Department of the Interior

Strategic Plan for Improving Diversity

November 28, 1997

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Strategic Plan for Improving Diversity
in the
Department of the Interior

Executive Summary

On April 15, 1997, Deputy Secretary John Garamendi created a Task Force to develop a strategic plan for improving diversity in the Department of the Interior (Department or DOI). The Task Force was comprised of representatives from all of the Bureaus,[1/] and the DOI Diversity Council. The Task Force focused on the following areas: Strategic planning for a diverse workforce; Targeted recruitment; Retention; Quality of work life for employees; and Accountability.

What is....Diversity

The term "diversity" is used broadly to refer to many demographic variables, including, but not limited to, racial, religious, color, gender, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, age, education, geographic origin, and skill characteristics. America's diversity has given this country its unique strength, resilience, and richness.

Managing diversity is a comprehensive process for developing a workplace environment that is productive for all employees. It is inclusive, rather than exclusive, and addresses workplace behaviors and understanding differences. The challenge is to ensure that the systems, policies, and practices within the Department do not benefit any one group over another, and that the differences each employee brings to the Department are respected, and used to enhance

1/ *The Bureaus of the Department are expected to develop and adopt bureau-specific plans consistent with the Department's Plan. The term "Bureau" includes all bureaus and Departmental offices within the Department.*

the Department's capacity, strength, service, and adaptability as an organization. This is essential if the Department is to meet the demands of its mission into the next century.

The term “diversity” is also used narrowly in employment recruiting and retention efforts to refer to race/national origin (RNO), gender, or disability, so that the plan developed by the Task Force focuses on achieving diversity in these areas. The authorities permitting organizations to use affirmative employment practices in certain circumstances do not apply to American Indians and Alaska Natives (AI/AN) hired under the rules of Indian Preference in the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), but the authorities do apply to gender and disability issues among AI/AN in BIA.

More than 50 disabilities are recognized by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), and nine of the most severe have been designated as “targeted” for extra efforts in recruitment by employers.

What is....Civilian Labor Force

The term "Civilian Labor Force" (CLF) as used in this document means everyone in America age 16 or above who was employed at the time of the most recent census broken out into 500 occupations.

DOI’s primary key to success is its employees. The Task Force believes that most of the authorities and tools needed to bring about diversity and retention have long existed, so one component of this plan is to ensure management accountability for realizing the Department’s vision for diversity.

Historically, many minorities have not been recruited by or employed in the Department, and have not attained a level of employment in the Department anywhere close to commensurate with their presence in the CLF.
The Department is national in scope. Its Bureaus serve all United States citizens, and many people from abroad. The Bureaus' missions include, among others, making visitors welcome to various facilities, such as parks and refuges, processing permits for a wide variety of uses of the public lands, collecting royalties for minerals extracted from the public lands, rounding-up and adopting-out wild horses and burros found in the west, protecting archeological and cultural resources of the public lands, and enforcing criminal laws of the United States. As a consequence of this broad spectrum of duties and services, the Department touches the lives of most Americans. The people who deal with the Department bring with them a wide variety of backgrounds, cultures, and experiences. A diverse workforce enables the Department to provide a measure of understanding to its customers by relating to the diverse backgrounds of those customers. By including employees of all backgrounds,

all DOI employees gain a measure of knowledge, background, experience, and comfort in serving all the Department's customers.

Results

The following is the Department's Strategic Plan for Diversity. Within 21 days after the Plan's adoption, each Bureau shall adopt its own Bureau-specific plan, demonstrating flexibility to adopt specific implementation steps that are best suited to its respective needs to reach the expected results.

The Plan

VISION

The Department's workforce is reflective of the nation at all levels and in all occupations; and the Department is a workplace where the quality of work life is valued and there is an environment open and accepting of individual differences and where all employees are encouraged to maximize their potential and to exhibit a commitment to provide quality service to customers.

GOALS

Goal 1

Recruit a workforce that reflects the diversity of the nation

Objective A: Improve diversity through outreach to under-represented groups.

Strategies:

1 Bureaus shall develop and use written targeted recruitment plans[1/] for occupations with (1) a large amount of under-representation or (2) with a significant number of anticipated hires. Bureaus that have achieved a diverse workforce in previously under-represented job categories shall continue their efforts to maintain the diverse workforce.

2 Bureaus shall develop a system to manage effectively the Affirmative Employment Program (AEP) in occupations with infrequent vacancies. Bureaus are encouraged to develop job announcements combining groups of such occupations and groups of Bureaus for more effective targeted recruitment. If there is no formal recruitment plan for these vacancies, Bureaus are encouraged to require selecting officials to list the steps taken to get applicants from each under-represented group.

3 Bureaus shall develop a system for workforce planning and the analytical management of the workforce, including projections of vacancies, analysis of recruitment efforts and results, and analysis of selection and separation trends. Bureaus shall base their analyses on objective data, and closely coordinate with their AEP and their budget projections. Particular emphasis shall be given to the improvement of recruiting and hiring practices, and the elimination of barriers to these improvements.

