

**MINE SAFETY AND HEALTH ADMINISTRATION
AGENCY DIVERSITY ACTION PLAN
FOR 1998 - 2003**

- *****
- * INTRODUCTION
 - * BACKGROUND
 - * DEMOGRAPHICS
 - * FEORP
 - * INITIATIVES & ACTION ITEMS
- *****

MINE SAFETY AND HEALTH ADMINISTRATION
NAME OF ORGANIZATION

4015 Wilson Boulevard: BT #3: Arlington, Virginia 22315
ADDRESS OF ORGANIZATION

ORGANIZATIONAL LEVEL: _____ AGENCY

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES COVERED BY THE PLAN: 2,144
Women: 592 Minorities: 186

J. Diane Dize, EEO Specialist (703) 235-8262
NAME OF CONTACT PERSON/PERSON PREPARING FORM Telephone Number

Michael A. Thompson, Director, Office of Equal Opportunity
NAME AND TITLE OF PRINCIPAL EEO OFFICER



SIGNATURE OF PRINCIPAL EEO OFFICIAL
(Certifies compliance with the Secretary of Labor's Diversity Initiatives)

05/15/98
Date

Introduction

The Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) is dedicated to achieving the Secretary of Labor's goal to "foster equal opportunity workplaces in the nation" by making the "Department of Labor a model agency." MSHA is committed to creating an inclusive environment where diversity is valued, managed and leveraged - ensuring that all individuals are inspired to contribute to the success of our mission.

MSHA recognizes the need to utilize and maximize the skills, knowledge and abilities of all our employees, allowing them to achieve their career goals on an equitable basis, according to their contributions and performance. The Diversity Plan's goals and objectives present a clear road map by which this much needed vision can become a living reality. This Plan is a tremendous start in ensuring that MSHA's workforce is more culturally diverse, full of hope and enthusiasm, and motivated to work together to meet our mission of making every mine in the United States safe and healthful. MSHA's Diversity Action Plan is a challenge to every manager, supervisor, and employee to work together as we make MSHA the "***Equal Opportunity and Diversity Standard for Excellence.***"

Background

MSHA's Diversity Action Plan is the result of the Secretary of Labor's Diversity Task Force, composed of senior level officials, including MSHA's Assistant Secretary, charged with assessing the status of diversity in the Department of Labor, identifying issues and challenges, and making recommendations on what improvements are needed to achieve greater diversity and equal opportunity in the Department.

MSHA's Plan grew out of the total findings and recommendations of the Task Force. It is the desire of the Assistant Secretary and top MSHA management staff to establish a definitive and comprehensive Agency Diversity Action Plan to recruit and retain diverse staff and to provide development and advancement opportunities equitably.

Meetings were held with MSHA's Agency Vice President for Local 12 and the following top MSHA Office Administrators and Directors:

- Coal Mine Safety & Health
- Metal/Nonmetal Mine Safety & Health
- Office of Technical Support
- Administration & Management
- Program Evaluation & Information Resources
- Educational Policy & Development
- Standards Regulations & Variances
- Office of Assessments

All top managers understood that ***Diversity Leadership*** is an important practice that focuses on the people in our total environment (internal and external). They were urged to use their creativity in designing programs and activities that would maximize the contributions of all employees, teams, and Agency partners to deliver the highest quality enforcement service.

Demographics

Discussion: Since MSHA's inception, demographics and the low representation of minorities and women in the mining industry have played a key role in MSHA having a well-defined glass ceiling as well as an under representation of minorities and women employees. This diversity plan will address innovative approaches to targeted recruitment, mining community outreach efforts, seminars and diversity training, and other initiatives to minimize demographic impediments.

Based on the latest data available, the total mining industry's minority and women (in non-traditional positions) representation figures are approximately 15% and 6%, respectively. MSHA's total minority representation figure is 8.7% and women in non-traditional positions is 2%.

In the past there has been considerable debate as to whether or not it is appropriate to compare MSHA's representational levels to the civilian labor force figures or to the mining industry's figures, which is the pool from which employees are selected. Establishing baseline data and determining desirable representational levels must be accomplished to provide direction to targeted recruitment and special emphasis hiring programs, and to monitor the results. We need to establish reasonable benchmarks in which to measure goals and accomplishments.

