solutions that is going to improve the way we recruit,
12 develop and train our employees, advance a 21st century workforce and ensure
13 our ability to meet our mission now, and into the future.

14 But before we get there, let me take a few moments to provide a
15 couple of observations about the state of human capital at the NRC. One of the
16 most, on the slide you can see, one of the most significant changes has been the
17 reduction in our onboard numbers, which has decreased roughly 21 percent since
18 2015.

19 Despite these reductions, the Agency has continued to meet its
20 safety and security mission and has achieved a high degree of organizational
21 performance.

22 Next slide. Attrition this year is projected to be slightly higher
23 than six percent. As of March, the NRC had lost approximately 100 staff and is

1 projected to loss another 80 by the end of the fiscal year. We anticipate this trend
2 to be relatively stable or slightly higher over the next few years.

3 Knowing our attrition is a key component of our ability to forecast
4 hiring. And if attrition continues at this level or higher, we will need to adjust our
5 hiring accordingly.

6 We're also monitoring exit survey data with respect to
7 resignations and transfers of staff to determine if there are any developing trends.
8 Thus far in Fiscal Year '19 there seems to be a slight increase in the resignation
9 and transfer of technical staff from the program offices.

10 We have not seen that trend in the corporate offices or in the
11 regions. This is just new information.

12 Next slide. You've seen this slide many years and there's no
13 surprises here. The organization, as it continues to contract, is also continuing to
14 age.

15 As you can see, 26 percent of the Agency's population will be
16 eligible to retire by the end of this fiscal year. Subsequently, retirement eligibility
17 increases by roughly four percent each year thereafter. This is consistent with
18 historical trends over the past several years.

19 But if you go a few years forward, roughly 40 percent of the
20 Agency's current population will be eligible to retire by 2022.

21 Next slide. This situation is further amplified when looking at
22 the age distribution of NRC staff, which is currently out of balance and not
23 unexpected, given the lack of entry level hiring over the past few years.

1 As you can see in this chart, there is a disproportionately small
2 number of staff below the age of 30. Jason will address the implication of this
3 imbalance in our workforce and our plans to reinvigorate our entry level hiring
4 programs.

5 Next slide. If you only look at our current state without
6 understanding our journey, one would think that we've been stagnant and that we
7 have not planned for the future. But that is far from true.

8 Our human capital programs have continually evolved to meet
9 the changing NRC needs, and in fact, the Office of Personnel Management, in a
10 recent meeting, recognized us for our many innovative human capital initiatives.
11 I'll go through a few of them at this time.

12 The first one is strategic workforce planning. We're currently in
13 the final stages of Phase 2 of our enhanced process. Which covers about 80
14 percent of the NRC workforce.

15 The initial observation of this pilot are similar to what we saw, I'm
16 sorry, let me start again.

17 The initial observation of the enhanced process are similar to
18 what we experienced with the pilot last year. And that is that we can use
19 information gained from strategic workforce planning to inform hiring decisions,
20 making sure that we are hiring training and retaining individuals in the areas where
21 we expect to have work in the future.

22 The initial observations of the pilot are that we can use SWP to
23 inform our hiring decisions and where we will have work.

1 Next slide. I'm sorry, not next slide. Go back to competency
2 modeling, my fault. Susan Abraham is going to provide more insight into this area
3 during her presentation, but this is another initiative that's going to be able to tell
4 us where staff can develop in current positions or in new positions in the future.

5 With respect to strengthening leadership development, we
6 should be proud of our efforts to establish a strong and diverse CDP, where in fact
7 several of our candidates have secured rotations with federal agencies to enhance
8 their external awareness and bring back best practices.

9 We have also instituted a branch chief rotational program where
10 aspiring GG-14 leaders are able to compete for temporary promotions and to
11 branch chief positions vacated by those who are in the candidate development
12 program.

13 We also continue to participate in government-wide
14 developmental programs, such as the White House leadership development
15 program and the CXO Fellows Program.

16 Finally, we continue to support the Agency's organizational
17 culture initiatives through the implementation of the leadership model, our Speed
18 of Trust courses. And in Fiscal Year '20, we will be launching our new cultures
19 and values course.

20 In closing, it's an exciting time to be working in the human capital
21 area within the NRC. It is a time of opportunity and a time of investment.

22 I would now like to turn the presentation over to Jason.

23 MR. SHAY: Thank you, Miriam. Good morning, Chairman,

1 good morning Commissions.

2 Thank you for the opportunity to update you on our entry level
3 hiring strategies. Human capital management has evolved at the NRC and it must
4 continue to evolve if the Agency wants to develop a 21st century workforce to
5 accomplish the work of the future.

6 While we appreciate the dedicated and highly experienced staff
7 currently with the Agency, prudence dictates that we plan for their inevitable
8 departure.

9 Consequently, the Agency is pursuing strategies for a
10 demographically balanced workforce, including investing in entry level hires in
11 order to continue to meet our critical regulator and safety mission.

12 Next slide please. The NRC typically defines an entry level
13 hire as someone who is hired into a professional or technical position at the GG-5
14 through GG-11 grade level, with a full promotion level to a GG-13.

15 As in March 2019, the NRC had a total of 14 entry level staff
16 within the Agency. We currently have an additional 12 entry level hires that either
17 in the process of being hired or have onboard subsequently.

18 While the Agency continues to remain proactive in implementing
19 its hiring strategies, the demographics continue to shift as their workforce ages.
20 The next slide shows the percentages and number of staff by age group.

21 As you can see in the chart, only 1.8 percent, or 52 of our staff,
22 go back one please. Go back one slide. Thank you.

23 As you can see in the chart, only 1.8 percent, or 52 of our staff,

1 are below the age of 30. While the number of employees' government-wide,
2 below the age of 30, is now approximately six percent. The lowest it's been in a
3 decade.

4 Compounding this issue, the NRC workforce continues to age
5 and a number of employees at or nearing retirement increases every year. As
6 indicated in the chart, the number of staff under the age of 30 is severely out of
7 proportion with the rest of the age groups.

8 In addition, the number of staff above the age of 50 represents
9 56 percent of the NRC's population. The next slide further exhibits the age groups
10 by functional area.

11 Next slide. The chart on this slide represents age groups by
12 functional area. As the chart indicates, staff under the age of 30 represent a very
13 small percentage of the Agency's population. Most significantly in corporate
14 support offices.

15 In addition, staff under the age of 40 represent 24 percent of the
16 technical offices and 16 percent of the corporate office respectively. As compared
17 to 45 percent of the legal staff.

18 While these imbalances certainly present some unique
19 challenges for the Agency, we're embarking on new ways of planning for and
20 investing in a more balanced 21st century workforce.

21 Next slide please. The Agency's current state of human capital
22 is a result of activities implemented to strategically manage our workforce during a
23 period of right-sizing and declining budgets.

1 While these actions were necessary and have helped us
2 restructure our workforce, they also resulted in a significant number of reduction in
3 the pipeline of entry level hires.

4 Further impacting the pipeline, the nuclear safety professional
5 development program was suspended in FY 2016, with the last participant
6 graduating from the program in FY 2017.

7 In addition, and as of late, hiring managers tend to prefer mid-
8 career level hires and they require less training, in some cases have industry
9 experience and thus are perceived as being immediately more productive upon
10 hiring.

11 Lastly, as Miriam touched upon in her remarks, attrition for the
12 Agency continues to hover around six percent. The next slide shows the attrition
13 by age group for FY 2018 and FY 2019 year to date.

14 Next slide. As depicted in FY 2018, the number of staff under
15 the age of 30 declined by roughly 12 percent or by ten staff. Second only to staff
16 60 and over, which declined by roughly 14 percent.

17 Of the ten individuals under the age of 30 who are either
18 resigned or transferred to another Agency, six were technical staff, two were
19 corporate support staff and two were administrative assistants.

20 When research was conducted as to why they way, via exit
21 survey data, the two items referenced the most were higher pay and career
22 advancements.

23 Next slide please. Federal hiring will likely be challenging over

1 the next couple of years as low unemployment, shortages of highly skilled talent
2 and longer times to hire put pressure on agencies to hire, locate and retain highly
3 qualified personnel.

4 Additionally, the new workforce has certain expectations in the
5 workplace. For example, while the Generation Z workforce desires high tech
6 solutions, they also desire more face-to-face communications. Especially when it
7 comes to supportive leadership and building relationships among co-workers.

8 The NRC must invest in the softer skills of leadership to ensure
9 we meet the expectations of our future workforce.

10 Additionally, work-life balance is critically important to both the
11 current and new workforce. Supporting telework, flexible work schedules and
12 promoting health and wellness will go a long way towards the NRC remaining
13 competitive as a desirable place to work.

14 It should come as no surprise that the new workforce also values
15 high tech solutions. Which includes the how they learn and develop.

16 For example, Millennials and Generation Z's approach to
17 problem solving and knowledge sharing is quite different than that of previous
18 generations. They want agile, accessible, instant and collaborative training
19 development tools.

20 My colleague, Susan Abraham, will later be discussing a
21 Wikipege concept that should help the NRC expand its approaches to learning and
22 development.

23 And lastly, and critically important, is a culture of diversity and

1 inclusion. In general, today's workforce values both diversity and inclusion as
2 essential elements that drives performance, enhances innovation and are
3 imperative to recruitment and retention.

4 Initiatives like the diversity dialogue project and participation in
5 equal employment opportunity advisory committees, cultivate and promote the
6 benefits of diverse cultures, demographics, education and experiences, that will
7 help to ensure the NRC is agile and transformative and at the forefront of regulatory
8 change.

9 Next slide please. The temporary summer student program is
10 used by the Agency to hire college students with various academic disciplines for
11 employments lasting up to 89 days.

12 These students may be converted into the cooperative education
13 program and ultimately appointed non-competitively to a permanent position within
14 the NRC. In FY 2019, offices requested 75 students. However, we expect to
15 only onboard 34 this summer.

16 While we've never had a problem recruiting summer hires in the
17 past, recruitment is starting earlier in academic years at colleges and universities.
18 Resulting in most students selecting internships by December.

19 Moving forward, we plan to post our vacancy announcements
20 slightly early in the academic year to allow hiring managers to make selections as
21 quickly as possible. Preferably before mid-November.

22 This strategy aligns with our recruitment schedule and should
23 help the NRC to be more competitive when hiring the best and brightest students.

1 In addition, the NRCs multi-faceted integrated university program offers funding
2 for scholarships, fellowships and faculty development grants in nuclear science,
3 engineering and related trades to colleges and universities.

4 The NRC has the authority to non-competitively hire students
5 who receive scholarships and fellowships through the IUP. However, since 2007,
6 only 35 grants recipients were permanently hired by the NRC out of approximately
7 2,300 fellowships and scholarships awarded.

8 To increase the number of grant recipients hired by the Agency,
9 the Office of the Chief Human Capital officer, in partnership with the Nuclear
10 Regulatory Research, and the Office of Small Business and Civil Rights, plan to
11 more proactively engage in direct outreach with grant recipients to promote the
12 NRC as an employer of choice.

