

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

\*\*\*

BRIEFING ON EEO PROGRAM

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PUBLIC MEETING

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Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Commission Hearing Room  
11555 Rockville Pike  
Rockville, Maryland  
Tuesday, December 8, 1998

The Commission met in open session, pursuant to notice, at 10:00 a.m., the Honorable SHIRLEY A. JACKSON, Chairman of the Commission, presiding.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

SHIRLEY A. JACKSON, Chairman of the Commission  
JEFFREY S. MERRIFIELD, Member of the Commission  
EDWARD McGAFFIGAN, JR., Member of the Commission

STAFF AND PRESENTERS SEATED AT COMMISSION TABLE:

KAREN D. CYR, General Counsel  
JOHN D. HOYLE, Secretary  
PETER HEARN, NTEU  
JOSE IBARRA, Hispanic Employment Advisory Committee  
IRENE LITTLE, Office of Small Business and Civil Rights  
BILL TRAVERS, EDO  
PATRICIA NORRY, Management Services  
PAUL BIRD, Office of Human Resources  
ASHOK THADANI, Office of Research  
JESSE FUNCHES, Chief Financial Officer

P R O C E E D I N G S

[10:00 a.m.]

CHAIRMAN JACKSON: Good morning, ladies and gentlemen.

The Energy Reorganization Act of 1974, as amended, requires the Executive Director for Operations, the EDO, to report to the Commission at semiannual public meetings on the status of the NRC's equal employment opportunity efforts, the progress of the program, and any associated problems.

11 The purpose of the briefing today is to discuss  
12 the following: First, EEO accomplishments since the last  
13 June 25, 1998 briefing, including a status report on EEO  
14 commitments made by office directors and regional  
15 administrators at previous EEO briefings. Second, responses  
16 to a July 17, 1998 staff requirements memorandum, about  
17 which you will hear more later. Third, EEO accomplishments  
18 for fiscal year 1998, meaning October 1, 1997 through  
19 September 30, 1998. Four, fiscal year 1999 EEO objective.  
20 And, five, the implementation of EEO programs and policies  
21 in the Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research and the Office  
22 of the Chief Financial Officer.

23 SECY Paper 98-271, copies of which are available  
24 at the entrances to this room, contains additional  
25 information and data on the status of the NRC EEO program

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1 and the activities of the EEO advisory committees,  
2 subcommittees, and the Joint Labor-Management EEO Committee.

3 The paper represents the continuing cooperative  
4 efforts of the Office of the EEO, the Office of Small  
5 Business and Civil Rights, Human Resources, the EEO advisory  
6 committees, subcommittees, and the Joint Labor-Management  
7 EEO Committee.

8 So I want to begin by encouraging you to continue  
9 in your efforts to work together to recommend improvements  
10 and to establish and accomplish clear and tangible results  
11 and outcomes in meeting our EEO goals.

12 On that note, I welcome Dr. William Travers to his  
13 first EEO briefing as the EDO, as well as his partners, the  
14 various presenters, and all employees in the audience who  
15 demonstrate by your presence your interest in and commitment  
16 to the NRC EEO program.

17 The Commission looks forward to hearing about the  
18 progress we are making and the results we have achieved in  
19 the EEO area. As you are aware, our agency is addressing  
20 and responding with an intense focus to many challenges,  
21 including external and internal changes such as  
22 streamlining, reorganizations, electric industry  
23 restructuring, this is inside and out, nuclear plant license  
24 transfers, license renewals, and improvements overall in our  
25 regulatory regime.

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1 Although we must stay the course regarding these  
2 vital issues, we currently and concurrently must take real  
3 and concrete efforts to ensure that all of this occurs in an  
4 equitable way, so that we'll be better equipped to confront  
5 the various challenges and opportunities that are before us.  
6 As I have said on numerous occasions, and as I fundamentally  
7 believe, at a time like this, we don't waste anybody.

8 So with that, Dr. Travers, would you like to  
9 begin.

10 DR. TRAVERS: Thank you, Chairman Jackson,  
11 Commissioners, and good morning everyone. We are pleased to  
12 be here today, and I'm particularly pleased to be here in my  
13 new role, to provide the Commission with information on the  
14 problems, progress, and status of the Agency's equal  
15 employment opportunity program.

16 As you pointed out, our last briefing was held on  
17 June 25 of 1998, and it provided the status of the EEO  
18 program through March 31 of 1998. The briefing paper,  
19 SECY-98-271, submitted to the Commission in November, covers  
20 EEO activities for all of fiscal year '98. Today, although  
21 we will discuss highlights of the entire fiscal year, our  
22 primary focus will be on activities since our last meeting

23 with the Commission in June.

24           Joining me on my right are Pat Norry, the Deputy  
25 Executive Director for Management Services; Paul Bird, the

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1 Director of the Office of Human Resources; Ashok Thadani,  
2 Director of the Office of Research; and Jesse Funches, who  
3 is the Agency's chief financial officer.

4           On my left is Irene Little, Director of the Office  
5 of Small Business and Civil Rights, and Irene will introduce  
6 the EEO Advisory Committee representatives.

7           MS. LITTLE: Thank you, Dr. Travers.

8           To my left is Jose Ibarra. He is the chairperson  
9 of the Hispanic Employment Advisory Committee, and he is  
10 also representing the EEO Advisory Committee's spokesperson  
11 today. And Peter Hearn, who is the president of the NTEU.

12           In back of me in the well, I will ask that each  
13 person please stand as I call your name. John Minns, chair  
14 of the Selection Subcommittee; Janette Copeland, chair of  
15 the Paraprofessional Subcommittee; David Diec, chair of the  
16 Asian Pacific American Advisory Committee and the  
17 Performance Monitoring Subcommittee; Elliott Greher, chair  
18 of the Affirmative Action Advisory Committee; Mary Adams,  
19 sitting in for Charleen Raddatz as chair of the Federal  
20 Women's Program Advisory Committee; Raymond Holt, cochair of  
21 the African American Advisory Committee; Paul Norbut,  
22 sitting in for John Wilcox as chair of the Committee on Age  
23 Discrimination; and Cheryl Trottier, cochair of the Joint  
24 Labor-Management Equal Employment Opportunity Committee.

25           Thank you, Dr. Travers.

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1           DR. TRAVERS: Thank you, Irene.

2           As we all know, the Agency is in the process of  
3 carrying out a broad range of initiatives which are intended  
4 to increase both the effectiveness and the efficiency of  
5 many of our programs and processes. Included in these  
6 activities are significant reorganizations and some  
7 downsizing of staff levels. As we carry out these  
8 reorganizations, we recognize the challenge before us to  
9 effectively manage a declining work force, enhance and  
10 appreciate diversity at all levels in the Agency, maximize  
11 individual and organizational performance, and improve  
12 organizational synergy.

13           It is imperative that we collectively and  
14 strategically seek to achieve common goals and objectives  
15 necessary to carry out the agency's mission.

16           Our immediate focus in the EEO program has been  
17 twofold: maintaining the gains we have made over the years  
18 in diversifying our work place and work force, especially in  
19 the supervisory and managerial ranks, and taking steps to  
20 make sure that the limited career opportunities in the  
21 Agency in these times of declining resources are made  
22 available fairly to all employees.

23           As we move forward, we are working towards  
24 establishing an EEO standard of excellence. Our guiding  
25 principles are spelled out in the updated affirmative

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1 employment plan. These principles have been established to  
2 ensure that our guidelines are clear and our efforts are  
3 realistically focused and integrated into our day-to-day  
4 management of the Agency.

5           I am convinced that this pursuit will propel us  
6 toward a more effective and efficiently run organization  
7 that values its people and their contributions.

8 I will now ask Pat Norry to provide details about  
9 our progress and highlights of some of our response to the  
10 staff requirements memorandum.

11 MS. NORRY: Thank you, Bill.

12 First, I'll briefly review the highlights of the  
13 staff's response to the staff requirement memorandum from  
14 the last meeting.

15 May I have the first slide, please.

16 Steps to achieve an honest and fair assessment of  
17 individual employee performance across all NRC offices has  
18 several aspects: applying the definitions of performance  
19 ratings consistently and providing candid and timely  
20 feedback to employees are difficult challenges.

21 May we have the slides, please?

22 We have consistently encouraged managers and  
23 supervisors to provide honest and candid feedback to  
24 employees throughout their performance period. We have  
25 stressed this practice in our training course, Effective

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1 Management in Merit Staffing, and in our performance  
2 appraisal courses. Managers and supervisors are reminded to  
3 closely adhere to the criteria and the definitions  
4 established for rating SES and non-SES employee performance.  
5 The results of these efforts show that we need to do more.  
6 Office directors and regional administrators are responsible  
7 for improving the evaluation process within their offices  
8 with help from Human Resources.

9 By the next EEO briefing I hope we are able to  
10 report additional progress in this area. Training is an  
11 important component here, and we may need to step up the  
12 pace in the training. But I stress we have made progress  
13 since the last briefing, and we continue and we will be able  
14 to report further progress at the next briefing.

15 In addition we've taken steps to eliminate  
16 preselection of individuals for assignments and assure equal  
17 opportunity to all employees. The Merit Selection  
18 Subcommittee raised this concern in previous briefings and  
19 made several recommendations to enhance the merit process.

20 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: Let me stop you for a minute.

21 MS. NORRY: Yes.

22 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: You make the point that  
23 managers and supervisors are routinely reminded to adhere  
24 closely to the criteria and definitions established for  
25 rating SES, and you say you've met with limited success.

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1 Would you elaborate?

2 MS. NORRY: What I mean is that we believe that  
3 the correct application of the definitions for various  
4 appraisal ratings is not yet consistently applied throughout  
5 the Agency. This has to do with -- as you know, we've made  
6 a major effort to make sure that appraisals are honest, and  
7 in so doing we have stressed what it means to be an  
8 outstanding performer, what it means to be an excellent  
9 performer.

10 Now as you know, in the case of SES, all SES are  
11 rated fully successful, but the definitions of the  
12 performance within the subelements are characterized as  
13 exceeding or just meeting the goals. In the case of  
14 non-SES, we have the different appraisal ratings. And there  
15 is progress being made, we believe, and we know that in a  
16 number of parts of the Agency there's been a lot of emphasis  
17 put on this. But we just need to do more.

18 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: One additional question here:  
19 But criteria and definitions do exist?

20 MS. NORRY: Yes.  
21 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: And are the managers and  
22 supervisors themselves rated on the extent --  
23 MS. NORRY: Yes.  
24 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: To which they adhere to that?  
25 MS. NORRY: As part of the rating of managers;

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1 it's part of the rating of SES managers, how well they  
2 administer various human resources activities, including how  
3 well they administer the appraisal system.