In 1986, the Bureau of Mines conducted a Mining Industry Population Survey to measure employee characteristics by occupation in the mine; principal equipment operated; work location at the mine; present job, present company and total mining experience; job-related training during the last two years; age; sex; race; and education. The National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) is presently conducting a similar study, and MSHA has requested that various diversity data be included. This data has been extremely helpful to MSHA in comparing and contrasting injury rates for various demographic and subpopulations in order to identify those groups that are exhibiting higher than average injury and fatality rates. Also this data will be very pertinent to MSHA's Diversity Action Plan initiatives. Worker characteristics data will assist MSHA in determining availability of potential MSHA applicants geographically and would assist in targeted recruitment.

ACTION ITEM: Engage the assistance of the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) to update and develop methodologies to publish a "Year 2000 Characterization of the Mining Workforce."

TARGET DATE: December 31, 1999

RESPONSIBLE OFFICE: **Office of Equal Opportunity**

ACTION ITEM: Establish approved MSHA Diversity benchmarks. Determine under representation of minorities for each program area and apply diversity initiatives accordingly.

TARGET DATE: March 31, 2000

RESPONSIBLE OFFICE: Office of Equal Opportunity

1. Communicate MSHA's Diversity Values

Discussion: MSHA top management's commitment and involvement are key to the success of our diversity action plan. MSHA's strategy for achieving workforce diversity throughout the Agency depends on the following:

- > Leadership
- > Education
- > Infrastructure Development
- > Performance Measurement and Reward
- > Continuous Communication

The Assistant Secretary for Mine Safety and Health has committed to creating a diverse workplace by enforcing the above and reissuing MSHA's Administrative Policy Letters entitled, "***Equal Opportunity and Workforce Diversity Policy Statement***" and "***Policy on Sexual Harassment and Sexual Misconduct***." These issuances charge MSHA's Headquarters Deputy Assistant Secretaries, program administrators and their deputies; directors, district office managers and their assistants; center chiefs and assistants; and all first-level managers and supervisors with assuring nondiscrimination, and "... ***strengthening our commitment to achieving equal opportunity and workforce diversity...***"

Various and continuous communications are critical ingredients in creating an environment that values diversity and fosters mutual respect, and to develop a more harmonious and cooperative relationship among all persons. Communications foster and reinforce the diversity educational process. MSHA understands and believes that our employees are our most vital resource in our 21st century enforcement responsibilities, and that investment in all MSHA employees is very essential to accomplishing our mission. When Diversity education and training are communicated effectively, it has been proven that a more cohesive work environment exists. Understanding differences is a key part to developing mutual respect, acceptance, and inclusion of all MSHA employees. Special emphasis programs, such as Disability Awareness, Hispanic Heritage, African-American History, Women's History, etc. provide information about diversity that is very educational and worthwhile. More emphasis will be placed on MSHA's top managers, deputies, and first-line supervisors attending special emphasis programs functions and making more of an effort to encourage employee attendance and participation.

As described below, we will develop and improve communications to address the following: MSHA workplace values; the legal rights and responsibilities of managers and employees, recruiting, hiring, and retaining a diverse workforce; and the importance of fairness, inclusion, and employee-supervisor cooperation in employee-supervisor development.

ACTION ITEM: Continue to update and endorse DOL and MSHA's diversity and equal opportunity policies and procedures. All issuances will be included in MSHA's Administrative Policy and Procedures Manual.

TARGET DATE: September 30, 1999, and Ongoing
RESPONSIBLE OFFICE: Office of Equal Opportunity

ACTION ITEM: The Assistant Secretary for MSHA and top Headquarters staff will develop a video tape communicating our commitment to "Diversity" to MSHA employees nationwide.

TARGET DATE: September 30, 1999
RESPONSIBLE OFFICES: Office of Information; Educational Policy and Development (MSHA Academy); and Equal Opportunity

ACTION ITEM: Develop a "**Quarterly Diversity Schedule.**" This schedule will include dates and locations of Special Emphasis Programs, brown bag diversity luncheons, District Manager and Center Chief Meetings, District All Employee Meetings, as well as dates for participation in job and career fairs and special emphasis conferences, and dates for manager, supervisor, and employee diversity education initiatives.

TARGET DATE: September 30, 1999
RESPONSIBLE OFFICE: Office of Equal Opportunity

ACTION ITEM: Provide mandatory diversity, equal opportunity, and understanding differences training, refresher courses, awareness seminars, and orientations for all MSHA managers, supervisors, and employees, holding Top Staff responsible for scheduling their respective diversity training needs.