13 We also anticipate university champions playing a more active
14 role in direct outreach. University champions form alliances with faculty and staff
15 and ensure student awareness of employment opportunities at the NRC.

16 This academic link helps to create a pipeline of students trained
17 in areas that support the Agency short and long-term goals.

18 Next slide please. Work has begun on overhauling the current
19 NRC development program. We focus on increasing agility while allowing the
20 program to training the characteristics desired by the new workforce.

21 Five members of our SES candidate development program have
22 teamed up to develop a modernized developmental program called the Nuclear
23 Regulatory Apprenticeship Network.

1 As currently outlined, the new apprenticeship network will
2 consist of two phases with the first focused on our regulatory and technical
3 fundamentals. The second and most significant phase will focus on
4 apprenticeships to develop skills with a goal of having new hires perform real work
5 early in their career.

6 This concept is still in development and is in the process of being
7 socialized with staff and senior Agency leadership. But our intentions to have the
8 new program finalized in time for the 2020 recruitment season, which starts in
9 August.

10 Correspondingly, the NRCs current marketing campaign is
11 roughly five years old. And as result, we are currently developing the next
12 generation of marketing campaigns and recruitment materials.

13 Competition to attract highly qualified candidates is fierce. And
14 standing out in a crowded marketplace is crucial if we're going to apply to the best
15 and brightest.

16 However, a recent focus group session, conducted by our
17 marketing contractors resulted in negative reaction to the IDF federal employment.
18 Sixty-seven percent of the participants felt strongly that federal employment was a
19 mistake, insecure, unreliable and not worth their consideration.

20 Our solution is to implement an integrated communications and
21 marketing strategy that promotes the Agency strong employer brand. Such a
22 strategy effectively communicates that employees can expect from the NRC as an
23 employer of choice.

1 Lastly, and as plants continue to close prematurely, we see this
2 as a recruitment opportunity to hire impacted employees. Both at the entry and
3 mid-career levels who have industry experience as a potential win-win for both
4 entities.

5 Next slide please. College debt continues to be one of the
6 biggest concerns for the current workforce.

7 Americans currently own an estimated \$1.5 trillion in student
8 loans. So it's no wonder financial stress caused by student loan debt has
9 skyrocketed over the past decade.

10 Expanding the use of the NRC student loan repayment program
11 may help alleviate some of the stress. Which could help attract new applicants,
12 but also retain existing employees who are considering other employment
13 opportunities.

14 Traditionally, the NRC has only used student loan repayments
15 as a retention tool. However, OCHCO is currently exploring the option to use the
16 program as a recruitment tool.

17 The NRC's policy allows for use of student loan repayments to
18 facilitate recruitment and retention of highly or uniquely qualified employees.
19 Under the program, an employee agrees to a specified period of employment with
20 the Agency of not less than three years and return for each payment toward a
21 qualifying student loan previously taken out by the employee.

22 By using this program as a recruitment tool, we are essentially
23 guaranteeing a certain return on investment in the new employee.

1 Another way to alleviate stress, financial or otherwise, is through
2 participation and work-life programs. Work-life programs can help employees
3 better harmonize their work and personal lives, which may yield a higher
4 performance, job satisfaction and a commitment to stay with their current
5 employer.

6 The NRC has several work-life programs that we need to
7 continue to highlight when recruiting new employees. Including telework, flexible
8 work schedules, a health fitness center, employee assistance program and onsite
9 childcare.

10 Next slide please. The enhanced strategic workforce planning
11 process, mentioned earlier by Miriam, will help the Agency identify what positions
12 we will need in the future based on the type and amount of work projected through
13 the workflow forecast.

14 As a result, we can better target our entry level hiring and training
15 programs to focus on those areas. This will help to ensure that new hires we bring
16 onboard today will be ready to perform at the skill levels we need, as our more
17 experience staff retire or transfer to other mission critical positions.

18 In addition, our experience experts will be relied upon to pass
19 along our knowledge and insights through mentorship before departing.
20 However, challenges remain as budgets and workload are projected to continue
21 to decline over the next few years.

22 Despite a contracting environment, our human capital strategies
23 must consider the importance of a demographically balanced workforce as we

1 strive to hire the best and most qualified staff.

2 If the NRC is going to develop a 21st century workforce to
3 accomplish the work of the future, it must have a health mix of age, race, gender,
4 education experiences if it wants to improve creativity, increase employment
5 engagement, reduce turnover and increase overall organizational performance.

6 That concludes my presentation. I will now turn the
7 presentation over to Susan Abraham, who will be providing an update on learning
8 and development.

9 MS. ABRAHAM: Thank you, Jason. Good morning, Chairman
10 Svinicki and Commissioners.

11 This is my first briefing as the chief learning officer, and it's my
12 pleasure to be here today to present an update on learning and development.

13 The NRC has a proud tradition of investing in our people by
14 providing a strong training program. Our EDOs, including Margie and you, the
15 Commission, ensure that the same people focus and investment on training
16 continues today. Especially in an environment of decreasing budgets and
17 resources.

18 Our technical training, external training, leadership and
19 professional development programs continued to be resourced to provide a high-
20 quality training program.

21 Next slide please. Go one before that please. Thank you.

22 The NRC's workforce must have the ability to meet the current
23 mission, be prepared for the future and have the agility to keep up with an evolving

1 workload. Flexibility is needed to meet these overall needs for a workforce
2 composed of individual employees. Each with their talents, learning preferences,
3 work demands and the desire to support, capably support the mission.

4 This presentation focuses on four current workforce
5 investments. Together, the initiatives are modernizing learning and development
6 at the NRC.

7 I will begin with the learning transformation initiative. Next slide
8 please.

9 The learning transformation initiative, LTI, continues to change
10 the delivery of training from the traditional classroom to online virtual or a blended
11 solution. LTI addresses the workforce demands for modernization.

12 With changes in modality, training is more on demand, self-
13 paced, and when appropriate, prerequisite work is assigned. There is more
14 autonomy. Employees are better able to balance their training needs and
15 requirements against their priority, schedules and workload.

16 LTI saves some classroom training time. The blended solution
17 for health physics fundamentals is a particularly good example. It's a three week
18 classroom course that includes one week of lab time before conversion.

19 With a blended solution, it now takes approximately 20 hours of
20 online training with one week in the lab.

21 LTI also offers significant savings by limiting time away from the
22 job and decreases travel costs.

23 Our team has worked to master the technology and develop and

1 efficient process for course conversions to blended solutions. This experience led
2 us to the insight that technology is not only changing how the students learn, but
3 also changing how the instructors work and teach.

4 Effective instruction is equally important in a blended learning
5 environment. Our instructors will need to master the new technology and learn to
6 be effective with remote learners, conduct virtual training that is still instructor led,
7 gauge learn and participation, etcetera.

8 Essentially, they need the skills to facilitate in a blended learning
9 environment. We built a facilitating blended learning course for our instructors
10 and just piloted it.

11 Further conversions, future conversions will integrate the skills
12 and knowledges from the pilot. This was our first insight.

13 The second insight involves a mindset change. We're shifting
14 out of the traditional training mode where knowledge is pushed to the employee.

15 With blended learning, employees will have the opportunity to
16 take more ownership of their training. With on demand and self-directed learning,
17 it is up to the employee to complete the courses.

18 This is a change for the employee who has been in the
19 workforce, particularly NRC. For those entering the workforce, however, there's
20 already a familiarity with the use of technology for the many blended ways of
21 learning.

22 In summary, as we continue with LTI modernization, we will be
23 better able to provide learning so that each learner can best consume it according

1 to their learning styles and deliver learning when and where the employee needs
2 it.

3 Next slide. NRC's competency models are specific to a job
4 position and are a collection of knowledge, skills and behaviors that describe an
5 employee's ability to perform the job successfully. Each model is built in
6 collaboration with subject matter experts in the job.

7 Competency models have been built for eight offices. The four
8 regions, NRR, NRO, NMSS and NSIR, that comprise approximately 70 percent of
9 the NRC workforce.

10 Implementation has begun with the rollout of the competency
11 assessment tool to employees and their supervisors. The models match the
12 mission critical core positions that were identified under the strategic workforce
13 planning.

14 Later this summer, a determination will be made on the models
15 to be built for the remaining positions.

16 We're also keeping abreast of competency model development
17 efforts at the federal level. From OPM, the CFO, CIO and acquisition councils,
18 and this national initiative for cybersecurity education, to leverage potential use of
19 their models.

20 The models are a tool to improve the job skills of today's
21 workforce. The employees armed with information from the assessment and can
22 plot their learning path to bridge a skill gap or broaden a skill in their current job.

23 For career mobility, employees will be able to assess themselves

1 against pertinent models related to their interests in rotations, details and future
2 positions.

3 The supervisor is similarly armed with information from the
4 assessment to coach, track and develop their team. Supervisors will more easily
5 assess the employee skills and determine how to bridge any skill gaps.

6 Ownership of talent development resides with the individual
7 employees and his or her supervisor. The assessments enable further
8 communication opportunities between the two and is an example of the face-to-
9 face, high touch expectation mentioned by Jason, that the next generation
10 workforce desires.

11 In the future, senior managers will be able to use the same
12 assessment information to understand the workforce supply and demand and will
13 shape the competencies for evolving mission requirements and the future
14 workforce.

15 Senior managers will see trends, training gaps and strengths
16 and forecast training needs when the workload shifts to supposed SWP.

17 The NRC culture values formal training. However, learning can
18 be provided through other effective means, such as mentoring. Ideally, senior
19 staff, or highly skilled staff with expertise and experience, can provide specific task-
20 based mentoring to an employee in need of developing a competency.

21 This mentoring mindset focuses on helping the employee to
22 perform successfully in a job role. Setting the mentoring expectation for staff is a
23 major change and challenge for our supervisors and leadership.

1 In September, OCHCO plans to initiate a pilot of a skill-based
2 mentoring program. In 2020, OCHCO will begin building a competency-based
3 training program, starting with the resident inspector, manual Chapter 1245
4 qualification program.

5 With model maturity and usage of the competency models, the
6 assessment data will be used to drive course content and offerings resulting in a
7 more efficient use of training and development resources. This competency-
8 based training program will meet the demand of addressing actual job performance
9 needs and future needs when the workload shifts.

10 In summary, the modernization that comes with the competency-
11 based training program will help drive productivity and efficiency. At the same
12 time, the workforce will be more empowered, have self-directed career mobility
13 and have more valuable learning.

14 Next slide please. In 2018, OCHCO strategically undertook the
15 replacement of the learning management system, iLearn, as an opportunity to
16 stretch our tool sets and capabilities for learning and development, by leveraging
17 new technology.

18 With support from the Office of Administration and Office of the
19 Chief Information Officer, OCHCO required a new solution in January of this year.
20 The new talent management system, TMS, provided through an interagency
21 agreement with OPM, creates an integrated solution for learning management and
22 the competency models and tools.

23 Beyond that, TMS will introduce additional capabilities with a

1 new performance appraisal software system that automates the paper process. It
2 will automate tracking of qualification programs, which is currently a manual
3 process. And it will house individual development plans.