4 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: Does that show up then in their  
5 performance ratings?

6 MS. NORRY: Yes. Not consistently. That is one  
7 area where we need to do a better job, but it does show up.  
8 That is something that I believe we need to put more focus  
9 on, make sure that it is in there that Office Directors,  
10 Division Directors and down in the managerial ranks are  
11 rated on that.

12 COMMISSIONER DICUS: Okay. You said that you  
13 haven't achieved the goal that you have set out agency-wide  
14 to get this consistency, and if you characterize it, there  
15 is a difference between Headquarters and the regions or a  
16 particular region or is this really agency-wide including  
17 across-the-board to the regions?

18 MS. NORRY: I don't -- I mean we --

19 MR. BIRD: Pardon me --

20 MS. NORRY: Yes, go ahead.

21 MR. BIRD: I think you could broadly characterize  
22 it that way. The regions seem to overall rate lower than  
23 the Headquarters, and then within the Headquarters the Staff  
24 offices tend to rate lower than the Commission offices and  
25 so there's some generic ways you could look at this and then

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1 office to office there are some inconsistencies in outcomes.

2 Now that is not to say they are not fair and  
3 honest. You know, some offices, particularly offices with  
4 small staffs, you may have people who are performing in a  
5 different level than in other offices, but I think in  
6 response to your question you could say that you can make  
7 those breaks.

8 COMMISSIONER DICUS: So that would seem to target  
9 some of the areas that you need to work on.

10 MR. BIRD: Exactly.

11 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: I continue to believe that if  
12 you have elements and standards for your supervisors and  
13 managers, then it has to be policed in terms of holding them  
14 to it. If you don't do it with the people who work for you  
15 and they don't do it for the people who work for them, then  
16 you have a dishonest performance appraisal system for  
17 managers and supervisors, so that is my only comment.

18 MS. NORRY: That's right.

19 I was talking about the steps we have taken to  
20 eliminate preselection and we, as the Merit Selection  
21 Subcommittee had made a number of excellent points in  
22 recommending additional things we could do, we have accepted  
23 many of them and in fact have just published a merit  
24 selection brochure that addresses many of the questions that  
25 are raised about the application process, the selection

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1 process, and how people are qualified.

2 It gives fairly forthright answers to these  
3 questions and we are going to distribute this brochure to  
4 everyone in the agency, and this should help.

5 Do you have a copy of that? You got it? Okay.  
6 Merit Staffing at the NRC -- in this we have tried  
7 to answer all the questions that keep getting raised and we  
8 will keep working on this and improve it in future  
9 publications.

10 We have also implemented a Managing Diversity  
11 process to assist in creating a work environment that  
12 supports maximizing the potential of all employees and  
13 improving individual and organizational performance, thereby  
14 helping to enhance regulatory effectiveness.

15 Awareness sessions have been completed for all  
16 managers and supervisors. The next phase will consist of  
17 sessions for all employees. Managing a diverse workforce  
18 will require the cooperative effort of management and staff  
19 to ensure success of long-term organizational change.

20 We believe these initiatives will continue to  
21 mitigate the perception of preselection in the merit  
22 process.

23 Finally, the SRM requested information regarding  
24 the status and utilization of a Commissioner Assistant  
25 candidate pool and a paper has been forwarded to the

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1 Commission which addresses this issue.

2 Next I would like to review our activities in the  
3 primary focus areas for our EEO program. May I have the  
4 next slide, please.

5 These are enhancing opportunities for women and  
6 minorities in professional positions, expanding the pool of  
7 minorities and women in supervisory, management, executive,  
8 and senior level positions, enhancing efforts to attract and  
9 retain employees with disabilities, and improving  
10 communications about the agency's EEO objectives.

11 Even in the current downsizing and reorganizing  
12 environment, these four areas have remained our primary  
13 focus and we have had some degree of success in achieving  
14 them.

15 The first area of emphasis, enhancing  
16 opportunities for advancement of women and minorities in  
17 professional positions, 71 professional hires were made in  
18 Fiscal '98 of which 21 were minorities and 7 were  
19 non-minority women. The intern program was reinstated this  
20 fiscal year and we continued our outreach to attract highly  
21 qualified women and minority candidates and were successful.  
22 Five interns were hired. All were minorities or women.  
23 Next slide.

24 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: Let me ask a question here.  
25 Did any Native American, African American, or Hispanic women

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1 apply to the intern program?

2 MS. NORRY: I don't know the answer to the  
3 question.

4 MR. BIRD: I am not sure, but I believe so. We  
5 can certainly check that.

6 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: Okay -- and how many  
7 individuals applied overall?

8 MR. BIRD: I am not sure I have that data.

9 COMMISSIONER MCGAFFIGAN: Could I ask a question  
10 before you leave that slide? I was looking at this document  
11 that just came to us, the Affirmative Employment Plan.

12 There is a reference in the Appendix, the Glossary  
13 of Terms, the Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education  
14 Data or ORISE Data, which apparently lays out demographic  
15 data on each occupation and what the applicant pool is  
16 likely to consist of for each occupation.

17 Do you look at that data and compare it to what  
18 our actual hires are to see -- and is that available?  
19 MS. NORRY: Yes.  
20 COMMISSIONER MCGAFFIGAN: The comparison of the  
21 ORISE demographic data with our actual hires?  
22 MS. NORRY: Yes. We have that.  
23 COMMISSIONER MCGAFFIGAN: I just would be  
24 interested in seeing that at some point.  
25 MS. NORRY: Yes. In fact, I think at one point in

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1 these papers we used to include those data and we certainly  
2 can do that again. It got to be a little much in a word --  
3 the necessity to make comparisons in cases where the groups  
4 were not as representative of the ones we actually hired as  
5 they could have been, so we kind of stopped putting that in  
6 there, but we do have those data.  
7 COMMISSIONER MCGAFFIGAN: Okay. This may be  
8 something left -- I couldn't find it anywhere except in the  
9 Glossary so it may have been a mistake to leave it in. I  
10 would be interested in seeing it if it is available.  
11 MS. NORRY: Okay.  
12 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: Of the 21 minorities that you  
13 point out were hired, you can't give me any breakdown by  
14 ethnicity and sex at all?  
15 MS. NORRY: That's in here, isn't it?  
16 Well, it doesn't break down -- that's the whole  
17 thing but it doesn't break down the actual hires.  
18 Could Paul -- Paul said he actually has that or we  
19 can certainly supply it.  
20 MS. LITTLE: Pat, I believe that is in the  
21 attachment 4 on page 1, attachment 4.  
22 MS. NORRY: Okay. What page, Irene?  
23 [Pause.]  
24 MR. BIRD: It's the first paragraph.  
25 MS. NORRY: So it breaks it down between

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1 Professional and Other and then it gives the breakdown of  
2 the ethnicity groups.  
3 MS. LITTLE: And the intern hire breakdown is in  
4 the last paragraph on that page, but not the applicants,  
5 just the hires.  
6 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: Thank you. So you are going to  
7 give me the information about the applicant pool.  
8 MS. NORRY: Okay. Next slide -- the rotational  
9 program.  
10 We have continued to use the rotational process to  
11 enhance the career growth potential of our employees. The  
12 number of rotations decreased slightly from 238 to 215 by  
13 the number of minority rotations increased by 3 percent,  
14 from 38 to 42. Now the next slide.  
15 The next area of emphasis is to enhance the pool  
16 of minorities and women in supervisory, management,  
17 executive and senior level positions.  
18 In spite of the reduction in overall staff, the  
19 number of minority employees in the feeder group, Grades 13  
20 to 15, increased from 349 to 361. The number of women in  
21 this group held steady at 421. The number of women and  
22 minorities in SES and senior level positions increased  
23 slightly. Of the 38 employees in senior level positions, 12  
24 are minorities or women.  
25 Minority women in the SES increased by two,

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1 bringing the total to three, and the total number of women

2 in the SES is now 21. The number of minority men remained  
3 at 15.

4 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: And over what period of time  
5 has that changed in terms of the number of women in the SES?  
6 How is that tracked over time?

7 MS. NORRY: When we say that we increased -- over  
8 what period of time?

9 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: You pick it. Two years? Five  
10 years?

11 MS. NORRY: For?

12 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: The increase in the number of  
13 women in the SES.

14 MS. NORRY: Well, last year we were -- I mean it's  
15 been going steadily up --

16 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: Do you have a chart that shows  
17 that?

18 MS. NORRY: Do we have a chart that shows --

19 MR. BIRD: I may have that --

20 MS. NORRY: We were stuck in single digits for  
21 many years and then we made steady -- okay.

22 Okay -- so where does it say Women? We had 13 --

23 MR. BIRD: In '94.

24 MS. NORRY: 13 in '94; 14 in '95; 15 in '96 -- and  
25 then we made a big jump to 19 --

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1 MR. BIRD: In '97.

2 MS. NORRY: No -- 20 in '97 and then 20 --

3 MR. BIRD: In '98.

4 MS. NORRY: -- in '98. We have what, added one?

5 MR. BIRD: Yes.

6 MS. LITTLE: 21 in '98.

7 MS. NORRY: 21 in '98, and so in '98 what you have  
8 is 18 White women, two African American women, and one Asian  
9 Pacific woman. May I have the next slide, please, which  
10 relates to the third area of emphasis, to enhance efforts to  
11 attract, develop and retain employees with disabilities.

12 An aggressive advertising campaign and liaison  
13 activities helped us to attract and recruit persons with  
14 disabilities. A total of seven persons with such  
15 disabilities were hired this fiscal year.

16 In addition, we were able to support several  
17 employees requiring reasonable accommodations including  
18 automatic door devices, special monitors for the visually  
19 impaired and telecommunications devices for hearing impaired  
20 employees. This type of support helps to improve the  
21 environment and allow these employees to maximize their  
22 productivity.

23 The next area of emphasis is to improve  
24 communication about EEO and affirmative action objectives,  
25 improve management responsiveness, and evaluate progress. I

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1 referred earlier to the merit staffing brochure, which  
2 should help in the communication of what merit staffing is  
3 all about, and we are continuing to work with managers to  
4 provide honest and candid feedback to employees.

5 We have standardized the guidance to supervisors  
6 and managers for addressing EEO goals, objectives and  
7 achievements and we are continuing to work with the EEO  
8 Advisory Committees and joint Labor-Management EEO Committee  
9 to address concerns through these -- raised through these  
10 committees.

11 We believe these initiatives are all components of  
12 a healthy EEO program which provides equal employment in a  
13 supportive work environment for all employees.

