

LONG-TERM OBJECTIVE 4.2

The SBA will recruit, sustain and effectively deploy a skilled, knowledgeable, diverse workforce and executive cadre capable of executing high quality programs and activities that meet the current and emerging needs of its customers.

Office of Human Capital Management

SBA, through the Office of Human Capital Management (OHCM), develops and provides innovative human capital strategies. The OHCM advises the SBA management with respect to selecting, developing and managing a high-quality, productive workforce. OHCM develops policies, procedures and standards to strengthen and improve the Agency's human resources program in the areas of workforce planning and restructuring; employment; compensation and benefits; employee and labor relations; employee development; work/life programs; executive resources; leadership development; and succession planning. This office ensures the implementation, coordination and management of activities that affect Agency employees are aligned with crosscutting initiatives such as the President's Management Agenda and the SBA's strategic plan.

4.2.1 In FY 2004, and maintained each year thereafter, SBA will achieve a rating of Green for having met all of the Core Criteria of the Human Capital initiative on the PMA.

Besides its progress in the area of transformation, SBA also made progress in the area of PMA. In the fourth quarter of FY 2005, OHCM submitted its proposal to OPM. After OPM's review, the rating on Current Status remained the same; however, in FY 2005 the standards on optimizing the organizational structure, improving diversity, and reducing the time to hire were upgraded from Yellow to Green. To obtain Green on Current Status by Q3 of FY 2006, OHCM will continue to improve its progress in three remaining areas: Succession Planning, Skill Gap Narrowing, and the Human Capital Accountability System. OHCM drafted a formal leadership succession plan that will be submitted to OPM for approval by the end of the first quarter of FY 2006. To mitigate the skills gap, OHCM recently completed an online training needs assessment for all the managers and supervisors that focused on improving leadership and management skills. In the near future, a similar assessment will be given to all SBA employees. Finally, as part of the PMA initiative, OHCM is currently working with OPM to develop a plan for conducting accountability activities for FY 2006.

4.2.2 As a result of a revised management and performance culture, SBA employees' rating of overall satisfaction with their jobs will increase each year and by FY 2008 will exceed the government-wide average by at least 10%.

In FY 2005, SBA through OHCM made significant process in the Agency's efforts on transformation. First, OHCM established a workforce transformation group that led the effort in developing, implementing and communicating a transformation strategy to all employees. Second, it developed and implemented an analysis tool for all reorganization proposals and reengineered the Compensation and Benefits Committee process to implement the Administrator's Transformation Strategy. Third, it developed a process to evaluate the Headquarters organizational structure to ensure optimization in addressing future staffing challenges. Furthermore, to facilitate the field transformation process, it developed and implemented new standardized position descriptions for Business Development Specialists, Lender Relationships Specialists, and Program Support Assistants.

The results of the 2004 Federal Human Capital Survey revealed that, overall, 59% of SBA's employees who responded were satisfied with their job. The overall government-wide job satisfaction response was 67.5%. It is noted that SBA had the highest survey participation rate government-wide (74%). However, to improve SBA as a "better place to work," and to move SBA from "Good to Great" the Administrator will be hosting "town hall meetings" on a regular basis. The first of a series of meetings was held on October 26, 2005. The Administrator answered many questions; however the core questions asked by employees were in the areas of training, job security, and job performance. The national and local union presidents were invited and they participated in the discussions. Because of time constraints, the Administrator could not answer all questions that were sent via e-mail; those questions and answers will be posted on the Agency's web page.

4.2.3 The percentage of SBA employees possessing core competencies identified for their positions is identified in FY 2004 and the resulting gaps in current and future skills and competencies in mission-critical occupations is reduced by 20% each year.

In the area of employee training, SBA completed the Gap Analysis Assessment for all employees in mission-critical and information technology occupations and implemented individual development plans for employees in the mission-critical occupations that showed a gap in job-critical skills. It closed the competency gaps identified by an OPM 360-degree assessment for employees in leadership positions and developed training packages and leadership strategies for supervisors and managers.

In FY 2004, OHCM conducted a comprehensive skills gap assessment for all employees. As part of the PMA initiative, SBA was able to demonstrate significant gap improvement for the pilot offices that were assessed in FY 2003 and FY 2004. The pilot offices showed an increase in productivity by 49%. Currently, OHCM is in the process of procuring a vendor to help improve and measure gap-narrowing in FY 2006.