4 In the future, the learning courses and content will also be
5 accessible on mobile devices. A major benefit for the next generation workforce
6 that is attached to their technology.

7 Implementation will be faced with the first rollout of the learning
8 management system targeted for this summer. The new performance appraisal
9 automation is planned for October, and the remaining capabilities are planned for
10 2020.

11 With all these capabilities, the new talent management system
12 will result in a more efficient and cost-effective solution.

13 Next slide please. Formal training provides one channel for
14 learning. From personal experience, understanding how people learn in real life
15 and the experience of the learning and development industry, we know that there
16 are other valuable methods of learning.

17 Learning from YouTube with succinct and bite sized how to
18 tutorials, or the Wikipedia, with embedded links for those who have a deep interest
19 in the specific topic are examples of other channels of learning.

20 NRC is building a collaborative and informal learning channel
21 that also supports knowledge management. Under the auspices of the KM
22 Steering Committee, with Steve West as our current champion, three initiatives
23 were identified to capture critical knowledge and make information and learning

1 more accessible.

2 First, during Knowledge November, a new Wiki tool will be rolled
3 out called Nuclepedia. We're excited about the prospect of providing a
4 collaborative platform for learning and knowledge.

5 In our research, we learned that agencies like NASA started a
6 grassroots effort to collect yearly training information. Eight years later, there are
7 40,000 pages on their Wiki tool called EVA. It is one of 23 Wiki tools built solely
8 by interested NASA employees to provide valuable information that is easily
9 accessible.

10 It's a model that we're using today to develop our own Wiki tool.
11 Second, a collaborative information collection effort has begun with the community
12 at large, the offices.

13 The knowledge management champions and the offices have
14 been asked to provide information on their critical knowledge topics and topics of
15 interest to their staff.

16 Third, senior level staff are developing a set of information on
17 the NRC's significant events. The information will be captured as Wiki entries in
18 our Nuclepedia.

19 After this initial seeding of information in the Wiki, we want to see
20 use and adopt of the tool. Like NASA, there may be slow growth in the initial
21 years. The efforts of the KM champions, the SLs and interested staff, will be
22 important.

23 I will pause now for a video on the NRC's Nuclepedia.

1 (Video playback started.)

2 PARTICIPANT: Investing in the future is focusing on one of the
3 agencies most valuable assets, organizational knowledge. And the best way to
4 protect and grow this asset is to have a comprehensive and engaging knowledge
5 management system that gives all staff members access to information when and
6 where they need it, from reliable experts and in the fastest way possible.

7 While also eliminating barriers such as geography, information
8 silos and outdated information. So, what strategy can be innovative, deliver quick
9 results and be user friendly?

10 What can provide the Agency with a single source of
11 information? What can be accessible anywhere you need it and be easy to
12 contribute without barriers?

13 The NRC assembled a team to develop a solution and were
14 inspired by the experience and success of several govern Wiki-based platforms.

15 All their research and insights went into one clear solution.
16 Introducing, Nuclepedia, the NRC's Wiki.

17 Nuclepedia is a new online system for collaborative data sharing.
18 It facilitates increased communication and collaboration, regardless of
19 geographical location.

20 Nuclepedia is also a comprehensive database designed to help
21 all NRC staff with their day-to-day activities. So, let's take a look into the future to
22 see Nuclepedia in action.

23 The commercial grade dedication page was previously

1 developed through the critical knowledge KM initiative. In order to facilitate the
2 new DBAI program inspection, by including recent operating experience, NRR
3 enhanced the page by creating a focus section on generic communications.

4 The Office of Research, in coordination with NRR, provided the
5 training to the inspectors. So they logged into Nuclepedia and added those
6 presentations to the database.

7 Once the inspections were completed, the inspectors logged into
8 Nuclepedia and documented the results in a condensed tabulated format.
9 Experts in the field of commercial dedication, within the Office of New Reactors,
10 and construction, were invited to the newly established panels.

11 The results of those panels were included in Nuclepedia. As a
12 result of the Agency-wide collaboration on this critical knowledge topic, a
13 comprehensive page is now available to gather information to make informed
14 decisions.

15 When will this future start, sooner than you think. Nuclepedia
16 launches this fall during our annual November celebration. Nuclepedia, focusing
17 organizational knowledge, investing in the future.

18 (Video playback stopped.)

19 MS. ABRAHAM: That concludes my presentation. I will now
20 turn it over to Pam Baker.

21 MS. BAKER: Thank you, Susan. Good morning, Chairman
22 Svinicki, Commissioners Baran, Caputo, and Wright. And NRC Staff.

23 I'm delighted to be providing my final commission briefing on the

1 status of NRC's EEO program and its diversity inclusion efforts. Before jumping
2 into the content, I want to draw attention to the continued excellence of our Small
3 Business Program and the outstanding work of Tony Briggs, Tira Patterson, and
4 Diane Saint.

5 The commitment of this group is amazing and continues to yield
6 great results as they develop strategic acquisition solutions to meet Agency needs
7 and ease burden on contracting staff, all the while upholding our small business
8 goals.

9 Two weeks ago, we held our second regional Small Business
10 Outreach and Matchmaking event in partnership with Region II in Atlanta. Over
11 350 small businesses registered and heard about opportunities to grow their
12 businesses.

13 We anticipate similar success from the event as last year, where
14 contacts made then fueled NRC's five out of five, achieving five out of five of its
15 small business goals for FY 2018.

16 Getting back to human capital. The investment we are making
17 in reskilling our workforce, building competency and reconstituting a viable
18 pipeline, rests on our ability to release the talent we develop and acquire.

19 An inclusive and empowering workplace enables employees to
20 stay focused on their contributions to the Agency's mission, provide innovative
21 ideas and transform the way we do business.

22 Next slide. Slide behind. Thank you. Integration occurs
23 when there is awareness of both individual and organizational biases and

1 deliberate actions are taken to remove exclusionary barriers.

2 The efforts of our EEO community, which includes our advisory
3 committees, resource and infinity groups, continues to reinforce inclusion. As we
4 adopt the predict behaviors of the leadership model, the Passport Series,
5 collaboratively sponsored by these groups, has been highly effective in
6 demonstrating the workplace application of behaviors such as participative
7 decision making and risk tolerance.

8 Our Diversity Management Advisory Council and DIALOGUE
9 Ambassadors have spread the word and encourage involvement in this week's
10 futures JAM.

11 As Jason already mentioned, our entry level hiring strategy
12 includes the recruitment targeting of those recipients over our continuing integrated
13 university program and the concluding minority serving institution grant program in
14 order to facilitate speeder efforts for employment. Offers for employment.

15 True inclusion comes when it is part of how we work. Our EEO
16 communities' recent efforts have successfully linked special emphasis program
17 events to mission operations.

18 Our Women's history month luncheon was held during the RIC
19 and featured the president and CEO of the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission.

20 In April, our Native American Advisory Committee partnered with
21 the NMSS Tribal Liaison Team in hosting a viewing and discussion of the film, with
22 the filmmaker of Dawnland, a documentary of stolen children and the first truth and
23 reconciliation commission for Native Americans.

1 And just last week, in celebration of Pride month, we held safe
2 spaces training on insights for being a LGBTQ+ ally.

3 As these collaborations continue to fuel the NRC's progress in
4 becoming more inclusive, we still experience misunderstandings that can create
5 discord in the workplace.

6 Next slide. As NRC transforms and prepares for the future by
7 promoting innovative change, our success is highly dependent upon the
8 environment that spawns trust and is inclusive.

9 As we increase our awareness of our differences, we need to
10 recognize that our unfamiliarity with each other can, at times, distract us from our
11 mission.

12 By giving folks outlet to resolve issues early, conflicts don't
13 fester. Which in turn aids in sustaining positive work relationships.

14 Our dialogue, diversity and inclusion awareness, leading
15 organizational growth, understanding an engagement, Ambassadors are our front
16 line. The 200 staff and managers who have completed the program and work
17 throughout headquarters and in Region III, seek and our sought by their colleagues
18 in conversations that help to vent tensions.

19 EEO counselors serve as our second line. These employees
20 are trained and highly committed in helping disagreeing parties achieve better
21 understanding of each other.

22 Recognizing the long tenure of the current counselor cadre,
23 SBCR is in the process of revamping the program by soliciting new members and

1 focusing on training during our EEO conference to be held in August.

2 We employ additional resources with our EEO and anti-
3 harassment trainers and speed of trust facilitators. These groups provide skills
4 training and information to work across differences collegially and respectfully.

5 Through the SBCR civil rights program, we employ mediators to
6 assist parties in finding common ground to resolve differences. The recent
7 executive order precluding the removal of permanent records from personnel files,
8 as terms of settlement agreements, has required greater creativity in resolving
9 complaints.

10 Changes to our process have also increased activity and
11 effectiveness of our alternative dispute resolution program, ADR.

12 Next slide. Since the 2017 equal employment opportunity
13 commission technical assistant visit, we have been making significant changes to
14 our ADR program to meet the EEOCs objective of resolving complaints proactively
15 by encouraging the use of ADR.

16 One major change was communicating the expectations for
17 supervisors and manager participation. In our EEO refresher training for
18 supervisors, we explained that if ADR is requested by a complainant and there are
19 no other conflicts, managers are required to participate.

20 We also revised our EEO counselor checklist to better clarify that
21 ADR is available and offered.

22 This chart compares ADR activity between FY 2018 and FY
23 2019 to date. As you can see, our efforts to clarify and promote the program have

1 already resulted in a significant increase in activity and subsequent settlements.

2 In fact, for this fiscal year, we have already exceeded the
3 EEOC's goal of 50 percent participation.

4 With additional communications and program enhancements,
5 including a yellow announcement and a revised ADR manual, we will keep
6 monitoring the program for effectiveness via feedback. Unfortunately, however,
7 ADR remediation does not resolve every complaint.

8 Next slide. As you view this familiar chart from year-to-year, I
9 think it's important to point out what it is exactly depicted here.

10 In our process, complaints must first go through the informal
11 stage. This is the stage where our counselors strive to resolve the issues and we
12 encourage mediation, including ADR.

13 If there is no resolution, the complainant can choose to pursue a
14 formal complaint. Thus, these numbers reflect the influx of complaints into our
15 process rather than how many complaints we are currently working.

16 An important to thing to understand is, informal complaints may
17 transition to formal complaints based on the filing time frame requirements. Some
18 of the 13 informal complaints received thus far this year are also counted in part
19 with the ten formal complaints listed.

20 Also included in that ten are FY 2018 informal complaints that
21 were filed as formal complaints in 2019.

22 In addition to monitoring the intake of complaints, we also exam
23 the nature of the complaints when assessing our programs effectiveness.

1 Next slide please. In examining complaint activity more closely,
2 NRC's overall activity remains low in comparison with other federal agencies of
3 similar size.

4 However, as our staffing levels have decreased through the
5 years, complaint activity has not trended in the same proportion. This is to be
6 expected as our organization goes through some major changes.

7 The top three bases for complaints, age, gender and retaliation,
8 have remained the same through the past few years. We are seeing an
9 increasing trend in race-based complaints, while complaints alleging discrimination
10 based on a disability are declining.