14 Irene Little will now provide highlights of other  
15 recent accomplishments and new initiatives that support our  
16 EEO program, and she will highlight issues addressed by the  
17 EEO Advisory Committees. Irene?

18 MS. LITTLE: Thank you, Mrs. Norry.

19 If I could have the next slide, please. I will  
20 talk about three areas.

21 The first, the EEO program direction.

22 In an effort to improve the effectiveness of the  
23 Agency's EEO program, and to communicate a clear message  
24 regarding the program's direction, the Commission reviewed  
25 recently -- and you, Chairman Jackson, signed -- the updated

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1 NRC EEO and diversity policy and the Agency's affirmative  
2 employment plan. This affirmative employment plan provides  
3 the framework for managers and staff to work together to  
4 improve NRC's work environment and organizational  
5 performance. A copy of this plan has been provided to all  
6 supervisors and managers, and will be distributed to all  
7 employees within the next few days.

8 The EEO guiding principles that are spelled out in  
9 the affirmative employment plan are also included in  
10 guidance to all supervisors and managers for completing the  
11 operating plan. This single focused guidance will assist  
12 managers and supervisors in establishing specific EEO  
13 objectives and in integrating EEO into their day-to-day  
14 management of all activities. It will also serve as a tool  
15 for monitoring achievements in the EEO arena.

16 The second area that I will discuss is the area of  
17 office directors who have come to the table, as we have two  
18 here today, to talk about specific EEO goals and activities  
19 in their offices. The offices that have come during the  
20 past two briefings have provided us status on their  
21 activities.

22 The Office of General Counsel came to the table in  
23 October 1997 and discussed her commitment to enhance staff  
24 development. Since that time one African American woman in  
25 a paralegal position completed studies leading to a law

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1 degree, and in fiscal year 1998 was selected for an attorney  
2 position. Another African-American woman is currently  
3 participating in the computer science development program to  
4 enhance her information management skills, skills that are  
5 in increasing demand throughout the Agency. OGC's efforts  
6 are continuing in this area.

7 Also at the table in October 1997 was the office  
8 director, Office of Nuclear Materials, Safety, and  
9 Safeguards. The Director made a commitment to place  
10 increased emphasis on focused recruitment in the LOCA area,  
11 and since that time combined recruitment efforts have  
12 resulted in the hiring of 15 permanent positions. All of  
13 these hires are minorities or women. NMSS expects to fill  
14 approximately 50 positions in fiscal year 1999. Many of  
15 these positions will be filled at the entry level, and the  
16 expectation is the diversity of the applicant pool will  
17 remain the same -- be similar to what we've experienced in  
18 the past.

19 Also at the table in October was the Regional  
20 Administrator from Region III, who made a commitment to  
21 increase the use of the individual development plan for  
22 career development. And since that time Region III  
23 management has conducted special sessions to discuss skills  
24 building for all employees. Today approximately 40 percent

1 place. This effort is expected to continue and should  
2 result in overall improvement of individual and regional  
3 performance.

4 At the last briefing in June 1998 the Office  
5 Director, Nuclear Reactor Regulation, discussed an increased  
6 emphasis on communication throughout his organization, and  
7 increasing efforts to diversify the NRR work force through  
8 entry-level hiring. In response to these commitments, NRR  
9 has increased the frequency of its all-hands meetings to  
10 respond more effectively to employee concerns regarding  
11 changes in the office. NRR has also established an  
12 entry-level recruitment program. During FY 1998, six  
13 selections were made; five of these six were women or  
14 minorities.

15 And finally, the Regional Administrator from  
16 Region I, also at the table in June, made a commitment to  
17 enhance diversity of Region I's management staff. There has  
18 been no opportunity to fill permanent supervisory positions  
19 in Region I for several years. However, Region I's  
20 management has used temporary promotions and rotational  
21 assignments to enhance the career potential of employees in  
22 both technical and administrative pipelines. In FY 1998,  
23 two white women and two minorities were temporarily promoted  
24 to supervisory positions, and four other women or minorities  
25 were supported for rotational assignment.

1 Also, the entire Agency has been focused on  
2 reducing the underrepresentation of Hispanics in the work  
3 force, and we'd make a noteworthy comment that of four  
4 Hispanics hired in FY 1998, two of them were hired by  
5 Region I.

6 The Office of Small Business and Civil Rights will  
7 continue to work with offices and regions to provide  
8 assistance in establishing realistic EEO goals in monitoring  
9 these activities as they work toward these goals.

10 The third area I will discuss is committee  
11 activity. The EEO advisory committees and the Joint  
12 Labor-Management EEO Committee have continued to play a  
13 significant role in bringing EEO issues to the attention of  
14 management, and in offering up recommendations to remediate  
15 EEO concerns.

16 During the past fiscal year, the committees have  
17 emphasized establishing upward-mobility positions to improve  
18 opportunities for paraprofessionals. The Joint  
19 Labor-Management EEO Committee and the advisory committees  
20 have both recommended that we conduct an assessment of the  
21 potential adverse impact of downsizing and reorganizing on  
22 women, minorities, and persons with disabilities. The  
23 Office of Small Business and Civil Rights will be conducting  
24 this informal assessment and providing feedback in future  
25 briefings on the results.

1 In past EEO briefings, we have also discussed the  
2 recommendations made by the Selection Subcommittee and the  
3 Performance Monitoring Subcommittee. These recommendations  
4 have all been responded to now, and those subcommittees are  
5 now absorbed into the EEO Advisory Committee structure.

6 To elaborate more on the EEO advisory committee  
7 activity, Jose Ibarra will provide highlights.

8 MR. IBARRA: Good morning, Chairman.

9 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: Good morning.

10 MR. IBARRA: Good morning, Commissioners.

11 Thank you very much for the opportunity to talk to  
12 you on behalf of all the EEO advisory committees and the  
13 subcommittees.

14 The cooperation has continued, very positive  
15 cooperation with the Office of Small Business, Civil Rights,  
16 and the Office of Human Resources. The Performance  
17 Monitoring Subcommittee and the Merit Selection Subcommittee  
18 have completed their work, and we are very encouraged that  
19 several of the recommendations of the Merit Selection  
20 Subcommittee have been implemented by management. The  
21 Paraprofessional Subcommittee is progressing in its review  
22 of issues related to administrative and clerical employees.

23 In this time of downsizing and reorganization, our  
24 primary focus is the impact that this will have on  
25 minorities, women, persons 40 years and older, and

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1 individuals with disabilities. It is critical that  
2 management provide support and constructive feedback to  
3 employees and that they coach and mentor employees in this  
4 environment. The advisory committees want to be positive  
5 and have a positive outlook, and we believe that this is a  
6 time for employees to hone their skills, because of the  
7 large number of people that are retiring that will create  
8 new opportunities for the people that do remain.

9 It is important for managers to communicate this  
10 to their employees, especially minorities, and it's  
11 important that they assist them in developing skills to  
12 carry out the mission of this agency.

13 The advisory committees believe that in order to  
14 enhance careers for individuals they need visibility and  
15 exposure. This can be provided by rotational assignments  
16 and developmental assignments in high-visibility positions,  
17 including the EDO's office and the Commissioner's offices.  
18 In addition, the Agency needs to provide more upward  
19 mobility for paraprofessionals, and they need to enhance the  
20 focused recruitment of qualified minorities.

21 In the last briefing we mentioned the fact that  
22 Hispanics -- we were having problems with retention of  
23 Hispanics, and that does continue. In this briefing period  
24 in spite of being successful in hiring for Hispanics, today  
25 we have 62 Hispanics versus 64 which were reported in the

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1 June briefing of this year.

2 Thank you.

3 MS. NORRY: Thank you, Jose.

4 I would now like to ask Ashok Thadani to provide  
5 highlights of the EEO program in the Office of Nuclear  
6 Regulatory Research.

7 MR. THADANI: Thank you, Pat. Good morning.

8 I'm pleased to address the Commission today on the  
9 EEO program in the Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research.  
10 Research fully supports equal employment and  
11 career-enhancing opportunities for all of its employees.  
12 Research, like many of the organization's offices, is  
13 managing its programs within a staffing environment that has  
14 very limited options for hiring, especially from outside the  
15 Agency.

16 Research currently has 165 employees; 23 percent  
17 are minorities; 19 percent are white women; and 58 percent  
18 are white men. Currently Research supervisors are  
19 represented by 12 percent white women, 20 percent Asian  
20 Pacific men, and 68 percent white men. During the last  
21 year, white women were selected for two key positions in

22 Research: Deputy Director of Research and Chief of  
23 Radiation and Health Effects Branch. An African American  
24 man was selected for a secretarial position, and an Asian  
25 Pacific American man was selected for a materials engineer

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1 position.

2 Research is currently working with the Offices of  
3 Small Business and Civil Rights and Human Resources to  
4 identify targeted minorities to fill some anticipated future  
5 research vacancies. In view of significant losses the  
6 office experienced in '97 and '98, in '99 we anticipate  
7 recruiting recent high-quality graduates and postgraduates  
8 in certain key disciplines as risk analysis, nuclear  
9 mechanical engineering, and Earth sciences.

10 I strongly believe in recognizing the  
11 contributions and accomplishments of employees through the  
12 use of incentive awards. All awards are personally reviewed  
13 by me and my deputy to ensure consistency and fairness in  
14 the process. Research initiated an employee of the month  
15 program during fiscal year 1998. This award recognizes  
16 significant contributions by employees with instant cash  
17 awards and citations; 57 percent of the employee of the  
18 month awards were given to women or minorities.

19 Research has continued its efforts to improve  
20 overall office performance and to help employees attain  
21 their career goals through training and development. Each  
22 staff member is encouraged to attend training and  
23 development each year. In addition to training for  
24 technical staff, several nontechnical research employees are  
25 enrolled at area colleges to enhance their career

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1 opportunities. One female line manager is completing course  
2 work at the University of Maryland in computer science and  
3 accounting. An African American female secretary is  
4 completing course work at the University of Maryland in  
5 business management. And an African American male secretary  
6 is enrolled at Prince George's Community College.

7 Research also uses rotational assignments as an  
8 effective method of enhancing career development and provide  
9 exposure to staff to other offices outside of Research. In  
10 fact, Research staff participated in 24 rotations, which is  
11 15 percent of the staff, during 1998, and 30 percent of all  
12 rotations involved women or minorities.

13 Last year an African American female secretary who  
14 had completed her degree in business finance at the  
15 University of Maryland participated in a rotational  
16 assignment in the Office of Administration and was later  
17 selected for a paraprofessional position in that office.