4 Bureaus shall target their recruitment to assist in reaching the appropriate CLF parity for each occupation in a reasonable number of years, given the rate of new hires. Each Bureau shall establish a 5-year recruitment plan to make significant improvement in achieving diversity. Bureaus shall make annual reports showing progress in this strategy.

5 In the most egregious cases of under-representation, DOI will, within legal requirements, vigorously pursue allowing RNO- and gender-conscious hiring. This strategy shall be identified in the bureau-specific plans to implement the Department's Plan and

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1 / *The purpose of targeted recruitment is to expand the pool of qualified applicants so as to include more individuals of under-represented groups. Targeted recruitment under a plan necessarily implies, for example, that a targeted job series lacks parity with the applicable CLF for at least one under-represented group.*

shall be subject to prior review and approval by the Offices of the Secretary and the Solicitor.

6 The DOI Office of Personnel and Office for Equal Opportunity shall prepare a handbook for managers/ supervisors and personnel offices that include a "tool box" of personnel authorities and procedures which may be of particular use in improving diversity. These offices shall pursue expanding these authorities to improve diversity.

7 Bureaus shall recruit from under-represented groups for their temporary employment and comparable programs, and track their success in bringing these individuals into permanent positions in accord with applicable civil service regulations.

Measures: Statistical analysis of the Bureaus' diversity profiles, comparisons to the CLF, and analyses of new hires and conversions to permanent positions for each Bureau.

Objective B: Improve diversity through outreach to persons with disabilities.

Strategies:

1 Bureaus shall develop targeted recruitment plans for persons with disabilities, as defined by the EEOC, who are under-represented in the Department's workforce, with particular attention to those targeted by the EEOC for special recruitment efforts. Where feasible, Bureaus shall jointly address common issues.

2 Bureaus should make increased use of existing special personnel authorities and procedures for hiring applicants with disabilities.

Measures: Analyses of the Bureaus' accession and onboard profiles using government-wide employment figures of people with disabilities, and analysis of complaints regarding accommodation and accessibility issues.

Goal 2

Retain a workforce that reflects the diversity of the nation.

Objective A: Develop and use fully each employee's potential.

Strategies:

1 Bureaus shall provide opportunities for the development and full use of employee potential so that all employees may advance fairly and equitably.

2 Bureaus shall monitor employee development and promotion practices, and develop action plans to eliminate any barriers to fair and equitable employee advancement.

3 Bureaus shall use vigorously career development programs such as leadership development and "upward mobility," among others, to reach grade parity.

4 Bureaus shall examine the classification, entry level of positions, the selection process, and the career ladders and bridge positions in occupations with under-represented groups, and develop action plans to eliminate any barriers to fair and equal entry by and promotion of under-represented groups in those occupations.

5 Bureaus shall provide reasonable accommodations for employees with disabilities.

Measures: Statistical analysis of progress toward grade parity, improving trends in survey results, and other measures of full utilization.

Objective B: Develop an action plan to enhance quality of work life in order to retain a diverse workforce.

Strategies:

1 Bureaus shall assess why employees are leaving the Department, and develop action plans to eliminate barriers to retention.

2 Bureaus shall identify employees' work life concerns, using techniques such as surveys and focus groups, and develop action plans to eliminate those concerns.

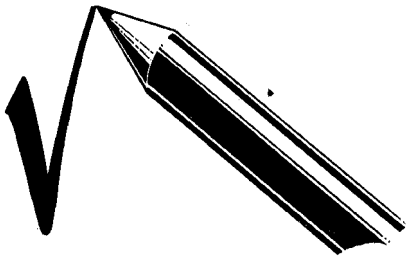
3 DOI shall support and encourage activities and services that support a quality work life, such as child/elder care, employee wellness, flexi-place, telecommuting, and alternative work schedules as appropriate.

4 Bureaus shall involve employees in finding solutions for quality of work life issues, using local employee-based organizations, such as diversity teams and unions.

5 When designing new facilities or renovating existing facilities, Bureaus shall ensure that the plans bring accessibility up to required standards.

Measures: Quantitative and qualitative analysis of employee satisfaction with work life, improving trends in survey results, and other measures.

Goal 3



Ensure accountability at the secretarial and bureau levels for improving diversity.

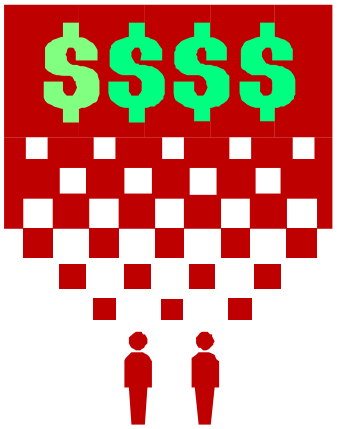
Objective A: Review, evaluate and monitor management actions.