11 The top three issues of complaints are also consistent with
12 previous years and reflective of the impact of organizational changes as offices
13 and regions reduce staffing levels, reorganize and retool skills.

14 In going through these changes, it is important to be transparent,
15 fair, respectful and supportive, so that employees do not perceive or realize
16 inequity in assuming new duties or in how their performance is appraised.

17 The extent to which we collectively practice and demonstrate
18 these traits in the workplace determines the inclusiveness of our organization.

19 Next slide. The above model depicts the evolution of an
20 inclusion as cultural competency develops. In emphasizing the importance of
21 being proactive and resolving misunderstandings and conflicts, I find this helpful in
22 understanding both the progress the NRC has made along with identifying where
23 more work is required.

1 Although my earlier examples highlight our EEO's communities'
2 efforts to integrate with mission work and organizational initiatives, EEO complaint
3 activity indicates that pockets in the NRC remain along the left side of this
4 continuum.

5 It is at the ambivalent stage where more work is needed to
6 encourage attitude changes and knowledge in order to progress to the stages on
7 the right side of the slide.

8 In preparing for the futures JAM this week, the team pointed to
9 how our stories create our culture. During an executive leadership seminar earlier
10 this month on influence, the facilitator explained that individuals rarely change just
11 by being told. Rather, they are more influenced vicariously through the
12 experience of others, and most influenced by direct experience.

13 Sharing our stories enables others to see things from different
14 perspectives and encourage new experiences for ourselves. The leadership
15 model cites behaviors to expand our capacity for diversity of thought, which
16 enables us to adjust and reconcile individual beliefs as we seek greater knowledge
17 and reassess risk.

18 Where we find those who are actively inclusive and demonstrate
19 leadership at all levels, we need to recognize and showcase their actions for others
20 to see and model.

21 For example, instead of passively forwarding your branch chief
22 an email about your advisory committee's event, personally invite them to attend
23 with you. In continuing with dialogue cohorts, our Ambassadors can share their

1 own personal experience in the program to solicit new membership. Or new
2 participants in the program.

3 As the NRC embarks on its journey towards the future by
4 transforming how we accomplish our mission through innovation, we must also be
5 deliberate in our actions to be inclusive.

6 Next slide please. Changing tone. While there's only been
7 three years since I first came onboard as the SBCR director, it has been quite a
8 ride, as depicted here in this metaphorical cartoon.

9 I want to first extend my true appreciation to the NRC's
10 leadership in taking a risk and affording me the opportunity to serve this Agency in
11 the role of the SBCR director. I've experienced both highs and lows, unexpected
12 twist and turns but survived it all.

13 I will soon exit my last position after more than 38 years in federal
14 service with an afterglow of exhilaration from the experience, just like the end of a
15 coaster ride.

16 I came to this position with a personal intent to have a seat at
17 the table, be influential and most, mostly importantly, make a difference. I never
18 lost my focus to work collaboratively while also having the courage to be that one
19 lone or first voice offering a different perspective.

20 Having recently placed my parent's house on the market the
21 phrase, good bones, comes to mind when I reflect on the changes that I've seen,
22 help facilitate, or actually steered into happening. I was fortunate to build upon a
23 strong foundation of value driven principles that permeate throughout this Agency.

1 In building upon these good bones, I strive to lead the SBCR
2 office and our EEO community through several unexpected challenges while
3 celebrating outstanding success.

4 Things I am most thankful for and proud to be a part of include,
5 the powerful success of DIALOGUE and its impact on individuals in the workplace.
6 I ask you to continue to hone empathy for each other.

7 I'm proud of the Agency achieving superior excellence in its
8 small business program through its partnering and long-range mission. Vision.

9 The empowerment, energy, ingenuity, collaboration of the
10 advisory committees, affinity, and resource groups has been amazing. It has
11 been an honor to attend their inspirational and highly relevant programs.

12 These committed employees redefined our special emphasis
13 program, beyond just cultural awareness and serve as our innovators and opinion
14 leaders. Keep listening to what they have to tell you.

15 I'm encouraged and believe the changes made to have greater
16 representation in the SES is so important in how we shape the Agency's future,
17 and I hope it continues to cascade to our development of our feeder group into
18 leadership.

19 There's so many smiles, tears, laughs and exchanges I have had
20 with so many that my briefing time does not permit me to name them all. So I'll
21 just thanks again for a great ride.

22 I'll now turn things over, back to Margie Doane, our executive
23 director. Thank you.

1 MS. DOANE: Thanks, Pam. So, take a second here, that was
2 beautiful.

3 The Staff today provided you with an overview of our plans to
4 attract and retain topnotch workforce that will enable us to sustain our Agency now
5 and into the future.

6 We believe that through the reinvigoration of our entry level
7 hiring programs, our innovative learning approaches and by using modern
8 development tools, we can attract new professionals into the NRC.

9 Throughout our transformation, we will continue a strong focus
10 on equal employment opportunity and diversity and inclusion. To ensure that our
11 workforce is valued and fully engaged.

12 This concludes our presentation and we welcome your
13 questions.

14 CHAIRMAN SVINICKI: Thank you very much, Margie, and to
15 all of you who presented. And to, Pam, I agree, that was very thoughtful and
16 moving. Thank you very much for that.

17 I hope there weren't a whole lot of tears. I'm like, that only got
18 me a couple of -- But we all have our challenging days here, so I appreciate you
19 being so candid about that.

20 And I know a lot of folks helped you all develop the
21 presentations, and they help you do all the work that you talked about today, so I
22 want to offer my thanks to all of them as well. Some of whom are probably off
23 Jamming and some who are here in the room. So thank you for the work that you

1 do.

2 It's easy to figure out the order of recognition today because I go
3 first. So, let me dive right in.

4 I do want to note, because Pam mentioned it, and sometimes we
5 do specifically present on the Small Business Program, here we didn't, wasn't one
6 of the topics today, but I just want to continue to call out the outstanding exceptional
7 performance of the NRC in that program, which is recognized throughout the
8 government. So thank you, Pam, for highlighting that, although it wasn't one of
9 our briefing topics today.

10 I'm going to turn to kind of this Slide 7. I'm sure my colleagues
11 probably also have a strong interest in kind of the demographic spread of the
12 Agency.

13 Miriam, you talked about this, Jason built on it a bit. And Susan
14 also talked about kind of what are the emphasis of the, perhaps rising generation
15 of professionals and what's most meaningful to them in terms of their retention and
16 the gratification they derive from their work and their career.

17 So, let me just start with the numbers though. We're looking at
18 it and, again, very noteworthy is the small slice of under 30 employees, which is, I
19 think, now every 1.8 percent. Every time I ask about it, it was like 2, then it was
20 1.9, 1.8.

21 I guess when the numbers are small it just takes a very small
22 change in order to drive the percentage down again.

23 But we make a presumption. I think, Miriam, you said that

1 attrition is at about six percent overall and our forecasts are that it will be
2 consistent. Can you talk a little bit about, are we just saying that's the recent trend
3 so we're pushing that into the forecast or is there something in HR space that you
4 based that on?

5 MS. COHEN: So, I'll start and then Jason can correct me,
6 which I'm sure he will. So, we tried to look at attrition in non-early out buyout years
7 to see what the trends are.

8 And so, clearly as the workforce ages, the retirement eligibility
9 increases and therefore the average age increases. But I think we're looking
10 generally at consistency in terms of attrition over the years.

11 So I think attrition is a little bit higher. I think we forecasted
12 around six percent, and I think it's a little bit higher.

13 We've looked at how long people stay after they're eligible,
14 because people look at the eligibility date and they get alarmed, oh my gosh,
15 everyone can leave. But people generally stay here maybe up to five years after
16 their retirement eligibility.

17 And in fact, later on we're going to be talking with senior
18 management in the Agency about how we can look at actual attrition in the offices
19 to see how that impacts the Agency in terms of where you can actually hire.
20 Because not every office has the same attrition, right?

21 So we know that the lawyers, there tends to be more attrition in
22 OGC. Other offices may be different.

23 And so, I think when you're looking to project attrition, it's not a

1 one size fits all. So we're trying to actually employee more use of data analytics
2 to fine tune where attrition may be in different parts of the Agency. Jason, I'll let
3 you --

4 CHAIRMAN SVINICKI: And if I can jump in there, because
5 you've keyed on the exact kind of train of dominos that I was thinking about here
6 in my questions. Because the other chunk, if you add kind of 50 to 59 and over
7 60, you've got over 50 percent of the NRC employees.

8 I know that in senior leadership positions, leaders here are
9 requested to give a somewhat high-fidelity forecast. Not on their eligibility for
10 retirement but what is their actual life planning and what are they thinking about.

11 But for the broader NRC employee, how would you characterize
12 our understanding of the general breakdown of how long after eligibility people
13 stay?

14 You mentioned five years but then you're indicating it varies kind
15 of by whatever subject matter, if they're technical people we might have a different
16 number. So, could you build on that?

17 You were already heading that direction but I'm kind of getting
18 to, if that's 50 percent of our employees, if we had a better forecasting tool of when
19 they might leave, that would be something that you could feedback into the hiring
20 and the development of any skills gaps.

21 MR. SHAY: Yes. So, we're currently in development of a new
22 model that takes attrition back five years, per office, per pay period, to kind of help
23 us forecast what attrition would look like in the future.

1 And so, that provides good insights into what we're forecasting.
2 We're also taking look at the impacts of budget reductions as a model. Because
3 really, what the two variable show is it gives us some insights in how we can hire
4 per office.

5 And to your point, it's generally roughly five years is about the
6 average across the organization. There are pockets individually within the
7 organization, within each individual offices. But we try to highlight the five years
8 as a mechanism that we can measure against.

9 But that model is something that is going to help us, I think,
10 tremendously in the future in terms of where, informing offices of where they can
11 hire, informing the organization holistically, how many we can hire per
12 organization. And we can tweak the variables to, if the budget changes or attrition
13 starts to spike, we can change those things and see how the model runs through
14 and update on an actual biweekly basis.

15 CHAIRMAN SVINICKI: Well, and ideally, just to take that to the
16 next step then, if you had good analytics on that, in areas where we might not have
17 more than three or four individuals in a competency that we really need, I always
18 use technical examples, so I'll use one in a legal example.

19 We do have certain labor law issues that we need someone in
20 OGC who is kind of coming along with a great depth of knowledge, maybe even
21 corporate history of how NRC's approaches and polices have been developed over
22 the years.

23 And so, if you have a better sense of where the one or two

1 people who might have built that core competency, what their planning was, you
2 could begin to make even reskilling and retraining of current OGC staff and you
3 could say, five years out I need to start having someone mentor or shadow that
4 other really knowledgeable individual.

5 MR. SHAY: And it's not just the data also, it's the critical
6 conversations that our staff need to have with the hiring managers within the
7 organization. So, the quick, the more quickly they can let us know that someone
8 is planning to exit or if there any assumptions regarding that, we can help them
9 mitigate that issue that you're referring to as quickly as possible.