18 Research has continued its strong support for the  
19 mentoring program. In 1998 Research had seven mentees and  
20 five mentors. I am a mentor, but I do not mentor the  
21 employees of the Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research.

22 Research management supports the EEO program  
23 through management and employee participation in EEO  
24 activities. Two SES managers participate on the Executive  
25 Resource Board, EEO Review Group, to provide insights on the

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1 availability of highly qualified women and minorities for  
2 merit selection process.

3 Research employees hold membership on three EEO  
4 advisory committees. One employee was appointed as an NRC  
5 EEO counselor.

6 Now these are challenging times for NRC, but we do  
7 need to continue to pay close attention to EEO

8 considerations as well. Research plans to reorganize the  
9 office to achieve a supervisory-to-staff ratio of 1:8,  
10 reduce the number of SES positions, align functions to be  
11 consistent with Commission decisions on the fiscal year 2000  
12 budget, and maximize the effectiveness and efficiency of the  
13 organization by grouping functions that require similar  
14 staff technical skills.

15 As we proceed with these changes, we will involve  
16 the staff through the partnership as appropriate and be  
17 mindful of human resource issues.

18 I have also instituted quarterly all-hands  
19 meetings to enhance communication within the office. These  
20 meetings are used to update the staff on recent  
21 developments, discuss topics of interest to staff, and to  
22 exchange views, ideas, and concerns.

23 I have provided more specifics in my statement in  
24 the SECY paper. Thank you.

25 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: Thank you. Let me ask you a

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1 couple of questions.

2 Although women and at least one minority group,  
3 the Asian and Pacific American men, are well represented it  
4 seems in your supervisory ranks, other minorities such as  
5 Hispanics, African Americans, and Native Americans appear to  
6 be missing in those ranks and Hispanics and Native Americans  
7 may even be missing in the employee ranks, and so I guess my  
8 question is if they exist within your staff at all, what  
9 opportunities are available to these other minorities to  
10 prepare themselves for supervisory positions?

11 MR. THADANI: First of all, Chairman Jackson, you  
12 are quite correct. We in the Office of Research do not have  
13 much representation as a matter of fact of certain  
14 minorities, so the first step is, particularly in the  
15 professional field, the first step is to take advantage of  
16 what I think are some opportunities we will have in 1999 and  
17 target certain areas for -- in certain particular  
18 disciplines, technical staff.

19 Second -- in fact, Dr. Morrison, before I went to  
20 the Office of Research, had developed a development plan for  
21 each of the employees in the office, working with the  
22 managers not only technical development but other aspects of  
23 development as well.

24 The base from which we are operating in the Office  
25 of Research and other groups is really very small and it

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1 needs to be expanded.

2 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: Do you have any Hispanic or  
3 African American professionals in the Office of Research?

4 MR. THADANI: We do. We do. And we have offered  
5 them training and development, yes -- but I have to say at  
6 the same time it is a very small number.

7 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: What specific steps is your  
8 office taking with the Office of Small Business and Civil  
9 Rights and Human Resources to identify Hispanic, African  
10 American, and Native American and other minority and women  
11 applicants for those supervisory and just general Research  
12 vacancies? It is a bit discouraging -- I think it is  
13 important for the individuals but I noted when you were  
14 describing various activities for career enhancement, I  
15 didn't hear you really explicitly talk about any Hispanic  
16 American employees, and the only African American employees  
17 you talked about were in clerical positions.

18 MR. THADANI: Currently I have had a discussion

19 with both Irene and Paul Bird in terms of targeting certain  
20 minority groups for hiring purposes.

21 In terms of supervisory opportunities have been  
22 extremely limited. In fact, currently Office of Research is  
23 going to be going down from 23 SES positions to 13 SES  
24 positions; 12 non-supervisory or non-SES, supervisory  
25 positions, to 9 supervisory non-SES positions.

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1 Quite frankly, the opportunities just aren't there  
2 at this time, but I would expect that in future there will  
3 be some opportunities but last year, this year and perhaps  
4 next year would be difficult years.

5 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: And in your overall workforce?

6 MR. THADANI: We are doing --

7 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: Professional workforce.

8 MR. THADANI: Professional workforce -- we have  
9 opportunities now, I believe, because we are down to 165  
10 total and the professional forces is below our staffing  
11 level for '99, as a matter of fact, so I think there are  
12 some opportunities.

13 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: Please.

14 COMMISSIONER DICUS: This under-representation of  
15 certain minority groups, is this the case in fairly recent  
16 history or was this made worse when Research was downsized  
17 and personnel were moved into other programs?

18 MR. THADANI: I believe that has been the  
19 situation in the past but that is based on my general  
20 knowledge and I think it may have been made worse by some  
21 losses.

22 Research suffered in 1998 about 8 percent  
23 reduction of staff and while that has created some  
24 difficulties, yet I think that has also led to some  
25 opportunities for hiring.

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1 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: Do you have any idea about  
2 within the graduating student body including with advanced  
3 degrees at the University of Maryland, UMBC, Georgetown,  
4 George Washington, you know, what kinds of proportional  
5 pools of people there are in these various groups?

6 MR. THADANI: I don't know myself, but we would  
7 be -- since this is, I think next year is the first  
8 opportunity we are going to have, we are not only going to  
9 target local universities but other selected universities as  
10 well, but we will be getting that information.

11 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: Please.

12 COMMISSIONER MERRIFIELD: This line of questioning  
13 raises a couple of concerns. It seems to me that there are  
14 two -- it's not just directed toward NRR, sort of two areas  
15 you have to focus on.

16 One is the extent to which we can bring more  
17 people in, university level or elsewhere, into the NRC. The  
18 other issue is the extent to which we have people here and  
19 we don't lose them to other agencies, to the private sector  
20 and elsewhere.

21 Obviously there is more that we need to be doing  
22 in outreach both at local universities and elsewhere and I  
23 am pleased to hear that that is going to be increasing.

24 I am curious in terms of the retention of the  
25 people we already have, people we have trained, people we

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1 have gone out of our way to bring in who are minorities,  
2 where are we in that? Are we losing a lot of folks to other  
3 agencies, to the private sector, and what kind of tracking  
4 have we done to try to indicate what we may need to change

5 here to make it more attractive for people to stay?

6 MS. NORRY: I think we have the data from exit  
7 interviews to the extent that people share with us their  
8 reasons for leaving, and some of them are leaving to go to  
9 other agencies. Some of them are leaving to go to private  
10 industry.

11 What we clearly need to do a better job in is in  
12 whether you call it mentoring, whether you call it  
13 partnering, whatever -- when we have a promising new hire we  
14 can't just put them in a corner and assume that everything  
15 is going to be fine. We have to target them for some  
16 interest and make sure that their career is being followed.

17 We have had people who leave and say, well, I  
18 don't think, I didn't feel that I had a career path. Well,  
19 there is no reason for that. If you have someone who is  
20 good, and who is showing promise, they should never get the  
21 feeling they don't have a career path, so that is an area  
22 that we have already discussed that we have to put a major  
23 emphasis on, which is called keeping the good people we  
24 have.

25 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: With respect to retention, I

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1 have explicitly asked Mrs. Norry to get some data in terms  
2 of how other agencies are doing relative to retaining  
3 employees in those same categories. That is number one.

4 I have asked her to further get data if we are  
5 losing employees to other agencies, what is it that is  
6 attracting them to those other agencies; for those agencies  
7 that have better retention records than we do, to explore  
8 what it is they do to retain those employees; and finally to  
9 have all of this predicated on understanding with greater  
10 detail or a greater understanding why those employees who do  
11 leave, leave, particularly if they go to other agencies.

12 You know, competition with the private sector is  
13 one thing, but there is a real question when employees move  
14 from one agency to another.

15 COMMISSIONER MERRIFIELD: In just a follow-up to  
16 that, we have had -- I had some information about some very  
17 promising minority employees recently who have left who are  
18 relatively young, and obviously those are the people we want  
19 to bring through and bring into our system so that they too  
20 can eventually get up to the SES level, and I guess it  
21 raises the additional issue of the relative age of folks  
22 here in the agency.

23 Looking through some statistics, the percentage of  
24 employees under the age of 40 has been steadily decreasing  
25 here at the agency. There's a variety of reasons for that.

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1 What steps are we taking to make sure that as our workforce  
2 ages or as we have retirements, we are continuing to have a  
3 pool of people coming in, particularly minorities, who will  
4 be in a position to replace them so we don't have a drop-off  
5 at some point?

6 MS. NORRY: Paul, do you want to talk about our  
7 entry level efforts?

8 MR. BIRD: Yes. To the extent that we have been  
9 hiring, we have been working very hard to encourage all the  
10 offices to focus recruitment basically at the entry level,  
11 whether it be interns, graduate fellows. We think that  
12 intake is essential to the future of the agency and that is  
13 where we should focus a lot of efforts.

14 A tendency when you are downsizing is for people  
15 to hire back or try to hire back at full performance level.

16 I think for the large offices particularly that dialogue has  
17 produced some commitments, as you heard Ashok mention, to  
18 focus more on entry level hires.

19 I think that is how this agency will build its  
20 future, quite frankly.

21 I was looking at some data on this over the past  
22 four, five years for under 40 and we have consistently lost  
23 around 40 employees in that category each year on the  
24 average over those years, so the numbers haven't really  
25 increased. Of course, the base is coming down, so 40 out of

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1 a lower base is a bigger percentage.

2 One of the interesting things recently though is  
3 the shift in the movement of the under-40 group from  
4 transferring to other agencies to resignation to the private  
5 sector, so there has been some trend data and we are looking  
6 at that but certainly if you don't replenish at the entry  
7 level with younger people, you are mortgaging your future  
8 and I think that -- again, I think there's been a lot of  
9 dialogue on this and some commitment both in the regions and  
10 the Headquarters among the offices to do that, and hopefully  
11 that will take hold and continue.

12 COMMISSIONER MERRIFIELD: And that gets us back to  
13 the same point, and that is if we are putting the right  
14 resources, which we should, in maintaining and being able to  
15 bring in minorities at that level, to the extent that we  
16 have a lot of individuals in that age bracket leaving, that  
17 means a lot of people who who've been successful at bringing  
18 in may be leaving, and that is a concern.

19 MS. NORRY: Just one other piece of information.  
20 We had, we conducted approximately 125 exit interviews  
21 during mostly fiscal '98, and part of '99. They show that  
22 12 people out of that group left to go to another agency.

23 By far the largest number was 40, which was to  
24 private industry, and then a variety of other things, but  
25 next time we report on this, the number attributable to

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1 retirement will go way up -- but we need to do as Paul said  
2 at the entry level and at the same time need to make sure we  
3 are preparing people who are at the middle level to take the  
4 senior level positions that will be opening up.