Strategies:

1 At least on a quarterly basis, the Deputy Secretary, the Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management and Budget, and/or the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Workforce Diversity shall meet with Bureau heads to review progress in improving diversity.

2 Performance measures for all Senior Executive (SES) members and Departmental and Bureau managers/supervisors shall be included in performance agreements or performance plans. Use the following sample performance element/result from the list of samples located in the appendices, or an appropriate form thereof, in developing performance measures.

Shows sensitivity to, and in appropriate cases, demonstrated progress in both hiring and promotional practices toward improving the gender, ethnic, racial and disability composition of the organization's workforce and provides subordinates developmental opportunities to help them participate in the Department's goal of improving workforce diversity.



3 Bureaus shall establish, as one relevant factor, a clear link between the presentation of bonuses, awards, and promotions of managers with the successful achievement of their diversity performance standard.

4 Bureaus shall establish and implement quantitative measures to evaluate progress in improving diversity.

Measures: Documentation that above actions have been taken toward accountability and review by the Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management and Budget and the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Workforce Diversity.

Goal 4

Educate managers/supervisors and employees regarding diversity.

Objective A: Provide training for all managers/supervisors and employees regarding the value of a diverse workforce.

Strategies:

1 Bureaus shall conduct mandatory diversity education for all managers/supervisors and employees.

2 High-level DOI and Bureau officials shall champion the Department's diversity initiatives through activities such as speeches, discussions, workshops, and open forums in the Department.

3 Bureaus shall conduct mandatory training for all managers/supervisors on the legal implementation of Goals 1, 2, 3, and 5 of this Plan.

Measures: Participation in workshops, forums, and other training. Surveys of employee awareness of the Department's diversity efforts.

Objective B: Provide training for all managers/supervisors in the skills needed to manage a diverse workforce.

Strategies:

1 Bureaus shall conduct mandatory skills training for all managers/supervisors on the management of a diverse workforce, such as conflict resolution, team management, effective listening, personality types, and cultural differences.

2 Bureaus shall train all managers/supervisors in the use of tools, authorities, regulations, and procedures available to support diversity. (See attached Tool Box.)

Measures: Attendance at these training courses, and survey results of employee surveys showing whether these skills are practiced.

Goal 5

There will be zero tolerance for discrimination, harassment, or hostile work environments (Zero Tolerance Policy).

Objective A: Bureaus shall ensure that their operations are conducted without discrimination.

Strategies:

1 Bureaus shall reaffirm policies, programs, and guidelines that prohibit discrimination.

2 Bureaus shall ensure that all managers/supervisors swiftly resolve informal allegations of discrimination.

3 Bureaus shall hold all managers/supervisors accountable when discrimination, harassment, or hostile work environments exist in work areas under such persons' responsibilities.

4 Violators of the *Zero Tolerance Policy* will be subject to appropriate disciplinary or administrative action.

5 Bureaus will track closely any findings of discrimination to ensure that appropriate remedial actions are implemented quickly and fully.

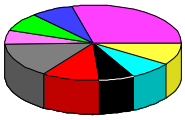
Measures: Quantitative and qualitative analysis of employee satisfaction with work life, improving trends in survey results and other measures.

Objective B: Bureaus shall ensure that all managers/supervisors provide a work environment in which employees are treated fairly and respectfully.

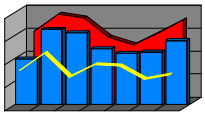
Strategies:

1 Training in appropriate treatment of employees shall be provided to all managers/supervisors and other employees.

2 Bureaus will use surveys and other means to track trends in employee expressions of fair and respectful treatment, and to identify work areas needing focused remedial actions.



Measures: Surveys and other means to track trends in employee expressions of fair and respectful treatment, and to identify work areas needing focused remedial action.



Objective C: Bureaus shall take affirmative measures to reduce the number of complaints, and improve the speed of complaints processing and complaints resolution within the Department.

Strategies:

1 Bureaus shall implement an automated tracking system to effectively monitor the timeliness of complaints processing.

2 Bureaus will expedite the processing of complaints that have not been completed within time periods set by EEOC. Bureau heads shall report the timeliness of complaints processing and progress toward eliminating backlogged complaints to the Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management and Budget on a quarterly basis.

3 Bureaus shall provide sufficient resources to process complaints in a timely manner.

4 Bureaus shall strengthen the EEO Counseling Program to resolve complaints informally at the earliest possible stage. In conjunction with the complaints resolution system, Bureaus shall implement an effective

alternate dispute resolution program to resolve complaints at any stage of the process.

5 In addition to implementing an effective alternate dispute resolution program, Bureaus shall undertake sufficient measures to improve the quality of the work environment by educating and training all managers/supervisors in dealing with human resources and workplace issues.

Measures: Reduction in the number of active complaints on an annual basis.

Nothing contained in this Plan shall create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable by any party against the United States, its agencies or instrumentalities, its officers or employees, or any other person.