TARGET DATE: September 30, 2001
RESPONSIBLE OFFICE: Program Administrators & Office of Equal Opportunity

2. Accountability

Discussion: MSHA assures that this Diversity Action Plan is not just a passing fad, and the seriousness of these initiatives will be confirmed in action and evaluation plans. Managers and employees will be told what would be expected of them, be trained and educated to accomplish expectations, and be fairly appraised and rewarded for their accomplishments.

Leadership and expertise are essential to assuring accountability. The diversity roles and responsibilities of MSHA's Top Staff, managers, supervisors, and employees must be defined and understood.

The Office of Equal Opportunity reports directly to the Office of the Assistant Secretary, and is MSHA's focal point for all nondiscrimination, equal opportunity, and diversity issues. Plans are underway to restructure this Office and update and reestablish its role, responsibilities, and resources to more adequately reflect the mission of this Diversity Action Plan.

Furthering workforce diversity and equal opportunity is an integral part of every managerial and supervisory position. Managers and supervisors must continue to maintain a results-oriented diversity and equal opportunity plan aimed at the desired results of this plan. To achieve this end, all managers and supervisors will have a critical performance standard reflecting workforce diversity and values.

Procedures to better evaluate and monitor MSHA diversity plan accomplishments and failures are needed. The new People Power 2000 will be installed in the OEO office so that pertinent data can be captured for us in identifying under representation and reporting to the program managers and the Assistant Secretary.

ACTION ITEM: Revise Performance Standards for all MSHA managers and supervisors making them more accountable for Diversity in their respective workplaces.

TARGET DATE: March 30, 1999

RESPONSIBLE OFFICE: Office of Administration and Management

ACTION ITEM: A workplace values" standard for employees will be adopted after DOL's Human Resources Center consults with the unions.

TARGET DATE: September 30, 1999

RESPONSIBLE OFFICE: Office of Administration and Management
Program Managers

ACTION ITEM: Restructure of the Office of Equal Opportunity. The Office will be renamed the "Office of Diversity and Civil Rights." This restructure will take into account the need for additional staff and resources to handle the increase of responsibilities and to address actions items created by the DOL and MSHA Diversity Action Plans.

TARGET DATE: January 31, 1999

RESPONSIBLE OFFICE: Office of Administration and Management

ACTION ITEM: OEO will establish semi-annual diversity meetings with MSHA Program Managers to provide them with a trend analysis of the Diversity Action Plan and other equal opportunity and civil rights concerns in their respective program areas, and assist in identifying areas of concern as well as positive areas in achieving diversity objectives. Results of this process will be forwarded to the Assistant Secretary for consideration prior to performance ratings.

TARGET DATE: March 30, 1999 and Semi-annually

RESPONSIBLE OFFICE: Office of Equal Opportunity

3. EMPLOYEE SELF-DEVELOPMENT

Discussion: One of MSHA's primary goals for this Diversity Action Plan is to set the equal opportunity and diversity standard for excellence through a highly skilled workforce which is representative, at all levels, of America's diversity and built upon trust, respect, teamwork, communication, empowerment, and commitment in an environment which is free of discrimination. To achieve this vision, it is important to expand growth opportunities and encourage employee self-development. All MSHA managers and supervisors must make a personal commitment to facilitate good morale by encouraging mentoring programs, and assisting employees in self-development.

ACTION ITEM: Disseminate information concerning its major positions via E-Mail and newsletters; encourage further formal education to meet education requirements for major MSHA occupations; develop Technician positions as bridges to Specialist positions, when possible which will be accomplished through the use of intensive career training plans; develop and implement CO-OP agreements with selected schools to enable interested students to become Industrial Hygienists and Mining Engineers after graduation. MSHA's major occupations are series GS-1822, Mine Safety and Health; series GS-1712, Training Specialists; series GS-690, Industrial Hygienists; and series GS-880, Mining Engineers.

TARGET DATE: April 1, 1999

RESPONSIBLE OFFICE: Office of Administration and Management

ACTION ITEM: Develop an Agency retention plan to define career ladder and training needs at each grade level for the major Agency occupations and provide career management programs for critical occupations.