5 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: Shall we hear now from --

6 MS. NORRY: Yes. Jesse Funches.

7 MR. FUNCHES: I am pleased to address the  
8 Commission today on the Equal Employment Opportunity Program  
9 as implemented in the Office of the Chief Financial Officer.

10 My staff and I are fully committed to equal  
11 employment opportunity for all employees and support the  
12 agency's equal employment opportunity and diversity policy,  
13 affirmative action objective, and initiatives.

14 I hope that the information I will share with you  
15 and members of the audience will demonstrate that  
16 commitment.

17 The Office of the CFO has 106 full-time and  
18 part-time employees. Sixty-nine percent of our staff are  
19 women and 31 percent are men. Thirty-three percent of our  
20 staff are minorities with the remaining 67 percent have been  
21 white.

22 The makeup of our managers and supervisors are  
23 similar to the makeup of the staff and distribution.

24 During the past year we have been successful in  
25 bringing in minorities and women in terms of new hires. For

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1 example, minority made up 25 percent of the new hires. This

2 included addressing one under-representation area, that is,  
3 hiring an African American man in our management ranks.

4 With respect to age, 73 percent of the staff is  
5 over 40 years old and among the managers 82 percent are  
6 currently over 40 years.

7 To achieve the agency EEO goal, I have directed  
8 the office and we have taken certain steps which I will now  
9 summarize.

10 To follow more closely the guidance as outlined in  
11 the management directive on performance appraisals, we have  
12 taken steps to provide a more realistic performance  
13 appraisal to the CFO staff. All of my managers and  
14 supervisors were reminded of their obligation to explain the  
15 performance appraisal process and in the perceived changes  
16 to the rating standards. The performance review stressed  
17 performance ratings that were consistent with the  
18 agency-wide standards.

19 We discussed the evaluation standards and the  
20 value of an effective interchange of information between  
21 each employee and their supervisor at an all hands meeting  
22 with all employees.

23 I believe we have made substantial progress this  
24 year. However, we will examine the results of this year's  
25 appraisal to determine what additional steps are necessary

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1 to make our appraisal a more effective interchange of  
2 information between the employees and supervisors.

3 My managers and I recognize that an effective  
4 merit selection process is an integral part of an effective  
5 EEO program. To this end, prior to recruiting to fill a  
6 position, our managers review the job description and  
7 performance rating to ensure no artificial barriers are  
8 present to employment. This includes making sure that the  
9 rating criteria and the standards are as broad as we can  
10 make them so that we can get the widest pool of applicants.

11 Additionally, we include women and/or minorities  
12 as members of all our rating panel. This helps us  
13 accomplish two goals. First, stressing diversity in the  
14 review panel assures that a broad cross-section of our staff  
15 are exposed to the selection process. Secondly, the  
16 recognition of the acceptance of diversity helps encourage  
17 all qualified minority and women candidates to consider  
18 application.

19 Another area that we are emphasizing is training.  
20 We encourage development of our employees through career  
21 training and rotation of assignment. During the past year  
22 we have sponsored 18 rotation assignments internally within  
23 the office. This included one minority women, three white  
24 women and four white men. We are also have a minority  
25 female in the agency computer science development program.

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1 We are using entry level professional positions to  
2 enhance career development. For example, two minority  
3 para-professional positions have been -- two minority women  
4 have been selected into para-professionalism positions at  
5 the entry level in the accounting area. We also have two  
6 entry level program analyst positions in the last stage of  
7 the merit selection process.

8 Recognition of job achievement in the work force  
9 is an important part of building an effective organization.  
10 It is a team building and provides motivation. I personally  
11 review all awards with my managers to make sure that they  
12 are appropriate and are consistent with the make-up of our

13 staff. During fiscal year 1997, we gave 58 awards, 31  
14 percent was to minorities, 47 percent to white women and 22  
15 percent to white men.

16 I encourage and support employees' participation  
17 in EEO activities such as the advisory committees and as the  
18 EEO council. Such participation helps us advance the agency  
19 and office EEO goals. We have three employees -- during the  
20 past year we had three employees serving on these important  
21 committees.

22 Overall, I am encouraged by what we have achieved  
23 in the areas of EEO and affirmative action. The office of  
24 the chief financial officers, managers and supervisors are  
25 aware and concerned about equal employment opportunities for

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1 our employees. In support of our efforts, I recently  
2 developed, in conjunction with the Director of the Office of  
3 Small Business and Civil Rights, a new element and standard  
4 that further clarified the EEO expectation of non-SES  
5 managers and supervisors.

6 As has been mentioned before, in the era of  
7 declining resources and streamlining, we recognize there  
8 might be diminishing opportunity for recruitment and  
9 promotion, however, we recognize this challenge and will  
10 manage to ensure that, as we move forward, that we keep a  
11 balanced staff in the EEO area.

12 My managers and I are committed to fostering the  
13 right environment for continued support and to achieving  
14 equal employment opportunity. I appreciate the opportunity  
15 to present this information to the Commission. Thank you.

16 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: Thank you. Let me ask you a  
17 couple of questions. Are any of your women managers  
18 minority women?

19 MR. FUNCHES: We have women minority at the first  
20 level supervisors.

21 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: Okay. Each office seems to  
22 have its own peculiarities, you know. I questioned Mr.  
23 Thadani about the Office of Research and the make-up of his  
24 staff. In your office, Asian-Pacific and Hispanic employees  
25 seem to be under-represented.

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1 MR. FUNCHES: That's correct.

2 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: Do you have any efforts  
3 underway to improve in that regard?

4 MR. FUNCHES: Yes. You are correct, we are short  
5 on Hispanics and Asian-Pacific. We have an active effort  
6 underway now, participating with the CFO council in the  
7 Hispanic area. The CFO council across the government is  
8 having the same issue with Hispanic, and we had a special  
9 meeting a couple of months ago, meeting with representatives  
10 from the Hispanic community to see what could be done in  
11 that area.

12 I think two focuses came out of that. One was to  
13 identify the universities where we could recruit and we have  
14 a list of those and we are working with HR to pursue those  
15 universities. I think the second aspect was an effort to  
16 try to make sure that those universities were aware of any  
17 new government requirements in anticipation of training,  
18 such that, if need be, they could adjust their curriculum or  
19 make sure that they advise the students to get the  
20 appropriate courses. So we have that, we have not seen any  
21 results of it yet.

22 The Asian-Pacific, we don't have any specific  
23 effort, however, we are looking at, you know, the pool of  
24 candidates that come in from the outside when we are able to

25 post outside, to try to identify if there are those and make

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1 sure that we, you know, give them opportunity for  
2 interviews.

3 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: How many bridge positions did  
4 you staff in the last two years?

5 MR. FUNCHES: In the last couple of years we  
6 established two to get people from what I would call a  
7 para-professional position into the accounting area, and we  
8 are in the process of looking to see if we can establish  
9 more. We have encouraged our para-professional people to --  
10 there are certain requirements that they have to have to be  
11 qualified as accountants and we have encouraged them and  
12 supported them in taking the appropriate courses.

13 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: How have the individuals who  
14 have been selected fared in the end, and how have they been  
15 of benefit to your office?

16 MR. FUNCHES: I think in terms of benefit, they  
17 have given us the technical capability that we need. To the  
18 best of my knowledge, they are performing, you know, they  
19 are performing well. We don't see any downside of doing  
20 that, in the sense that have been able to move from they  
21 were into -- they have moved into entry level positions and  
22 we are committed as managers to work with them to ensure  
23 that they succeed.

24 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: Do you encourage your managers  
25 in the use of individual development plans, or do you have

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1 them encourage employees to use that?

2 MR. FUNCHES: I have encouraged my managers to use  
3 individual development plans. We do not have widespread use  
4 within the organization, as widespread as I would like. And  
5 I think there's a couple of reasons. In certain  
6 organizations, there's a lot of interest by the employees in  
7 moving forward, individual development plans. In other  
8 areas, there's not as much interest. But we do, especially  
9 if an employee wants to have an individual development plan,  
10 we definitely will support that and advise the individual  
11 how to do it.

12 I understand HR is looking at how, you know, what  
13 are the steps we might want to -- the agency can take, and  
14 we definitely will be supportive of that.

15 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: Do you think there is an  
16 opportunity with the agency, and I know this has come out  
17 and I not going to get into -- you know, give me signal,  
18 Karen, if I am stepping off the cliff here. You know,  
19 people have a lot of concern, as we develop and deploy new  
20 uses of information technology, and is there an opportunity  
21 in that regard, both within your office, and in terms of  
22 fungibility of people, to encourage people through IDPs in  
23 those areas?

24 MR. FUNCHES: The answer is yes. As we move  
25 forward with new systems such as Starfire, as we went

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1 forward with like a new TNA system in the past, we have  
2 encouraged our people to make that transition and provided  
3 them the training to make the transition. I believe that  
4 the people have the ability to make that transition and we  
5 would make sure that they get the appropriate training such  
6 that they can participate in the new environment.

7 MS. NORRY: I would like to ask Pete Hearn, the  
8 President of the National Treasury Employees Union, do you  
9 have any remarks to make, Pete?

10 MR. HEARN: Good morning. Yes, I have observed so  
11 far the presentation seems to accent heavily on supervisory  
12 management ranks, which lately have been limited because of  
13 the budget crunch. I have heard terms mentioned that they  
14 are trying to maintain past gains and might have even --  
15 there's areas they actually made gains, which is pretty  
16 difficult in an area that is shrinking.

17 One of the problems that we see is in the grades  
18 14 and below. There's a vast number of NRC employees who  
19 are under the EEO statutes in those grade structures, and  
20 there are logjams at different grade levels. One, in  
21 particular, is the GS-7 level. There's a career path where  
22 you can -- an individual can obtain the GS-7 level, but the  
23 there's very few GS-8s. And then in some offices, you will  
24 go and you will see a few GS-8s, a few GS-9s, no GS-10s, no  
25 GS-11s, then they go to GS-12s, GS-13s. The career path is

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1 disrupted.

2 With change there is usually opportunity, and with  
3 the streamlining and empowerment reducing the number of  
4 managers, these managers are all doing work, and that work,  
5 a lot of that work still has to be done, and the way the  
6 system is supposed to work is that work gets passed down to  
7 the lower levels. That's empowerment, and it starts a  
8 trickle down effect where you start -- the higher grades are  
9 passing down higher duties to lower grades, and that enables  
10 you to increase the number of the grade levels lower than a  
11 14.