10 It's not ideal, but sometimes people just, I'm retiring. You know

11 --

12 CHAIRMAN SVINICKI: Yes, suddenly.

13 MR. SHAY: -- it's kind of one of those.

14 CHAIRMAN SVINICKI: Thank you.

15 MR. SHAY: Catch 22s.

16 CHAIRMAN SVINICKI: As I sometimes say, this isn't kind of
17 the closed cities of the Soviet Union where nuclear workers were kept kind of and
18 told when they could come and go. So, we're not like that here.

19 All right, Margie, go ahead.

20 MS. DOANE: No, no. On that note, no, we're not like that. So
21 I know you probably want to go --

22 CHAIRMAN SVINICKI: Everyone is watching Chernobyl on
23 HBO, so these things are front of mind, aren't they?

1 (Laughter.)

2 MS. DOANE: Right. So, I just wanted to say that the offices,
3 the program offices and other offices, like you were talking about OGC, are pairing
4 with the, our human resource offices, and also with SBCR and others, to ensure
5 that we are tackling the really tough questions.

6 Because, a lot of things that might spur attrition in this time would
7 be a lot of change. So we have things that are different.

8 But we've had change going on for several years. So, you have
9 those age demographics, but you also have change. So there's a lot of pairing
10 with offices to make sure that when we do through, say strategic workforce
11 planning, identify a gap that we can put in place all of these different strategies.

12 So, there may not be, I think what Jason and Miriam are
13 emphasizing is that we can't have necessarily a one size fits all for every problem
14 that arises, we need to really have this team approach.

15 CHAIRMAN SVINICKI: Well, and let me turn to Susan's
16 presentation then. I referenced that earlier.

17 I see that as being a foundational pillar to what we're trying to do
18 in workforce shaping, going forward, is the training. People being much more
19 empowered over their own career trajectory.

20 I don't like to stereotype about the kind of entering or rising
21 generation of professionals, but I think owning their own, building a resume and
22 owning the competencies and having the training and development opportunities
23 is something of emphasis, I think, to that generation.

1 And as we all, it's very visible to all of us, the retirement of iLearn
2 and things that are pending here. But I was learning a little bit more about the
3 talent management system, and as you build in, you know, both development
4 plans.

5 So it really takes all the pieces together. It's kind of my
6 individual development plan of where I want to go, the training and developmental
7 opportunities that would get me there.

8 And then the supervisor having the ability to have knowledge of
9 what the desire is, the direction people want to go. Building that in to having really
10 meaningful conversations at mid-year and performance review time.

11 I see all of that potential in that tool. And I think it's exciting that
12 these things, as you mentioned, Susan, were contemplated and in development
13 for a while.

14 But I think part of the energy I sense her at NRC is that they're
15 becoming more visible and more real. And is there anything you would want to
16 add on that notion of kind of this overall empowerment through what you're
17 developing?

18 MS. ABRAHAM: I do want to make one point, which is, the
19 point about making training accessible in the time of need. And that's where I
20 think productivity and efficiency will be realized.

21 So, with LTI and the development of the competency models,
22 having the right knowledge when we need it through blended learning, that's going
23 to be also a great added benefit.

1 So, making training accessible in the time that we need, that's
2 where we want to go with it.

3 CHAIRMAN SVINICKI: Well, thank you for that, I think it's an
4 important piece. And, again, my thanks.

5 I think all of the topics today just really are integrated and build
6 on each other. It's a very thoughtful and comprehensive direction that all of your
7 programs are setting, so thank you for that. And with that, I'll turn it over to
8 Commissioner Baran.

9 COMMISSIONER BARAN: Thanks. Well, I appreciate the
10 Chairman's questions and the Staff's focus on the entry level hiring problem.

11 This is a major challenge for the Agency. When I look at a
12 graph of new hires, it's one of the documents that was in the background briefing
13 book. There it is. That's our hiring trends.

14 It shows that the total number of new hires is minimal. And it
15 has been for years. And as a result, only two percent, or I guess 1.8 percent
16 employees, of NRC employees are younger than 30 years old.

17 That is way too low. And it is a clear indication that we are not
18 doing enough entry level hiring.

19 For the long-term health of the Agency, we need to bring new
20 talent into NRC through increased external hiring. This Agency is going to
21 continue to have an important health and safety mission in 2030, 2040, 2050 and
22 beyond. And we're going to need a skilled and vibrant workforce in that future.

23 And we are not doing nearly enough hiring today to get where

1 we need to be. This is a big deal. It is, I think, probably our number one
2 enterprise risk.

3 At the same time, we are currently under running on FTEs by
4 186 FTE. Congress provided funds for these FTEs. We're just not using those
5 available funds.

6 That's a big problem because there is important mission related
7 work that is not getting done or is moving much more slowly than it should. There
8 are examples from all across the Agency.

9 Because we're short staffed, reviews of spent fuel criticality
10 license amendment requests are taking 20 months to complete instead of 12
11 months.

12 Reviews of alternate source term licensing requests are taking
13 18 months instead of 12 months. Because we don't have sufficient staffing, the
14 metrics for fuel cycle facility license amendment acceptance reviews have gone
15 red.

16 Tribal policy guidance have been delayed. So have MPEP
17 guidance updates. Updates to fuel, neutronics and thermal hydraulic computer
18 codes have been delayed, as have updates to SPAR models.

19 We used to have a pool of potential future resident inspectors in
20 the region, now we don't. We don't have enough cyber or physical security
21 specialists.

22 The IG just did a report on the cyber aspect of that, it's right here,
23 and the IG found, "if staffing levels and skill sets do not align with cybersecurity

1 inspection workload requirements, NRC's ability to adapt to a dynamic threat
2 environment and detect problems with licensee cybersecurity programs could be
3 compromised."

4 The Office of Research doesn't have enough material engineers,
5 fire protection engineers or experts in the areas of nuclear fuels, neutronics and
6 internal dosimetry.

7 Region I is apparently so short staffed that instead of holding a
8 separate in person annual assessment meeting that each of the five Pennsylvania
9 nuclear power plants, they decided to hold just one online meeting for the whole
10 state.

11 This is by no means an exhausted list of cases where our current
12 staffing is not sufficient to meet our current workload. So, in a lot of cases we're
13 triaging rather than meeting the workload.

14 And as you can probably tell, I'm very concerned about this. I
15 think every office should be figuring out what work we have been deferring that we
16 should be doing or what projects could be completed more quickly if sufficient
17 resources were devoting to them.

18 It requires a change in mindset. NRC has reduced its workforce
19 by 21 percent during the last five years a cut, cut, cut mentality. But we need to
20 do the work we have. We need to do the work Congress funded us to do.

21 So, I've been talking a lot. Margie, what do you think about this
22 and do you share these concerns?

23 MS. DOANE: Yes, I share the concerns.

1 COMMISSIONER BARAN: Good answer.

2 (Laughter.)

3 MS. DOANE: I share the concerns that we have to build the
4 workforce for the future. I do believe that we are getting our mission done today
5 and that we have the skills that are necessary to do the work today. I understand
6 the things that you've listed, and much of that has been a conscious re-prioritization
7 to utilize the staff that we have in the best way that we think we should.

8 But we are maintaining public health and safety common
9 defense and security. So, I don't, but that is --

10 COMMISSIONER BARAN: That's, I mean, that's the question
11 I'm asking here. When we're under running by 186 FTE, from what Congress
12 funded us, why are we deferring this work? Why are we delaying this work?

13 This is actual workload. The whole enterprise over the last
14 several years has been about matching resources to workload. The resources
15 are there, we don't have the FTEs to do the workload in front of us.

16 How is the Staff going to identify the full list of funded work that
17 is being unnecessarily deferred or delayed?

18 MS. DOANE: So, I think we actually have, and we've continued
19 to improve this, I think we have actually an outstanding way of addressing the work
20 and making sure that we have the resources that are necessary to complete it.
21 And there really are conscious decisions to put off certain work that isn't as high or
22 prioritization, as high of priority.

23 So, the high priority work, even the medium priority work, is

1 getting done. There are things that are put off as you, when you don't have
2 resources, and that has been a conscious choice --

3 COMMISSIONER BARAN: But we do have resources. We're
4 under running by 186 FTE.

5 MS. DOANE: You're right.

6 COMMISSIONER BARAN: The resources are there. Are you
7 making a conscious decision not to use the resources Congress has appropriated
8 to do the work?

9 MS. DOANE: In some ways. I want to be open about this.
10 In some ways we are not hiring as quickly as we had in the past because we were
11 being very austere knowing that the work of the Agency would be coming down
12 because plants were closing.

13 And so, we were very careful about how to do out hiring. And
14 that's how we ended up not doing any new hiring. And now we are turning that
15 around.

16 So those numbers, that gap, will be closed. Will it be closed
17 down to zero, no. We will always have this attrition that we're working with
18 because of the demographics, and we'll always have then the time it takes to hire.

19 But yes, we are focused on it. We're focused on closing that
20 gap, definitely with respect to new hires. And also, looking at the gaps that we
21 have through strategic workforce planning, looking at the skill gaps that we'll have
22 in the future, making sure that we're getting those skills in or retraining and
23 reskilling.

1 So, yes, we know that this is an issue, yes, we are concentrating
2 on it. We have new hiring that will be coming up in the fall. And we're continuing
3 to hire as we speak.

4 COMMISSIONER BARAN: Well, I know this a focus of yours,
5 and I appreciate that. And, Miriam, if you have thoughts, I'm really very interested
6 in hearing them too.

7 The Chairman was asking about attrition, and six percent
8 attrition is a little higher than it's been, but I think that's pretty typical. But if we're
9 under running an FTE now by 186 of what Congress has funded us and we're
10 looking at six percent attrition for the year, if the hiring on the other side is ten, 15,
11 20, then the Agency shrunk by another five percent this year, right, and we're going
12 to be under running by even more going forward.

13 So, I am concerned that the level of, I like the focus that you now
14 have on entry level hiring, I appreciate that, I know it's been a certain focus for the
15 last few years and as a recognition we got to start thinking about it a little differently.
16 I'm worry about the magnitude of the hiring and whether it's anywhere near
17 adequate.

18 And whether we are able to quickly get to an appropriate level of
19 hiring. If six percent of people are leaving every year and we're hiring far fewer
20 than that, we're just going to keep this decline going.

21 And the work is there. I mean, I think it's become a mantra, oh,
22 the work is drying up. I think if I talked to a few more people I could give you a list
23 twice as long as the list I just gave you, of work that is here that we're not doing.

1 We're just not doing it.

2 The resources are there and we're not doing the work. And so,
3 I think that's a problem. And when you pair that with a big gap in entry level hiring,
4 it's kind of a mystery why it's a problem.

5 I don't know, Miriam, do you have thoughts or, Margie, on that,
6 on how are we going to get to the right level of entry level hiring? We can't be too
7 timid about it or we're going to shrink to the point we can't do the work.

8 MS. COHEN: So, I can't speak to the workload issue, I think
9 that Margie tackled that as best she knows based on what she's hearing.

10 The work, so, we're in the beginning stages of strategic
11 workforce planning and we know that we have received some external criticism for
12 our ability to adequately forecast our workload. So, when the 20, Fiscal Year '19
13 budget was done in Fiscal Year '17, maybe the world was a little bit different.