TARGET DATE: April 1, 1999

RESPONSIBLE OFFICE: Office of Administration and Management

ACTION ITEM: Detail employees to different program areas in MSHA and other DOL agencies; utilize Career Enhancement Program (CEP), Upward Mobility (UM) and bridges; develop a pool of cross-agency applicants; utilize external sources for training classes; and compile a comprehensive catalogue of existing development resources.

TARGET DATE: April 1, 1999

RESPONSIBLE OFFICE: Office of Administration and Management
Educational Policy and Development

ACTION ITEM: Utilize the CEP, UM and bridge positions more often; assist managers/supervisors in identifying positions appropriate for the CEP, UM and bridge, as well as assist managers/-supervisors in identifying training and educational needs for attainment of targeted position; work with managers/supervisors to determine that Individual Development Plans are prepared within established time frames; monitor selection process.

Employees in positions that become obsolete as a result of technological changes will, when possible, be provided training that will enable them to move into new positions within the Agency.

TARGET DATE: May 30, 1999

RESPONSIBLE OFFICE: Office of Administration and Management

ACTION ITEM: Provide training to managers on the minimum qualification analysis process and requirements and the selection process. Plans are to provide training to managers on the merit staffing process and to provide training classes and information via newsletters to employees on staffing processes, especially as they relate to major occupational needs of the Agency.

TARGET DATE: May 30, 1999

RESPONSIBLE OFFICE: Office of Administration and Management

ACTION ITEM: Provide training to managers and personnel specialists on the use and development of rating criteria.

TARGET DATE: May 30, 1999

RESPONSIBLE OFFICE: Office of Administration and Management

ACTION ITEM: Establish a mentoring program in MSHA Headquarters. Structure of the mentoring process will include contract facilitators.

TARGET DATE: December 31, 1999

RESPONSIBLE OFFICE: Offices of Equal Opportunity and Administration and Management

ACTION ITEM: Bring greater attention to the Career Assistance Center (CAC) of upcoming courses and other services offered by the CAC and arrange for Career Counselors to visit MSHA.

TARGET DATE: September 30, 1998, and Ongoing

RESPONSIBLE OFFICE: Office of Administration and Management

4. IMPROVE RECRUITING

Discussion: MSHA will make a more aggressive effort to let the entire public know of vacant positions. Well-structured, informative, and attractive recruitment materials are necessary for MSHA to be visible, as well as competitive, with other employers.

ACTION ITEM: Target recruitment towards the hiring of women and minorities, especially women, African/Americans and Hispanics, in the Mine Safety and Health (1822) and Industrial Hygienist (690) positions. Also targeted will be the Training Specialists (1712) and Mining Engineers (880).

Recruitment for these positions will be through distribution of vacancy announcements within MSHA, the DOL, the Federal Government, and externally through universities, colleges, conferences, job fairs, etc. Recruitment will be accomplished through distribution of vacancy announcements and/or attendance at appropriate organizational functions, conferences, job fairs, etc., by OEO personnel and special targeted recruitment committees within respective program areas.

TARGET DATE: Ongoing

RESPONSIBLE OFFICE: Office of Equal Opportunity

ACTION ITEM: Expand use of Welfare to Work Program, Student Employment Programs, volunteers, Persons with Disabilities, Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU), Hispanic Association and Colleges and Universities (HACU), Outstanding Scholar, Veterans' Readjustment Appointment, Presidential Management Interns, and professional organizations.

TARGET DATE: December 31, 1998 and Ongoing

RESPONSIBLE OFFICE: Office of Administration and Management

5. INCLUDE AND INFORM

Discussion: After a thorough study of DOL's Agency Diversity Action Plan ideas and recommendations, the OEO met with top management staff and the Agency Vice President of Local 12 to advise that OEO was developing MSHA's Plan and to request anything they would like to include in the plan. All employees will be given a copy of MSHA's Diversity Action Plan after it is approved.

ACTION ITEM: Develop and maintain a quarterly Diversity newsletter to all employees announcing accomplishments in fulfilling requirements of the Diversity Action Plan, disability issues, recruitment initiatives, equal opportunity, complaint issues, pertinent decisions, personnel policies, etc.

TARGET DATE: September 30, 1999 and Quarterly

RESPONSIBLE OFFICE: Offices of Equal Opportunity and Administration and Management

6. OTHER ISSUES

7. NOTABLE ACCOMPLISHMENTS