12 The savings is your overall salary structure your  
13 goes down, but your average salary or grade is going to  
14 increase because you need these lower graded people to  
15 enhance their skills and come up to a level where they can  
16 do more with less. And we don't see that being done or  
17 planned, and we would like to start planning for that,  
18 because this window of opportunity is there now, and we  
19 think it would help the agency and also help the EEO  
20 program.

21 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: Okay. Thank you.

22 MS. NORRY: That concludes our prepared  
23 presentations.

24 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: I have a few questions here.  
25 Let me go back. How are we progressing with recruiting

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1 Hispanic employees? Are we recruiting in areas of the  
2 country such as California or Texas where we might have a  
3 high percentage in the college student population? Are we  
4 using our regional resources? And are there any  
5 government-wide OPM strategies in this regard? Can any and  
6 all of your speak to that?

7 MR. BIRD: Yes, I think, you know, consistent with  
8 the past, we do try to focus some recruitment efforts on  
9 high-population areas. We have had some limited success  
10 when we've done that in terms of offering opportunities for  
11 mobility. But we continue to do that.

12 We focus schools, one example is Florida  
13 International University, which we're about to visit, that  
14 has a very high Hispanic population. And again to the  
15 extent we've had entry-level opportunities, we have had good  
16 results in terms of Hispanic applicants applying for our  
17 jobs.

18 We do focus locally as well. University of  
19 Maryland has been, you know, quite a good source of  
20 recruitment of engineers. They have a reasonably good  
21 minority population available in those undergraduate classes

22 through Maryland.

23 I think if we try to look and compare to other  
24 agencies, we've held our own in terms of recruitment at the  
25 entry level. More difficult, when we're again trying to

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1 recruit at a higher level of entry, we've had less success  
2 there, less likelihood of an applicant pool developing.

3 MS. NORRY: I believe that you also have had some  
4 success in getting through the efforts of Jose and his  
5 committee getting some assistance in that recruitment.

6 MR. BIRD: Yes.

7 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: Mr. Ibarra, do you want to --

8 MR. IBARRA: Yes. We are recruiting in the right  
9 schools. You know, if we go look at the number of  
10 graduates, we are. And as far as recruiting is concerned,  
11 we're doing very good on that.

12 My concern would be that we're not recruiting  
13 enough and more people are leaving. As you can see, you  
14 know, we have a net loss of four, which means six people  
15 left. Okay? So even though we can go ahead and enhance  
16 that, and we will enhance it, you know, we'll work with  
17 Small Business and Civil Rights. I don't have a big problem  
18 with that. I have the problem with the retention aspect.

19 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: Do you have specific ideas of  
20 strategies to improve --

21 MR. IBARRA: I am going to brainstorm with the  
22 Small Business and Civil Rights people, because I did have  
23 the opportunity to talk to five of the last seven people  
24 that have left, and, you know, everything is not negative.  
25 I think a lot of people hated to leave, and I think that's

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1 very strong for us. They really hated to leave. And so  
2 there has -- we can do some minor tweaking there, but I  
3 think we're not going to be able to retain everybody. We  
4 are going to lose people. But I think we can keep some.

5 COMMISSIONER MERRIFIELD: Chairman, I had a  
6 followup question for Mr. Ibarra on that.

7 Looking through the SECY paper that came out  
8 recently, there was a statement from your advisory  
9 committee. They had a sentence in there that I wanted to  
10 ask you about. It said the NRC is a good place to work.  
11 However, some Hispanics left the Agency due to a lack of  
12 supportive work environments and limited career advancement  
13 and development opportunities.

14 I understand the second half of that question, but  
15 I'm curious just to probe a little bit more what your  
16 concern is about a lack of a supportive work environment,  
17 and again, ways that we can improve that.

18 MR. IBARRA: Well, there's a lot of good things  
19 that this Agency does, and they must be doing good, because  
20 they don't want to leave. And the decision to leave is very  
21 hard on them.

22 I had felt that somewhere along the line they did  
23 not get the right encouragement, not that they didn't get  
24 encouragement, but there's a point where people need to to  
25 be patted on the back, and they need to be shown that

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1 everything is not negative, that there will be  
2 opportunities. This coaching and mentoring might have been  
3 lacking in some of these cases. Okay? Not to say we didn't  
4 do that. But maybe at the right time we didn't do it.

5 COMMISSIONER MERRIFIELD: Is that something you're  
6 finding agencywide, or are there pockets? For example --

7 MR. IBARRA: Well --  
8 COMMISSIONER MERRIFIELD: Are certain parts of the  
9 Agency doing a better job at mentoring?  
10 MR. IBARRA: Well, I can only speak for Hispanics,  
11 okay?  
12 COMMISSIONER MERRIFIELD: Right.  
13 MR. IBARRA: And I can tell you that maybe there's  
14 not enough of it. I don't think we are going to lose all 62  
15 Hispanics that we have in this agency today. There's no  
16 way, because there's a lot of people that have heavily  
17 invested into this agency. But we are going to lose the  
18 people that we hired three or four years ago if we don't  
19 step up the efforts. Okay? Because these are the people we  
20 tried so hard to hire, and we need to do something better  
21 than to, you know, make them leave.

22 MS. LITTLE: Chairman, we think that part of the  
23 solution to this is a mentoring program. We have a  
24 facilitated mentoring program, and maybe there are some  
25 things that we can do to beef that up a little bit.

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1 Just recently the Office of Small Business and  
2 Civil Rights has become involved in the orientation of new  
3 employees. We meet with all new employees on their first  
4 day here. And we will be offering, not only to Hispanics  
5 but to any new employee, the opportunity to engage them in  
6 our facilitated mentoring program. And we will be doing  
7 some followup with them and hopefully with their supervisors  
8 to make sure that they understand that we value them here,  
9 and if they need some help, to get some questions answered,  
10 they can get questions answered and to make them feel a  
11 little more supportive. We think that that is part of the  
12 solution to retention.

13 COMMISSIONER DICUS: And I agree, and that's  
14 important, particularly for the new employee, but addressing  
15 the issue that you just brought up and the people who have  
16 been here maybe four or five years, where this is a group  
17 we're losing. And it's important that the mentoring  
18 continue or there is some other way that we can address this  
19 issue of people who have been with the Agency, they've  
20 invested some time in the agency, they're reaching a point  
21 to really be very productive with the experience that  
22 they've gained that we don't lose those people. I'm  
23 concerned about that.

24 MR. IBARRA: I am hopeful that we can retain  
25 people if we work at it. The first thing we need to do is

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1 identify those people and track them, and make sure -- talk  
2 to them, find out what's happening.

3 DR. TRAVERS: If I can just say one thing. I  
4 agree, Commissioner, with your comment. I'm a mentor. I  
5 was a mentor before I came up to the 17th floor, and I am  
6 one today. And I found that very often the critical stage  
7 for mentoring is -- it's important when an employee comes  
8 aboard, but it becomes even more critical as they begin to  
9 look for opportunities in their career. And certainly  
10 that's where at some point in time you begin to lose people,  
11 if you don't have a process that can assist in identifying  
12 different paths. And I found that mentors very often bring  
13 a good perspective to the way the Agency works and the  
14 different opportunities that can be available that often are  
15 not identified by an individual in a particular office, for  
16 example. So I agree entirely with your comment.

17 MS. LITTLE: One other comment. Jose referenced  
18 that he would be brainstorming with the Small Business

19 Office. We've already started that process, and he and I  
20 have talked about trying to link Hispanic employees with  
21 members of the advisory committee and to facilitate some  
22 mentoring through that approach as well.

23 COMMISSIONER MERRIFIELD: I have just one quick  
24 followup question. When a new employee starts, do we offer  
25 them the opportunity to have a mentor, or do we say this is

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1 the mentor we have assigned to you?

2 MS. LITTLE: We've just initiated our involvement  
3 to talk about mentoring at the orientation sessions. We did  
4 that a couple months ago. We are talking to them about  
5 anything that we can do to facilitate their pleasant stay  
6 and progression in this agency.

7 It's not required. We're not requiring that at  
8 all. We're hoping that the managers will make a subsequent  
9 contact to us and reinforce that and offer and suggest that  
10 employees find a mentor and participate in that program. I  
11 know some of the office directors are doing that. But we're  
12 hoping to encourage the office directors to do followup  
13 there. Our office can't manage the entire program, but we  
14 can certainly make a start.

15 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: On a different tack, what are  
16 employees expected to learn from the upcoming employee  
17 sessions on managing diversity? And will all employees  
18 participate, or just a subset?

19 MS. LITTLE: Our goal is to -- I don't know if we  
20 plan to make it mandatory, but to offer it to all employees  
21 including a session in each regional office, and what we're  
22 hoping they will learn will be the role that they can play  
23 to open up communications between them and their  
24 supervisors.

25 If a manager is going to be an effective manager

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1 of diversity, it's a two-way street. They have to  
2 communicate with employees, and employees have to at some  
3 point trust the manager and open up to the manager. So  
4 we're hoping that they will understand that concept and be  
5 more willing to do that.

6 DR. TRAVERS: It's required for managers?

7 MS. LITTLE: We did not put it out as a  
8 requirement for managers. We put it out there, and many of  
9 them attended. Some of them probably --

10 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: Well, perhaps you should have  
11 it as a requirement, since you're talking managing  
12 diversity. Why don't you start with the people whose job it  
13 is to manage?

14 MS. LITTLE: Okay. We've done the sessions to  
15 initiate the start of the process with managers. Maybe we  
16 need to look at doing some more sessions and requiring --

17 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: Well, maybe we ought to put it  
18 in our SRM.

19 [Laughter.]

20 MS. LITTLE: Sounds good to me, Chairman.

21 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: Okay. Let me ask you, what's  
22 the difference between the career counseling and life  
23 planning activities that were provided to all employees who  
24 wished to participate in the individual career counseling  
25 program?

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1 MR. BIRD: I've looked at that, because you had  
2 mentioned that earlier. That basically is one single  
3 course. There is a substantial workbook associated with

4 that when you do your career planning, one section of which  
5 is devoted to life planning or life goals, if you will.  
6 It's not a significant part of that particular course. But  
7 that is one course associated with the career development  
8 training that we do offer here for individual employees. So  
9 it may have been a little misleading when we used the word  
10 "life planning" as if it was parallel, because it's a part  
11 of this, but it's not a key part of the career planning.

12 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: How many SLS are there overall,  
13 and what's the breakdown between Commission offices and  
14 non-Commission offices?