14 And I can't speak to what happened then versus where we are
15 now, but everything that we're seeing based on Agency budgets now and into the
16 future, said that maybe the workload is declining. And, again, where we work,
17 people aren't coming to us and saying, I need people to do this work.

18 But we do know that we have a demographic imbalance. So
19 I'm, from my perspective, I'm concerned with the numbers that show in 2022 we
20 really could reach a problem if all the people that are eligible to retire, retire.

21 I'm looking at decreased workload, based on what we're seeing
22 in workload forecasts that are coming in from the offices. I'm also mindful of, and
23 this is not my area of expertise, is we have NEMA, we have control points, which

1 are going to constrain our ability to hire as well.

2 So, I think we have to be mindful of that environment. And so,
3 we want to make sure that we have the people to do the work that we think is going
4 to be there in the future.

5 And addressing the imbalance in the age is a huge deal. I think
6 the question is, is how quickly do you turn on the entry level hiring spigot and for
7 how many given where the Agency is going. So, I don't know if that helps a little
8 bit.

9 COMMISSIONER BARAN: No, I appreciate that. And there's
10 no question that in certain areas our workload has gone down, but that's why the
11 appropriations have gone down.

12 And the concern I'm raising is a little separate which is, we're
13 way under running our appropriation. The appropriate reflects the reduced
14 workload, now we're dramatically under running it.

15 And there's work left on the table we're not doing, and it's not a
16 lack of resources, the resources are there, it's not an absence of workload, the
17 works there, we're just not doing it. And we're not doing it because we don't have
18 enough people in a lot of cases to do it.

19 Or, in some of these examples, why is it taking 20 months to do
20 a review instead of 12 months, we've got one person with a skill set there. And
21 that person may be fabulous, but is basically the pinch point on that.

22 Why do we have one person, why haven't we hired a second
23 person. And so, I think we've got to be thinking, you know, some of what you're

1 talking about is all cooked into the appropriation. And now we're just way below
2 the appropriation utilization of FTE.

3 MS. DOANE: Yes, we --

4 COMMISSIONER BARAN: So, but, Margie, if you wanted to
5 say something, I don't want to cut you off.

6 MS. DOANE: No, you're right, we are below. We know the
7 numbers, we know exactly what you're seeing, we know those areas.

8 And some of it is we're trying to also change to work smarter and
9 to do this work differently. And even to look at whether work should be done.

10 But you're absolutely right, there is a gap. We have resources,
11 we haven't hired into it. Part of it is because we are facing, in 2021, these caps.
12 And so we are anticipating that we'll have to go down even further.

13 And so we're being very careful about hiring. Differently than
14 we had done in the past. Some of that's a good thing because we don't want to
15 then all of a sudden have a sharp decline in workload like we had had over, that
16 had been the pattern. And then we have to face an excess of resources.

17 So --

18 COMMISSIONER BARAN: Right. And I appreciate --

19 MS. DOANE: -- we're in a dynamic --

20 COMMISSIONER BARAN: -- that smoothing concern you have
21 there.

22 MS. DOANE: But I don't want to suggest that that's the answer.

23 So the answer is, you see this team here, we are very focused on this issue.

1 We have to continue to work with it, we have to continue to work
2 with the offices. Strategic Workforce Planning does identify one person left in a
3 particular skill. I think the Chairman was mentioning that.

4 But office directors already know that. We are focused on this.
5 And we can move people from other offices to help as well.

6 COMMISSIONER BARAN: Right.

7 MS. DOANE: But we're prioritizing our work --

8 COMMISSIONER BARAN: But I just want to make sure that
9 message to that office director who knows it is, oh, don't ever ask for a second
10 person. I mean, if in fact we're at a pinch point with one person, we should be
11 going to a second person if we're under running by 186 FTE.

12 But anyway, my time is up. I'm looking forward to working with
13 you on this. I appreciate that you're focused on it. I think it's a big deal for the
14 Agency.

15 And it's really, in a way it's nothing new than what we've all been
16 talking about for the last several years, which is matching resources to workload.
17 And I think in some areas now we've overshot, and we're not, actually don't have
18 the hires we need to do the work that's there. Thanks.

19 CHAIRMAN SVINICKI: Thank you, Commissioner Baran.
20 Next, we'll hear from Commission Caputo. Please proceed.

21 COMMISSIONER CAPUTO: So, thank you for this impressive
22 set of presentations this morning. I agree with the Chairman, I think they were
23 very thoughtful and very well integrated.

1 And I particularly enjoyed Jason's work on retention and Susan's
2 on some of the innovative, talent development work that's going on. I really
3 appreciate all of the forward-looking thoughts that have gone into your
4 presentations today.

5 I share some of Commission Baran's concern about entry level
6 hiring and how to assess an appropriate level of entry level hiring. But I think I
7 have an opposite take on where we stand today.

8 And given the considerable amount of data that we were given
9 to digest today, which I thoroughly appreciated, I'd like to ask to bring up a slide
10 on full-time equivalent allocations.

11 As Miriam noted, we're down 21 percent since 2015. But if you
12 look back in our history toward 2000, the NRC operated with 2,801 employees and
13 managed a workload of roughly eight percent more reactors, 157 percent more
14 licensing actions and 47 percent more materials licensees.

15 So, my question is this. Between our innovative talent
16 development, harnessing modern technologies and the other assets that we now
17 have 19 years later, Margie and Miriam, do you see reasons why our current
18 workforce couldn't be capable of the same level of performance and efficiency as
19 we saw in 2000?

20 MS. DOANE: So, a lot has changed in 2000. Because we had
21 to, I can tell you just from, I mean, we've put a significant number of programs in
22 place that weren't there in 2000, so it's a little bit of apples and oranges, because
23 after 2000 of course we had the Energy Policy Act, and so we now have Category

1 1 and Category 2 sources, for example, and everything that goes with that that
2 wasn't there before in the same way.

3 Not anywhere near. We have many different legislative acts
4 that have come into play. So we have a significant amount of work that we didn't
5 have there.

6 The TARA and all kinds of different things. So, it's hard to
7 compare apples and oranges in that way.

8 So let me just turn to what we are doing now. We are looking
9 at the workload. We are being very focused on what is the workload that we have
10 now and into the future, to the best that we can predict it.

11 We are looking at the resources that we need to do it, and we
12 are looking at modernizing the way that we're doing work and making decisions in
13 a way that should have us making decisions in a more timely way, a more efficient
14 way, so that we're not back tracking so much and redoing a lot of what we're doing
15 as we're turning and turning.

16 A lot of what Pam has been doing for inclusivity and participative
17 decision making, all of this is going to pay off and we're going to make better
18 decisions and we're going to be more timely and we're going to be more efficient.

19 What you're hearing today is, we are trying to balance, we know
20 that we are continuing to come down, but I can't do any kind of comparison to 2000
21 because the workload is completely different and a lot has been added on since
22 2000.

23 Yes, we have a few plants that are closing, that's true, and so

1 we have that work declining, but we have, for the first time, we are seriously looking
2 at non-lightwater reactors and we are doing a tremendous amount of work in that
3 area with the licensing modernization project and things like that.

4 So, but your question is well taken. And I know it's directed at
5 the same issue, which is, are you focused on the resources that you need to do
6 the work that you're going to have now, in the short-term and in the long-term.
7 And I can assure you, we are.

8 We need to look at entry level hiring, there's no question about
9 that. And we are doing it. You've heard from Jason, we're using data analytics
10 to try to look at attrition. Right? To try to understand.

11 We're doing strategic workforce planning to identify gaps,
12 identify those places where we have one person deep. So we have very good
13 strategies, we have very good planning, but we have these number gaps that
14 you're identifying.

15 COMMISSIONER CAPUTO: Well, I will offer just a slightly
16 different view. We had a lot of post-9/11 work that waxed and waned. A lot of
17 new reactors that waxed and waned. And Fukushima work, which has waxed and
18 waned also.

19 And, it's not just a few reactors, it will be 19 by 2025. Which is
20 nearly 20 percent of the fleet. So, it's a pretty significant decline.

21 Similar to Commissioner Baran's concern, when I look back over
22 the last few fiscal years, we ended 2017 with 164 fewer than we budgeted. In
23 2018, 124 fewer FTE, and this year we'll end with 192 fewer FTE than we budgeted

1 for.

2 So, at an average cost of \$185,000 per FTE, this is
3 approximately, for 2019, it's approximately \$35 million.

4 Under the 2019 fee rule, operating reactors only received a 7.8
5 percent fee increase equally \$336,000 for each reactor. Times 98 plants, that's
6 \$33 million.

7 So, it looks to me that if we had budgeted our FTE more
8 accurately, we wouldn't have forced such a fee increase on existing reactors.

9 We're already projecting to end 2020 with 129 fewer FTE than in
10 our proposed budget. That means if Congress approves our proposed budget,
11 we'll end up billing licensees about \$24 million for FTE that we don't have.

12 So, Margie, my question for you, in keeping with this same of
13 how are you balancing, are you using the strategic workforce planning to more
14 accurately project our FTE needs with an eye toward fixing this patter?

15 MS. DOANE: Yes. So, the first thing you do in strategic
16 workforce planning is do an environmental scan. Where you try to predict based
17 on historical data and what we're seeing coming up in the future.

18 You try to predict what will be the work coming in. But we're
19 also trying to build into those models a thinking that we're going to be doing our
20 work better and more efficiently.

21 So, the short answer is yes, we are looking at these issues, we
22 are trying to predict better. But as Miriam and I have said, and Miriam, please add
23 to this, we understand that there will be a decline. And we understand a

1 significant number of reactors by 2025.

2 And so, we know that the workload in that area will be going
3 down. And that is part of the reason why the measures that we're taking in hiring
4 are moving more slowly than they had in the past. Because we don't want to be
5 in a situation where we over hire.

6 So, what we have to do is we have to turn that a bit. Because
7 we've been too slow. Look where we've ended up with under 30 hiring.

8 So, we are turning that around and we will close that gap. But
9 it is a continuous effort and we are focused on it. Did you?

10 MS. COHEN: I think that we're still in the second year of doing
11 strategic workforce planning. And we are going to be probably putting together a
12 report that summarizes what we've learned so far after the expansion of the pilot.

13 And we do know that we still need to improve in our ability to do
14 workload forecasting out five years. I think what we're seeing so far is that we
15 can use strategic workforce planning as a data point, but not the only data point.
16 I think we can get trend data, we can see sort of where the Agency is going.

17 But I don't think we can use strategic workforce planning to come
18 up with an exact number. I think it's a data point along with other data points.
19 And we're only a couple of years into it, and so I think we just have to see where
20 this goes. I think it's too early to say that, you know, it's a resounding success or
21 it's not.

22 MS. COHEN: Okay. This next question sort of brings together
23 a couple of concerns. Given how hiring activities have been limited, and given

1 the requirement by NEMA to get our corporate support costs down from 32 percent
2 this year to 30 percent next year, are we looking at retraining our internal corporate
3 support folks rather than looking at external hires?