In an effort to meet the challenges and to adhere to the President's Management Agenda and SBA's strategic goal to recruit, sustain and effectively deploy a skilled, knowledgeable, diverse and high-performing workforce and executive cadre capable of executing high-quality programs and activities that meet the current and emerging needs of its customers, OHCM devised a training strategy to address the training needs of all SBA employees. The first step in this strategy, which has been completed, is development of a two-tier training survey to benchmark training needs. The tier-one survey of all SBA managers has been implemented and completed. The tier-two survey for all other SBA employees has been designed and will be implemented, with the required union notification timeframe. The next step will be to develop training modules for every SBA employee, and then establish an SBA Learning and Development Center.

Office of Equal Employment Opportunity and Civil Rights Compliance

During FY 2005, the Office of Equal Employment Opportunity and Civil Rights Compliance (EEO&CRC) met all of its goals in support of the Agency's Strategic Plan and the President's Management Agenda. The following are the key accomplishments for FY 2005.

Ensure nondiscrimination of SBA employees and applicants for employment by implementing a sound EEO program and continually assessing the process, including informal and formal EEO complaint program, alternative dispute resolution through mediation, and investigations and Agency decisions.

EEO Training

Developing, implementing, and delivering EEO training provides comprehensive information and interactive instruction to Agency employees, managers, and others regarding all aspects of the Federal EEO process and the applicable regulations and laws. Adding online or computer-based instruction to SBA's training program provides a cost-effective means of reaching all stakeholders and ensuring accessible training wherever and whenever it is needed. EEO staff provided

training on all aspects of EEO to employees and managers of the Denver Finance Center, the Office of Business Development, and the newly-selected District Directors.

Implement MD-715

Implementation of the MD-715 provides guidance and standards for establishing and maintaining effective affirmative programs of equal employment opportunity under Section 717 of Title VII (PART A) and effective affirmative action programs under Section 501 of the Rehabilitation Act (PART B). Implementing the directive also ensures timely and appropriate reporting requirements (PART C) are satisfied. The overriding objective of this project was to ensure that all employees and applicants for employment are provided equality of opportunity in the SBA workplace regardless of race, sex, color, national origin, religion, disability or reprisal for engaging in prior protected activity.

The first annual MD-715 report was submitted to EEOC on February 24, 2005.



EEO Complaints Processing

The EEO&CRC Office continues to build upon its accomplishments to improve the complaints operations and proactively broaden measures to prevent discrimination; resolve claims of discrimination more efficiently; expand alternative dispute resolution; develop a more strategic focus in the areas of prevention, early resolution, appropriate complaint adjudication, and enforcement of equity mandates in agency employment practices. The Office hired three GS-13 EEO Specialists and one GS-15 Deputy Assistant Administrator.

Ensure nondiscrimination in programs/activities receiving SBA financial assistance. Conduct CRC reviews and continually assess review processes, focusing on the special competitive opportunity challenges facing small businesses with respect to ethnic populations, women, and persons with disabilities in both urban and rural business.

Civil Rights Compliance Reviews

The CRC reviews are conducted to ensure that no person in the United States shall be denied the benefits of, excluded from participation in, or subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving SBA financial assistance, based on race, color, sex, age, disability, national origin, and marital status (extension of credit). The reviews are also aimed at ensuring that individuals with disabilities have equal access to SBA-conducted or co-sponsored programs and activities. However, not all bases apply to all recipients.

The CRC staff identified the Agency's grant programs and selected three recipient groups (Women's Business Centers, SCORE, and Microloan technical assistance grantees) to undergo civil rights compliance reviews beginning in FY 2005. By the end of FY 2005, CRC staff had conducted all scheduled Women's Business Center reviews (82) and microlender/PRIME grantee reviews (163).

CRC Training

The CRC Training Plan was developed using an interactive training approach. CRC developed online instruction to enhance the internal and external customers' basic knowledge of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1975, as amended. This activity was completed by the end of FY 2005.

CRC Clearance and "Success Stories"

The CRC Division facilitates SBA clearance of firms selected to receive SBA awards and recognition by contacting EEOC to ensure that there are no findings of discrimination by these firms. EEO clearances are conducted throughout the year. CRC does not control the number of clearance requests it receives from SBA Headquarters and field offices. During FY 2005, a total of 1,086 award nominee clearance requests for various forms of public recognition were received and vetted in a timely manner by CRC staff. A total of 20 nominees, or 1.8%, had pending EEO complaints.