

# **NOS DIVERSITY PLAN**

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Direction for Managing Diversity (MD)**

The NOAA Diversity plan provides the overall managing diversity framework. It establishes the basic MD philosophy, overall goals and pertinent definitions. NOS takes its direction for managing diversity from the NOAA Diversity plan, but will not duplicate the information. Therefore, reading and understanding the NOAA Diversity Plan is essential.

### **1.2 Commitment to Diversity**

NOS continues to be actively involved in diversity initiatives and remains committed to maintaining a workforce and a work environment that is conducive to maximizing the potential of its employees. NOS is also committed to managing diversity principles in interactions with contacts in its external environment. NOS employees continue to learn about managing diversity and are encouraged to be ever conscious of modeling appropriate workplace behaviors. We provide resources to enlighten the public and potential job candidates about the NOS and NOAA missions, participate in programs that resolve conflict, and implement programs to improve the quality of work life for our workforce. The areas where NOS expects to see benefits from its efforts include the following:

- Increase the diversity of our workforce
- Enhance productivity
- Keep pace with technological change
- Expand options for problem solving
- Improve communication at all levels
- Broaden potential applicant pool
- Encourage full commitment from all employees
- Maximize the effectiveness of our operations
- Utilize our human resources more effectively

### **1.3 Commitment to Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and the Affirmative Employment Program (AE)**

The pursuit of managing diversity efforts will in no way change our commitment to EEO and AE. These three areas are distinctly different, yet are intertwined and dependent on the other. Understanding the differences and dependencies of EEO, AE and MD are key to developing and maintaining a diverse workforce. Through EEO laws and regulations, we protect the civil rights of our workforce. Through the AE process, we strive to balance our workforce so it is representative of industry workforce goals. Through

managing diversity initiatives, we strive to provide policies, practices, and systems and implement initiatives to enhance the quality of work life for the total workforce.

## **2.0 NOS DIVERSITY COMPONENTS**

The NOS Diversity Plan provides the foundation for managing diversity initiatives. The plan provides the specific action items for each of the five components of the plan including a matrix of prioritized activities.

### **2.1 Advocacy**

Advocacy is the first phase in initiating a managing diversity process. It involves the creation of a more educated workforce in the area of managing diversity. The workforce becomes more cognizant of organizational culture and the business case for managing diversity.

To date, over 80% of the NOS workforce has participated in basic awareness diversity training which focused on understanding differences and organizational culture. This educational process will continue as reflected in the following action items.

#### **Actions:**

- (1) Encourage managers and supervisors to attend diversity educational offerings presented in headquarters and in field locations. Encourage the use of broadcast mechanism and video-tapes to ensure that all managers, supervisors, and staff have access to these presentations.
- (2) Identify and provide resources to the NOAA Diversity Committee for various subcommittees.
- (3) Ensure that the MD performance plan element is incorporated into all managers and supervisors performance plans and managers and supervisors fully understand this responsibility. Provide all managers and supervisors with suggested activities provided by NOAA.
- (4) Encourage managers to incorporate MD in key change initiatives.
- (5) Support MD efforts in NOS Program and Staff Offices through the NOS EEO and Diversity Advisory Committee. This committee will also be used to ensure that information about managing diversity is distributed throughout the organization and that consultants in the NOS network continually work within their organizations to include managing diversity principles in daily operations.

- (6) Incorporate language into the existing NOS awards plans so that recognition for the diversity related activities can be made.

**Time frame:** Continuous

Responsible Officials: NOS Deputy Assistant Administrator (DAA), EEO and Diversity Advisory Committee Members, and NOS Program and Staff Office Directors.

**Partners:** Unions, the EEO Manager

## **2.2 Fostering Diversity in the NOS Workforce: Quality of Work Life**

NOS strives to provide the best working conditions for its employees and keeps abreast of opportunities to maintain a safe and healthy work environment. NOS also participates in flexible and supportive systems such as the use of alternative work schedules to accommodate the varied needs of the workforce.

### **Actions:**

- (1) Support the NOAA Diversity Committee in its efforts to improve quality of work life for all employees. Identify where improvements are needed in work/family balance issues such as dual career and non-traditional families, child care, elder care, aging workforce, etc. and develop action planning for the implementation of at least one new initiative.
- (2) Implement quality of work life initiatives that are identified by the NOAA Diversity Committee that are relevant to the NOS workforce.
- (3) Ensure that the workforce is cognizant of existing employee services that affect quality of work life.

**Time frame:** On going.

Responsible Officials: DAA, Program and Staff Office Directors, EEO and Diversity Advisory Committee Members, and NOS Workforce

**Partners:** Unions, EEO Officer, Employee Groups

## **2.3 Developing the NOS Workforce for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and Promoting Career Interests**

NOS is committed to developing and maintaining a workforce that is utilized to its fullest potential to accomplish the NOS mission.

**Actions:**

- (1) Develop and implement programs to help the workforce maximize their contributions toward the NOS mission.
- (2) Utilize the NOAA Rotational Assignment Program as an additional opportunity for employees to develop their skills in the context of the actual job, with an individual who has an accomplished skill. Encourage managers to actively participate in this process by providing meaningful experiences to help employees broaden their skills.
- (3) Develop and implement a Mentoring Program to assist employees in understanding how to personally improve their skills and to gain a focused approach to achieving their goals. Ensure that the model reflects the diversity of NOS.
- (4) Provide creative developmental and training opportunities for the workforce to maintain state-of-the-art knowledge in all mission related fields and emerging technology.
- (5) Work with the Diversity Committee to identify and improve existing NOAA-wide systems such as performance/award, selection, promotion, etc.
- (6) Work with the NOS Workforce Management Division to provide training in human resource areas that managers encounter daily.
- (7) Develop an NOS-wide succession plan to bridge current and future resource to mission.
- (8) Investigate possibilities for more flexible recruitment policies.

**Time frame:** FY 00 – Ongoing

Responsible Officials: Deputy Assistant Administrator, Program and Staff Office Directors, NOS Workforce, and the NOS Human Resource Management Division.

**Partners:** Unions, the EEO Manager

**2.4 Developing NOS' Potential Workforce for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and Promoting Career Interest**

**Actions:**

- (1) Utilize available opportunities to promote the image and mission of NOAA and NOS to enhance our chances of attracting quality employees.

- (2) Work with community organizations and schools in the capacity of judges for science fairs, tutoring, and other activities to promote awareness of NOS programs. Develop an NOS network of employees interested in participating in these activities.
- (3) Provide resources for exhibiting at conferences, workshops, professional society meetings, etc. When possible, these will be scheduled in conjunction with other business trips.
- (4) Participate in summer intern programs for high school and college students to provide on-the-job experience.
- (5) Institute an NOS Education Program with a team approach to connect with schools and communities and through student mentoring.

**Time frame:** Ongoing

**Responsible Officials:** Deputy Assistant Administrator, Program and Staff Office Directors, NOS Workforce, EEO and Diversity Advisory Committee members.

**Partners:** Unions, EEO Manager

### **3.0 MEASURES AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

This initiative requires an analysis of the data collected in the organizational assessment phase to determine where improvements are needed. Measures and accountability strategies will then be developed.

**Action:** To be determined

### **4.0 PARTNERSHIPS**

In addition to NOAA support organizations that provide services to NOS, our internal partners will include all management levels, the NOS Workforce, Unions, the EEO Officer and EEO and Diversity Advisory Committee members.

### **5.0 NOS REPRESENTATION ON THE NOAA DIVERSITY COMMITTEE**

The NOS EEO and Diversity Programs Manager is the NOS management representative to the Diversity Council.