15 MR. BIRD: Currently there are 42 SL positions  
16 that are filled, 18 by Commissioner assistants and 24 other.

17 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: I note that the SECY paper says  
18 that NMSS is in the process of filling approximately 50  
19 technical positions. Can you tell me where NMSS is  
20 recruiting for those 50 positions?

21 DR. PAPERIELLO: I'm sorry, could you repeat the  
22 question?

23 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: Well, the SECY paper states  
24 that NMSS is in the process of recruiting -- filling  
25 approximately 50 technical positions.

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1 DR. PAPERIELLO: Right.

2 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: Where are you looking to fill  
3 those?

4 DR. PAPERIELLO: We have a program for recruiting  
5 at local schools. That has been only partially successful.  
6 In part we're told our salaries are not competitive with the  
7 private sector for entry-level engineers and the like.  
8 That's been a problem. We are recruiting through Human  
9 Resources, the intern program. And we have -- at least I've  
10 signed off in the last couple weeks four or five requests of  
11 Human Resources to hire entry-level interns.

12 We have about 20 vacancies right now, and we  
13 anticipate, based on losses over the last three years, that  
14 we will probably lose somewhere between 25 and 30 people.  
15 We do not have a program to turn around and say we're going  
16 to visit, you know, schools outside of the local area in the  
17 coming year. I mean, I don't have a program to do that. I  
18 have taken a technical member out of my staff to assist  
19 Human Resources to review the applications we get in so I  
20 can get them in the pipeline faster.

21 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: Do you and the regions ever  
22 work together in terms of outreach and reaching a larger  
23 base of people?

24 DR. PAPERIELLO: No.

25 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: Well --

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1 DR. PAPERIELLO: It's an idea. I just haven't --

2 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: Maybe it's an idea whose time  
3 has come.

4 DR. PAPERIELLO: Right.

5 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: Okay. Thanks.

6 Let me have a question for NRR. Maybe you could  
7 go to the...

8 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: The paper, the SECY paper,  
9 speaks about NRR successes in hiring at the entry level  
10 women and minority employees.

11 Can you flesh out a little more for us the steps  
12 that NRR is taking toward encouraging or preparing women and  
13 minorities for supervisory, management, and executive  
14 positions?

15 MR. COLLINS: Is that question targeted towards

16 the entry level or overall?

17 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: No, I am saying you talked  
18 about the success at the entry level and now I am interested  
19 in career progression in terms of what specific steps you  
20 are taking toward the encouragement or preparation of  
21 employees in these groups for movement into supervisory,  
22 management, and executive positions.

23 MR. COLLINS: That question is probably at least  
24 at this point more appropriate for the Intern Program. The  
25 entry level program is a fairly new concept based on the

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1 transition from hiring individuals who are in the  
2 organization for longer term development, say two to three  
3 years, as opposed to hiring individuals who are placed at an  
4 entry level position and are coached in a specific  
5 discipline and fill a permanent slot.

6 In regards to the Intern Program, we have been  
7 very successful in the Intern Program in the past. We have  
8 some statistics which perhaps are outside the scope of the  
9 Commission paper, but that show overall we have been able to  
10 retain at least greater than 50 percent of the interns, and  
11 a number of those have been individuals who have been  
12 targeted towards the office goals.

13 Those individuals, I don't have the statistics in  
14 my head as far as their progression, but many of them right  
15 now are in 13-14 positions.

16 They are perhaps a grade away from entering into  
17 the supervisory ranks. In a generic sense, the best  
18 opportunity for those individuals are with the agency  
19 development programs, which are specifically the women's  
20 leadership development program and a longer term that would  
21 be an SES development program.

22 In a practical sense, the best way to develop  
23 individuals in the 13 position, more appropriately the 14  
24 position, is in details and acting assignments.

25 We have had a number of those opportunities. I

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1 think we have taken advantage of those but again I think it  
2 is probably one to two years early for the Intern Program to  
3 rise up to be a class that is eligible for the majority of  
4 those.

5 Generally I would say, just to close out, that the  
6 quality of staff that we are seeing from the Intern Program  
7 is fairly remarkable in their ability to accommodate not  
8 only adjustments to the NRC but also to demonstrate their  
9 proficiency as high performers. It's been a very successful  
10 program.

11 The entry level program we probably have to wait  
12 and see since it is new, but the types of individuals we  
13 have attracted are commensurate with that.

14 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: Okay, thank you.

15 Let me ask if there are any further comments from  
16 the Paraprofessional Committee, from -- well, you talked  
17 about the Selection Subcommittee -- or any of the Advisory  
18 Committees. Are there any additional comments that anyone  
19 would like to make? Yes, please -- go to the podium, the  
20 microphone.

21 MR. NARBUT: Thank you, Chairman and  
22 Commissioners.

23 Today I heard a lot of discussion about goals and  
24 accomplishments for women, minorities, and people with  
25 disabilities. The subject of our aging population wasn't

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1 mentioned at all, but it is one of the keystones of the EEO  
2 program.

3 The word "age" wasn't mentioned for a full hour  
4 and it was only mentioned twice in all the discussions we  
5 had today, so I would ask -- first of all, I will say that I  
6 worked with the Small Business and Civil Rights group to get  
7 these aging issues on the table and I would ask your help in  
8 the upcoming year to get those issues on the table.

9 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: What are they?

10 MR. NARBUT: The issues are under development and  
11 I think it is probably premature to talk about them, but we  
12 do have in our writeup in your package two statistical  
13 studies that show that persons of age over 55 seem to be  
14 statistically -- I don't know how to say this politely --  
15 perhaps discriminated against in terms of promotions and  
16 their performance ratings. Those are real issues we would  
17 like to look at.

18 The demographics that were discussed today left  
19 age out and there are a lot of issues there. The nation is  
20 aging. It is becoming an issue for the nation. I am sure  
21 it is going to become an issue for this agency and it  
22 deserves some focus.

23 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: But I guess the real challenge,  
24 it would seem to me, is if there are specific concerns and  
25 you may have heard me in previous meetings. It is very

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1 difficult for the Commission to deal with anecdotes and so  
2 it is very important that if there are particular concerns  
3 that they get expressed and that there is the --

4 MR. NARBUT: We intend to go forward with that.

5 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: -- data. An aging population  
6 in an agency or in a nation has any number of things  
7 associated with it but the question becomes if there are  
8 specific concerns that you in fact bring it to the  
9 Commission and you bring it in a non-anecdotal fashion.

10 MR. NARBUT: Well, in all fairness, it hasn't been  
11 brought forth to the Commission but it has been, working  
12 with small business and civil rights, we have gotten data on  
13 the population. We have analyzed that data statistically  
14 with our statisticians and the results are valid. They show  
15 that there is a problem.

16 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: We need to see what that is and  
17 that is all I am really trying to say to you.

18 It's not that I don't believe the Commission is in  
19 any way unsympathetic, I mean some of us falls into that  
20 category ourselves, is in any way unsympathetic to concerns  
21 that members of our community may have who are in that  
22 category but we have to hear about them before we can know  
23 something and do something about it, but thank you.

24 Are there any other concerns? Yes? Please.

25 MS. COPELAND: Good morning. I am part of the

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1 Paraprofessional Subcommittee and of course the  
2 paraprofessionals are --

3 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: Could you speak more --

4 MS. COPELAND: The paraprofessionals are concerned  
5 about the new technology that is coming into the agency and  
6 what will happen to them.

7 We have gotten some very good help from HR and  
8 Small Business and Civil Rights, and are getting some  
9 statistical data on the three issues that we had brought  
10 forth to the agency regarding the awards compared between  
11 professional and the paraprofessionals, and we have the  
12 statistics and the Commission paper.

13 We also were concerned about the secretarial  
14 positions within the other agencies compared to NRC and we  
15 have also looked at that and we have made the statement that  
16 we are basically on the same kind of lines as the other  
17 agencies compared to what we do here at NRC.

18 The last thing we are looking at, position  
19 descriptions, and we haven't completed that and we hope to  
20 bring forth that at the next briefing.

21 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: Okay. Thank you. Please.

22 MR. THOMAS: Good morning, Chairman Jackson,  
23 Commissioners and audience.

24 The ACAA has three items that they would like to  
25 stress, and we have stressed these in past years.

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1 First, I would like to say that I believe that  
2 this is a living document and I can hear and see changes  
3 that have taken place. I think I have been to about four or  
4 five or these meetings and it seems to be a very progressive  
5 document.

6 Our first item was to develop more specific and  
7 substantial criteria for evaluating managers and  
8 supervisors. I see on page 6 that there is an encouragement  
9 to Directors, Office Directors, to clarify EEO expectations  
10 in supervisor elements and standards. That tells me that  
11 maybe this element exists.

12 ACAA has recommended or is recommending that a  
13 separate EEO supplement be included in managers' performance  
14 appraisals.

15 We look at things that are taking place today.  
16 Everything is on performance measures. The agency has  
17 performance measures. We budget the dollars and et cetera,  
18 so we think that supervisors, to maintain or perform under  
19 the EEO, should have some standards that they are measured  
20 by, and it can't be something that is just willy-nilly,  
21 let's say, so we are looking forward to -- we would like to  
22 see that standard or standards if we may, because from page  
23 6, we believe it says "Clarify EEO expectations and  
24 supervisor elements and standards" so the standards must  
25 exist.

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1 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: Well, I appreciate your comment  
2 and I can certainly do something about those employees that  
3 report to me and maybe by the trickle-down theory it can  
4 affect the other management.

5 MR. THOMAS: My second element is increase the  
6 number of African American women in SES supervisory,  
7 management and senior level positions and the number of  
8 women in the feeder groups for these positions.

9 We recognize that, in the paper we talk about  
10 there are three minority women in the SES positions and we  
11 know that two are African Americans and this is a recent  
12 event, over the last year.

13 Our concern is that as we move into the downsizing  
14 that we don't lose any of these positions, and I heard today  
15 that assessments are ongoing to make sure that things stay  
16 somewhat, if they can, in proportion and that there will not  
17 be any losses made, so that is very encouraging.

18 Our last main concern is to encourage the  
19 establishment of upward mobility positions for  
20 paraprofessional, jobs to provide opportunities for the  
21 advancement of African Americans and other minorities.

22 I will leave that alone but I just wanted to say  
23 that we do support this and the Paraprofessional Committee

24 just made that statement of their concerns.