4 COMMISSIONER CAPUTO: So let me take that. So corporate
5 support offices, I don't want to say are unique or special, but I think you have to
6 understand where we were to know where we are now. And I think the fact that
7 we actually had to implement a reduction in force, even though we did not separate
8 any individuals in corporate, put us in a very different position.

9 And going back to your earlier question about, you know, what
10 was the work in 2000 versus what it is now, it is very different. And I think what
11 we're seeing is that the skill sets required across the corporate offices are not like
12 they were 20 or 30 years ago when you could just, you know, take a generalist and
13 put them in these jobs.

14 So I think if you talk to Mary Muessle, you know, you need people
15 that are qualified and capable to be contract officers. You need a business
16 degree. I mean, you could certainly train people internally to move into those
17 roles if they have that background.

18 I don't have to tell you, in IT, IT today is not like it was 20 years
19 ago. You actually need qualified, credentialed people. And we're even seeing
20 in my office that the HR function is not what it used to be as well, that you need
21 people that actually know data analytics. It's not your traditional HR role.

22 Similarly, you could see in CFO, you need trained accountants.
23 Again, they're using data analytics there. And so while I think that you will need

1 to do some internal training and redirection where appropriate, the corporate
2 offices really took a big hit.

3 And so I see our ability to hit the NEMA targets, at least as far
4 as the corporate capacity in FTE space, actually is requiring us to go externally in
5 some cases where the skill set can't be met in-house.

6 CHAIRMAN SVINICKI: Thank you. Thank you very much,
7 Commissioner. Next we'll hear from Commissioner Wright. Please
8 proceed.

9 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Thank you. Thank you very
10 much. Before I get started again, Pam, congratulations. We're going to miss
11 you. And thank you for your work to your country.

12 So today, I really appreciate everything I've heard here. And
13 I've really appreciated the give and take here on the questions that the
14 Commissioners have asked too. And being last, you know, a lot of stuff's been
15 kind of asked and addressed, maybe not completely answered but at least
16 addressed.

17 You know, we have a very good Agency to work at. People are
18 generally very happy here. We get pretty good marks. But we also have had
19 some things that, when people leave, I appreciated your comments earlier, one of
20 the factors that influences a decision to leave the Agency was the environment for
21 maybe raising concerns, including the fear of reprisal that you brought up earlier.

22 And I know it's something that we take very serious here at the
23 Agency. And it's being looked at.

1 So, Miriam, does this concern generally appear on the list of
2 frequent responses to exit surveys? Is this one of the -

3 MS. COHEN: I think it's a combination of factors. I mean, the
4 exit survey data, they usually lump into particular categories of people fell back of
5 career advancement, or commute, or those kinds of things.

6 But what's fascinating about the responses to the exit surveys is
7 almost everyone recommends that NRC as a great place to work.

8 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Right.

9 MS. COHEN: And so I think all politics is local. It depends on
10 who your supervisor is, what's going on in your work unit. And so I think it's the
11 typical things that we've seen. There's nothing that I'm seeing out of the ordinary
12 on the exit survey results.

13 But I really think we need to be mindful of people that are exiting
14 via resignations and transfers. Because most of the people leave through
15 retirements.

16 But as we see an uptick, especially in employees under the age
17 of 30 that are leaving to just resign, or transfer to other agencies, I think we need
18 to be mindful of that, especially when we look at the imbalance in the workforce.

19 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: And so what you just ended with
20 right there is my concern. That's very, to me that would be red flag for me, when
21 you've got good people, talented people leaving here, going to other agencies,
22 other sectors even. That's concerning, because that speaks to an internal
23 problem that we have.

1 And we're going through transformation which hasn't, by name,
2 been brought up, although we talked about JAM. So one of my concerns, and I
3 share what I've heard from my fellow Commissioners here, but my concern is
4 mission critical hiring.

5 You know, are we focusing more on that than we are on just
6 hiring low entry employees who we can bring in and train? I mean, how are we
7 focused if we're trying to get - I appreciate Jeff's concern on, you know, we're not
8 getting the workload, blah, blah, blah, done, the focus on that.

9 But if we're, you mentioned the word re-skilling, I think, Jason.
10 How are you -

11 MR. SHAY: That has been our practice over the past couple of
12 years, is to focus on those mission critical positions. That's why you see the chart
13 that you saw, Commissioner Baran.

14 But what's not on that chart is what's in process right now. So
15 in 2019, we've approved basic - it's a little bit more than 50 external hires. So
16 you're seeing that number because they haven't onboarded yet. So we are
17 progressing.

18 And of those 50, I want to say 12 were entry level hires. So
19 we're working with the offices through the staffing request forms that we get for
20 them on mission critical positions.

21 But we're also engaging them on backfilling more than entry
22 level hires, especially if they need the position later on to be mid-career level,
23 maybe in two or three years. We can hire an entry level hire now and then grow

1 them internally to meet that need.

2 But to your point, yes, we have been focusing on the mission
3 critical positions lately because of the hiring restrictions and the resources that
4 were mentioned by Miriam.

5 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: So I'm focused - oh, go ahead.

6 MS. DOANE: But we need all levels -

7 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Oh, yeah.

8 MS. DOANE: -- in the Agency. I mean, the work spans not just
9 mission critical. And that's funny the way we say it, right? All of us are working
10 towards the mission. But there are some things that are specific to a particular
11 skill.

12 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Well, and I hear that. But we
13 have people leaving. If we've got a mission critical thing, you can't just get an
14 entry level hire to do some of that stuff. You've got to either recruit them, or you've
15 got to attract them from another agency. I mean, if we've got people leaving going
16 to FDA or something, are we getting people over here from other agencies? And
17 are we actively recruiting those people?

18 MS. DOANE: Yes. I think Jason answered those questions
19 about actively recruiting.

20 MR. SHAY: Yeah, and again we're working
21 with the offices to understand the impacts of that person leaving. So yes, we are
22 trying to preemptively work with them to do that as strategic business partners.

23 But, you know, when we're going out and recruiting, and we're

1 targeting those positions, I think it's extremely important to utilize the mechanisms
2 that we have. And I mentioned the grants. I mean, we've had 260 grants
3 recipients graduate in 2019. And we have 159 that are going to graduate in 2020.

4 We need to really focus in on that, because that's the best way
5 and the quickest way to get people onboard into the organization and then target
6 externally those positions that you're talking about that may be hard to find, you
7 know, maybe even mid-career level, and focus on those areas that we can recruit
8 in.

9 So it's a holistic human capital strategy in working with the hiring
10 managers. It's important that we have those discussions up front and working
11 with my HR specialist and the branch chiefs ahead of time so that we can
12 collectively look at a human capital strategy together.

13 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Right.

14 MS. DOANE: I will add, Commissioner, because I'm not sure.
15 I think we discussed this, but where we identify an area that we don't think we will
16 be able to recruit, or we've had difficulty recruiting in the past, like for PRA, we
17 have had our own fellowship programs --

18 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Right.

19 MS. DOANE: -- where we've developed resources. But it
20 takes time to do that. So we're focused on it, and so we have the strategies in the
21 planning. But so far, we have the people that we need to do the work that we
22 have. But for the future, we need to put a real focus on these areas.

23 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Right. So, Jason?

1 MR. SHAY: And I will say, you know, we get a lot of applications
2 when we go externally. It's not that we just don't have, you know, enough people
3 who are trying to come into the organization. It's just the inflow and outflow of
4 people.

5 And I think that may be the new norm. And, you know, as some
6 people like to say, like the millennial hopping or the people leaving the
7 organization, but that may be a good thing. They're bringing back experiences
8 from other organizations, bringing them back to the organization. What we have
9 to do is make the experience here one that they want to come back to the
10 organization.

11 And that's, I think, most critically important. So I think that's a
12 decent strategy, to be honest with you.

13 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Right. So I know it's been a few
14 years since we've done the - really gone after a real aggressive external program
15 to hire new hires, or whatever. And, you know, full disclosure, I met last week or
16 the week before with about four of the summer hires that we've got. A couple of
17 them are here for the second year.

18 It was a great meeting, great dialogue. And I was trying to learn
19 from them, okay, so how do we go about, how does the NRC and the federal
20 government, how do they go out and, you know, attract the talent like you? How
21 did you get here?

22 And a couple of concerns that I heard were that, when we go out
23 and we go to the job fairs, or whatever it is they call them, and they register on this

1 jobs website portal or whatever, that they're not hearing back timely. That they're
2 not, you know, they may meet in the fall at the job fair, but they may not be hearing
3 back until April.

4 And we're losing a lot of good talent to other people because
5 we're getting back too late. And the cream's being, you know, skimmed off the
6 top. Are we focusing more on that?

7 MR. SHAY: Yes. That was part of my presentation to kind of
8 move that process back in the recruitment schedule. You know, it did take time,
9 you know, for us to make hiring decisions and get the hiring managers to make
10 decisions. And we had over 500 applications. It takes a lot of time to vet and
11 return to my office.

12 But we are moving it back to mid-August timeframe, hopefully
13 closing in mid-September. We did hear that we may be losing some of the cream
14 of the crop in the December timeframe. That was feedback that we got.

15 But we also have to do some, you know, care and feeding along
16 that process. Because again, they're not going to onboard until May. You know,
17 the 75 requests that we got from offices in the 34 that were actually onboarding,
18 there was a lot of declinations that came from those students also that they found
19 jobs closer to their respective area, they got private sector offers which we
20 probably couldn't, you know, equal. And sorry to say, some of them didn't pass
21 the 145b security process.

22 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Sure.

23 MR. SHAY: So they kind of fell off through natural kind of, I

1 guess, declinations or attrition. But we heard that. And we're going to try to
2 make a quicker selection so that we can, you know, show that we are dedicated to
3 entry level hiring and dedicated to them as a resource for the organization itself.

4 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Yeah. And I appreciate it,
5 because you did mention that there's a lot of benefits to being here, you know.
6 And one of the big things I heard right off was the child care.

7 So anyway, I'm really grateful you're doing the work and not me
8 on that. Having been in the private sector for a while, having to hire and train,
9 man, I don't envy what you have to do. So thank you for what you're doing for the
10 Agency.

11 CHAIRMAN SVINICKI: Well, thank you very much. I'm going
12 to just make some observations in closing. And out of fairness I'll offer my
13 colleagues an opportunity, because we've had such a wonderful discussion here
14 today.

15 My questions earlier focused on entry level hires and then folks
16 that are retirement eligible. I just want to have a little kind of bumper sticker in
17 favor of mid-career people.

18 I feel like I came here as did, I know, Miriam, and Pam with other
19 government experience. But I feel like, at this point, the day to day contribution I
20 make is more what I learned here than anything I brought with me. I mean, I'm
21 sure what I do today is rooted in those experiences that I had from other
22 government service, but a lot of what we do here is we learn it once we come here.

23 And so I just wanted to say that I wasn't in any way neglectful.

1 And as a matter of fact, Jason acknowledged that there is somewhat of an
2 organizational preference for mid-careers. Because you know that people are so
3 valuable from the moment that they come onboard. So I didn't want the staff to
4 interpret my remarks to mean that I wasn't focused on that.