25 I heard something earlier that was encouraging. I

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1 heard General Counsel had taken a position that was I guess  
2 paraprofessional and the person moved into a lawyer's job.  
3 I have seen this happen in our organization, and I am in  
4 OCFO and I don't see that to patronize my Director, my  
5 Office Director, but I have seen a voucher examiner move to  
6 an accountant position, which is good, but more of that has  
7 to be done, and I think that if there was and there may be a  
8 database that shows the level of attainment by a given  
9 individual -- I am talking about degrees -- who are sitting  
10 in place that we could tap that and say why would I hire an  
11 accountant entry level when I have one sitting over there  
12 and that person is a secretary right now because when I look  
13 at the NRC News, Review and Comments document periodically I  
14 will see what person has attained an accomplishment, so why  
15 would I go out and hire an accountant at entry level when I  
16 have one sitting in a secretary's position. What I need to  
17 do is go out and hire a secretary and move that secretary  
18 into the accounting position.

19 Thank you very much.

20 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: Thank you.

21 [Applause.]

22 COMMISSIONER MERRIFIELD: I would like to make a  
23 comment regarding that, regarding your last point, because I  
24 think it is a very good one. We have a very well trained  
25 staff here, and to the extent that we can encourage people,

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1 where they have gone through self-help and education to move  
2 up through the ranks, I think we should. I mean I say that  
3 -- I have got a personal issue in there. When I worked in  
4 the United States Senate, I went to law school at night and  
5 was able to do something like that, similar --

6 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: And look what happened to you.

7 COMMISSIONER MERRIFIELD: And look what happened  
8 to me.

9 [Laughter.]

10 COMMISSIONER MERRIFIELD: Some might not think  
11 that is a good thing. But, anyway, I think that is very  
12 important, because you have individuals who have been here  
13 at the agency who know how things happen, and to the extent  
14 that we came move them up through the ranks, or through  
15 their self-help efforts, they are a more valuable commodity  
16 to us than someone we hire at that same level from the  
17 outside. No two ways about it.

18 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: Very good.

19 MR. GREER: I represent the Affirmative Action  
20 Advisory Committee. I wanted to draw your attention to what  
21 I think is the most important page in the document you  
22 received for this meeting, and that is Table 1 on the  
23 Attachment No. 5.

24 I am not going to go into detail in analyzing this  
25 particular table, but I think all the information you want

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1 to hear about affirmative action is pretty much summarized  
2 in that particular table and the tables that follow it.

3 But to get down to a person stand on this, I  
4 really feel that if we have 116 hires in a year, if only  
5 five of them are interns, that's not enough. Now, I know  
6 the people who did the work on hiring those five, and the  
7 results are excellent. The work was excellent, the results  
8 are excellent. But the total number is kind of poor. And  
9 we are never going to get any better in this agency in terms

10 of EEO profile if that is the kind of number we are seeking,  
11 five a year.

12 The same thing is true for the DARE positions,  
13 which has been an issue that two of my colleagues have  
14 spoken about. When we only have seven DARE positions in a  
15 year, that is not enough to bring the numbers up in various  
16 rankings, 14s versus 7s, SLSS or SESs versus non-managers.  
17 We have to do a better job in that DARE program to bring  
18 people who are capable, people who even get degrees at  
19 night, if you will, or whatever, up to the positions that  
20 they can hold in the professional ranks, in the technical  
21 ranks. Thank you very much.

22 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: Thank you very much.

23 Are there any other comments? Please.

24 COMMISSIONER DICUS: Just one quick thing. One  
25 piece of data that I had a question about, and it is in

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1 Attachment 2 of the SECY paper. It is a chart and it says  
2 best qualified -- data regarding the best qualified in grade  
3 14 or above. And it is broken down by gender and also  
4 ethnic background, and the curious thing, one piece of data  
5 on that chart, is that 22 percent of the best qualified  
6 chose to exercise their right not to indicate an ethnic  
7 background, which is fine, if that is a voluntary thing to  
8 do.

9 But of the 22 percent that chose not to, none of  
10 them were selected, and the only other place there was zero  
11 selections was where there was less than 1 percent of the  
12 best qualified list. So 22 percent chose not to indicate  
13 and none were selected, and it brings the question up --  
14 what does this piece of data mean and are we consciously or  
15 subconsciously selecting against someone who chooses to  
16 exercise that right not to indicate background, or this data  
17 have some other meaning? I would just be curious as to your  
18 response to it.

19 MR. BIRD: I am not sure exactly why you would get  
20 that data outcome. If we did this again, or looked at it in  
21 a different timeframe, I think it might come out --

22 MR. McDERMOTT: There is a simple answer. We know  
23 what box to put selectees in. So any of the people who were  
24 unknowns at the time became known and so that is where there  
25 are zero selectees.

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1 COMMISSIONER DICUS: Okay. I wonder then why you  
2 put that in?

3 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: Don't put it in. It confuses  
4 it.

5 COMMISSIONER DICUS: Thank you for the  
6 explanation.

7 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: Don't confuse the issue with  
8 facts. Commissioner.

9 COMMISSIONER MERRIFIELD: I had a question. It  
10 wasn't -- it is related to the EEO issues, and that is  
11 veterans. There is a veterans preference for federal  
12 hiring, and I think, but I am not certain, there may be even  
13 a subspecialty of that for Vietnam era veterans. And by way  
14 of curiosity, what have we been doing to fulfill those  
15 preferences?

16 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: You mean in our hiring  
17 practices.

18 COMMISSIONER MERRIFIELD: In our hiring practices.

19 MR. BIRD: We have some focused programs on  
20 veterans hiring. We do have an outreach program that is

21 aimed at that. There have been some recent legislative  
22 changes in the law pertaining to how you treat veterans. We  
23 are trying to sort that out and I think that will add  
24 another dimension to that.

25 We specifically target veterans with disabilities

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1 and try to recruit at sources where we believe we have a  
2 fair availability of that, and we have had some success with  
3 trying to do that as a focused recruitment effort. But  
4 that, you know, along with other targeted hiring is one of  
5 the things that we do look at and try to target and pursue.

6 COMMISSIONER MERRIFIELD: I had a comment.

7 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: Okay.

8 COMMISSIONER MERRIFIELD: Do you want me to say it  
9 now or later?

10 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: Sure.

11 COMMISSIONER MERRIFIELD: Since I am the newest  
12 member and just gone through the practice of hiring my own  
13 staff, I wanted to relate something. When I used to work up  
14 in the United States Senate, this agency had a generally  
15 known reputation of having a very high quality staff.

16 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: It still does.

17 COMMISSIONER MERRIFIELD: And still does. And so  
18 that was the way that I entered here, was with that  
19 knowledge. Having gone through the hiring process and  
20 having well over a hundred folks, a hundred individuals from  
21 the agency apply to be part of my staff, and having  
22 interviewed almost 40 of them, I can say a couple of things.  
23 The degree of variation of the quality of excellence in this  
24 agency is very low, meaning it is a very high quality across  
25 the board. And I think, you know, all too often, perhaps

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1 that fails to get translated. But at least from my  
2 standpoint, I want people to know how incredibly impressed I  
3 was with the degree of excellence in this agency of the  
4 people I interviewed, and I just wanted to make sure that  
5 people knew that.

6 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: I am glad I gave you a chance  
7 to comment.

8 Well, let me, first of all, thank all of the  
9 participants, both those at the table and everyone else, for  
10 very informative, very insightful, very frank comments. I  
11 think, over the time I have been here, that is a movement  
12 that I have seen that I appreciate. You know, I am frank  
13 with you, so I think it is good for you to be frank with the  
14 Commission.

15 I do believe you have a commitment and have taken  
16 action towards realizing an environment where all our  
17 employees are provided an equal and fair opportunity to  
18 demonstrate their talents and to advance when there are  
19 opportunities, and to contribute to our mission.

20 You know, in the end, we are always in an  
21 optimization game, but we have to remember that everybody  
22 matters. And during a period of continued, heightened focus  
23 on addressing challenges, the challenges of effectively  
24 regulating the nuclear power and nuclear materials  
25 industries, in the midst of agency downsizings,

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1 reorganizations and Congressional interest, it is very, very  
2 important that we don't lose sight of what the goals of  
3 achieving and maintaining a diverse work force really are,  
4 and they are that all people with talent should have the  
5 opportunity to contribute to our mission.

6 That means that we have to ensure that whatever

7 career opportunities there are, however limited they may be,  
8 are available to all our employees on an equitable basis.

9 As we work together, we, one strong NCR, work  
10 together, there are roles that all of us can play. And to  
11 the supervisors and managers, and particularly the  
12 executives -- you are executives and you are meant to be  
13 leaders, and so you have a responsibility, it has to start  
14 with you, to ensure that employees are all assessed fairly  
15 and objectively, to encourage, in fact, the use of  
16 individual development plans. I mean, because there are  
17 changes, and there are changes to the nature of the jobs  
18 people are being asked to do, and, so, now, more than ever,  
19 for all the employees, that is a critical thing, to  
20 recognize that, you know, employees need opportunities for  
21 training, development, rotational and shadow assignments.

22 But to employees, yourselves, I do continue, as  
23 you have heard me in the past, to ask yourselves, when you  
24 see the changes that you know are occurring, how much are  
25 you reaching out to catch ahold of the wagon before it goes

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1 on down the road? And so I encourage you to set your own  
2 goals and objectives and to aim as high as you can.

3 I think we have a responsibility at the Commission  
4 to respond to that. If you then, as Commissioner  
5 Merrifield, who I am finding to be a very wise man, you  
6 know, if you go to that extra effort, then we need to go to  
7 the effort of looking carefully at you and what that may  
8 mean for internal opportunity. That is not to say that  
9 every time there is going to be a one-to-one match and that  
10 every job is going to be filled that way, but we need to  
11 look at that.

12 And to employees who have advanced in your  
13 careers, I do encourage you to give back something by  
14 volunteering to serve as a mentor to those who haven't quite  
15 gotten to where they would want to be, and to share your  
16 experiences so that net-net, you know, we gain for the  
17 agency.

18 In the end, as particularly the folks at this  
19 table hear always from me, it is results or outcomes that  
20 matter. You know, I often said, well, one of these days,  
21 somebody will write a tombstone for me that says she tried  
22 and she died. And I would actually like to see a little  
23 more in between, and, so, I think all of us should strive to  
24 do that in good faith.

25 Unless there are further comments, the briefing is

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1 adjourned.

2 Before you disappear, please let me know read a  
3 note from Commissioner Diaz expressing his degree of  
4 interest and commitment, he says, "Please express my regrets  
5 for not being able to participate in the last 1998 EEO  
6 Commission briefing, and my strong support for the  
7 continuation and enhancement of the programs needed to  
8 support the employment opportunities for our staff. With  
9 best regard to all, Nils Diaz." We are adjourned.

10 [Whereupon, at 11:56 a.m., the briefing was  
11 concluded.]

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