5 And then the other thing that I was thinking about is, like, a lot of
6 the things we've talked about sound in conflict, but they can all be true at the same
7 time. Because we're talking about people, and we're talking about, you know,
8 people have free will, and free choice, and they're going to, you know, say well, I
9 wanted to be in this expertise, but now I want to do something else.

10 And so maybe they share with us the best they understand their
11 own career desires or their own retirement planning. But we will have to be - I
12 guess we're tired of agile. We don't say that anymore now. But I'm using fluid
13 these days, we're going to have to be really, really fluid.

14 So I think, you know, as Forrest Gump said, you know, the two
15 can coexist at the same time. The two can be true, two things that sound different.
16 We need to be less conservative on using the FTE that we have when we try to
17 get ahead of a need. But we can also, at the same time, it's true that we need to
18 get better fidelity in the budgets that we're asking for. So I feel like those things
19 can be true.

20 At the same time, you know, in my observation here I've worked
21 with a number of CFOs, including the current CFO, that say in this organization
22 we're cautious by nature. So we kind of under-execute the budget in the first
23 quarter. And CFOs start working in that capacity here.

1 And they're so frustrated at first, but then they come to find out,
2 oh, okay. So you just push on people, and they start executing the budget more
3 according to plan starting in the second quarter. And you just kind of accept that
4 that's the behavioral mindset here.

5 So I think it is true that we have to remember that the least
6 cautious thing to do is to imperil the ability to do this important mission. Because
7 we're the only people that do it.

8 So it's not really cautious if we put ourselves so close to the
9 margins on the human capital part of it. So we need to remember that. So those
10 were -- I just wanted to share that, reflecting on the great conversation we had. I
11 don't know if anyone else wanted to chime in.

12 COMMISSIONER BARAN: I would just say I really appreciate
13 your remarks on mid-career hiring too. Because we did talk a lot about entry level
14 hiring. But, you know, I absolutely agree that, you know, as we're trying to get to
15 an adequate level of hiring to make sure we can do the workload, a lot of that
16 probably should be mid-career. It's not going to be 100 percent entry level. And
17 that's absolutely right.

18 CHAIRMAN SVINICKI: Okay, thank you. Any other remarks?

19 COMMISSIONER CAPUTO: I guess in that spirit, I bring up
20 one observation I made from the childcare slide. There's a childcare slide about
21 the number of employees that we have under the salary threshold of \$73,000 and
22 another slide that we had staff by grade level. So ten percent of our workforce is
23 in pay grades under \$73,000.

1 But it seems like in the last three years they've made up over 30
2 percent of the staffing decreases. So I guess I would just caution as we're looking
3 at whether these are entry level or so on. Like Margie said, everyone we have
4 contributes to the mission.

5 And I am a little concerned that we need to be very strategic in
6 our strategic workforce planning and not neglect the value that's contributed by
7 folks at that level and maybe look at whether or not our retention of folks in those
8 positions is adequate as well. Thank you.

9 CHAIRMAN SVINICKI: Thank you. Anything else?

10 (No audible response)

11 CHAIRMAN SVINICKI: Okay. Well, again, I want to thank you
12 all for a really great meeting and discussion. And with that, we are adjourned.

13 Oh, I'm so sorry. Goodness sakes, it was such a great
14 discussion that I lost the thread on the fact that -- I even announced it earlier on.
15 So we will now recognize -- and thank you so much, and my apologies, Ms.
16 Sanders - we will recognize Serita Sanders, who is the executive vice president of
17 the National Treasury Employees Union, to provide remarks to us. Thank you so
18 much.

19 MS. SANDERS: Thank you. I wasn't upset really.

20 (Laughter)

21 MS. SANDERS: Okay, good morning, Chairman Svinicki,
22 Commissioners Baran, Caputo, and Wright. Good morning to EDO Doane, and
23 our leadership and managers as well. And from my perspective, as the executive

1 vice president of Chapter 208, our most important audience this morning, our
2 bargaining unit employees, our greatest resources, good morning to you too.

3 I would like to start off with the topic of change and
4 transformation. And I promise I didn't see the slides first, okay. So
5 coincidentally, this is also where I started at the last EEO briefing. What a
6 difference six months makes. Are we there yet? No. But I must say, we are
7 well on our way.

8 Furthermore, even from one year ago, significant progress has
9 been made. I personally didn't believe that such a paradigm shift and
10 achievements could be made in such a short duration. Last week, I went to
11 Region 3 to speak to the bargaining unit employees and I -- at the inspector
12 seminar, pardon me. Well, guess who I saw? The EDO and the NRR Office
13 director.

14 Your efforts to transform the Agency thus far should be
15 applauded and commended. Messages were on point. Presentations were
16 honest and candid. This duo is making their rounds to all the regions and
17 engaging all management for this unified message of change. Look at what the
18 Agency can do when focused, cooperative, sending clear messages, applying
19 resources, communicating, and the like.

20 As a practice, I solicit feedback from every NTEU venue. When
21 I spoke with the bargaining unit employees and managers about this duo's
22 respective presentations and their thoughts on it, they were excited and
23 exhilarated.

1 Our most senior management was so well received, favorable
2 comments were made on the EDO's presentations regarding the JAM. Why do
3 you think this was so? I believe they felt connected to the transitioning agency
4 and to be included in the change.

5 It's not easy to impress a crowd of inspectors. So we get it.
6 These significant changes to the nuclear industry, plant closures, lack of
7 anticipated new reactors being built, and such, is requiring the NRC to change
8 along with the nuclear industry that we regulate.

9 The current work environment is starting to embrace change
10 which is a huge step forward from six months ago. The union keeps its focus on
11 the best interest of all bargaining unit employees during the evolution of this
12 transforming Agency.

13 I do think the Agency is on its way to retooling and making a
14 comeback, although we are seeing just the beginning of this change. The jury's
15 still out on the culture change though.

16 So let me focus my attention to our most vulnerable workforce,
17 bargaining unit employees, 30 and under, and the more senior staff. The
18 bargaining unit employees, ages 30 to 32, this is the two percent, is the future of
19 this Agency.

20 I kind of skew my numbers a little bit from you guys. Because
21 when I went to Region I, the 30 to 32 told me include us with those Zers, okay.
22 Because our plight is the same. So the Union considers our two percent 30 to 32.

23 How will you retain them? There must be more flexibility and

1 opportunities for them and their managers supporting their work/life balance. This
2 is so key. This should be for all employees, but with this group it is essential. We
3 are losing them fast.

4 I recently had a conversation with an employee that indicated
5 that when he hears that the two percent or Generation Zers are leaving, it's either
6 lack of opportunity or management.

7 Conversely, at least 50 percent of our workforce is 50 and over,
8 and 25 percent of our workforce is retirement eligible. Where's this slice of the
9 pie in the new - I mean, starting a new organization?

10 One older employee approached me and stated that in this new
11 organization there didn't seem to be room for a person like him. He is brilliant.
12 And he has lots to offer in a mentoring or supervision role. But he was overlooked.
13 Equitable diversity and inclusion must always be a part of the equation to solve
14 any problem.

15 So before I go into my next script, I'd just like to make a comment
16 to address what Commissioner Wright has said about losing employees. We
17 actually have a couple examples of those mid-career, so smart, skilled. NRC put
18 a lot of money in them. They left because their management wouldn't be flexible.

19 It's a new day in America, okay, really. Opportunities are
20 abundant. I went to the RIC, three women, very diverse, I had a conversation with
21 them. And I said are you coming back? They used to work here. They're Zers
22 and maybe hitting 32 at most. They're, like, no, opportunity, liked NRC. And so
23 any time you see me talking and laughing with people, I'm getting information,

1 okay. I'm not just friendly.

2 So it's really real what's going on with losing people in the mid-
3 career. Even though we didn't focus on it, when I heard your presentation, it's
4 there.

5 And you have to be more flexible with these mid-career as well.
6 They'll stay, very loyal, but take away work/life balance. They wanted a rotation.
7 One guy's serving his country. His supervisor said you've got to come back. He
8 says but I'm skilled. They don't have anyone to replace me. Yeah, he came
9 back and quit. And he was in the inspection staff.

10 But anyway, now to my favorite subject in which to draw parallels
11 from for the topic of transformation, it's the auto industry. You see I like cars, right.
12 In the last six months, the auto industry has also drastically changed. At the 2019
13 Auto Show, SUV inventory showcased 50 percent of SUVs which is way up from
14 past years.

15 The 20/20 Kia Telluride, never heard of it, SUV emerged as the
16 favorite of the auto show. Why, you might ask? They listened to the customers
17 and kept pace and in sync with the needs of the evolving family and individuals'
18 need for space in our multi-faceted lives.

19 Additionally, Ford has joined GM in cutting jobs and costs. It's
20 cutting 7,000 white color jobs, or ten percent of its salaried staff worldwide, as part
21 of a cost-cutting effort it says will save the company about \$6 million a year. SUVs
22 made an impact on the auto industry long before actions were taken to address
23 the decline in the sedan.

1 NRC should be the Kia Telluride and take a page from their play
2 book, taking that same 50,000 foot approach to listen to the staff and make
3 changes for the best organization and be the darling of the federal government as
4 it reigned for so many years.

5 The lens of the Union's eye sees far and wide throughout the
6 Agency. As you can see, we value our most valuable resources. We listen. We
7 visit the regions to talk to them personally, host many events with the bargaining
8 unit employees, and talk to as many bargaining unit employees as we can, and
9 occasionally some managers.

10 While we don't represent them, they are integral to the work life
11 of the bargaining unit employees and a measure of success for NRC's vision if the
12 NRC employees and managers are unifying.

13 What is it that we constantly see, that which leaves a glare in our
14 eye? The need to improve culture and relationships with management and staff.

15 I believe that some of the smartest employees in the federal
16 government work at the NRC. Create a culture that would allow them to be smart
17 in their areas of expertise and be recognized and continue to grow.

18 We have witnessed a lot of good staff being promoted into
19 management. Does this mean that this smart employee is good management
20 material? Don't promote a manager to a higher position that would build their
21 career when there are signs that this individual might not have been the best choice
22 just because you like him or her.

23 And/or there are repeated complaints from the staff about this

1 bad manager. One bad apple can spoil the bunch. Management is a skill and
2 not a mindset to be learned. Good managers cannot be manufactured.

3 One cannot fake caring about people. Because when you care,
4 you automatically support a good work/life balance scenario for the employee.
5 Instead, promote employees that possess innate managerial abilities and skills and
6 provide them with the training needed for development.

7 The one change will be a lasting one that will transform the
8 Agency, that unexpectedly reigned as the best place to work in the federal
9 government for many years. We were not competing or studying the FEVS
10 scores on how to improve. We simply had good management and staff, and a
11 mutual respect for one another. Let's return to those days. Thank you.

12 CHAIRMAN SVINICKI: Thank you so much, Ms. Sanders.
13 That was a wonderful note to end on. And with that, I believe we are now actually
14 well and truly adjourned. Thank you.

15 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter went off the record at
16 12:00 p.m.)