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UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
BRIEFING ON EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND DIVERSITY PROGRAMS (EEO)

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TUESDAY

NOVEMBER 27, 2007

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The Commission convened at 1:30 p.m., Dale E. Klein, Chairman, presiding.

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

DALE E. KLEIN, CHAIRMAN

GREGORY B. JACZKO, COMMISSIONER

PETER B. LYONS, COMMISSIONER

1 PANEL 1: NRC STAFF

2 LUIS REYES, Executive Director for Operations

3 MARGARET DOANE, Director, Office of International Programs

4 LAUREN QUINONES-NAVARRO, HEPAC

5 CORENTHIS B. KELLEY, Director, SBCR

6 JIM McDERMOTT, Director, Office of Human Resources

7 MARY ELLEN BEACH, Deputy Director, Office of Human Resources

8 DALE YIELDING, President, National Treasury Employees Union

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CHAIRMAN KLEIN: Good afternoon. Well, we get to hear about the Equal Employment Opportunity Program today and I think the last time we heard from this program was in February of '07. And we also get to hear from OIP on their activities. In going through the pre-briefing book, there's certainly a lot of data that you have accumulated and I'm sure we'll get the summary of that. We'll also hear from our advisory committee and then possibly Union comments a little bit later. As always, if there's any specific cases that are pending before the agency, we cannot comment on those.

And I guess the other comment I should make that rumor has it that Mary Ellen might be considering retiring.

MS. BEACH: Might be.

CHAIRMAN KLEIN: And rumor has it that you might retire in early '08 and if that's the case this may be your last Commission meeting unless we can convince you to not retire. But thanks for all your service for the agency and all the hard work. I now know what Jim will do between midnight and 6:00 a.m. But thanks again for all your work and I wish you the best if you do in fact go through with the retirement plan.

And I know that Commissioner Lyons has a plane to catch this afternoon, so we'll let him go first with his questions before he departs. Any comments before we start?

1 COMMISSIONER LYONS: Looking forward to the briefing.

2 CHAIRMAN KLEIN: Okay. Luis?

3 MR. REYES: Good afternoon, Chairman and Commissioners. The
4 staff is prepared to brief the Commission on our Equal Opportunity Programs.
5 Can I have slide number two, please? The presentation will concentrate on our
6 accomplishments and our plan for fiscal year 2008 and the future. If we can get
7 slide number two, the agenda slide, please?

8 The way we are trying to make the presentation is Margie Doane is going to
9 speak from an Office Director point of view, the activities from the Office of
10 International Programs. Lauren Quinones is going to represent all our advisory
11 committees and provide a consensus feedback from the advisory committees.
12 The advisory committees' representatives are sitting right behind us. We'll have
13 Ren Kelley talk about the program from the Small Business and Civil Rights Office.
14 We'll talk about challenges. If you have any hard questions then Jim and Mary
15 Ellen will answer those.

16 I just want to make one comment. The regional offices are all observing the
17 activity, but we wanted a representative and Darrell Roberts who is an executive in
18 Region I is here sitting with us. If I can have the third slide, please?

19 In all our buildings you see -- I guess one of the pictures didn't work out. In
20 all our buildings you see two plaques; not the ones you see there. One is the
21 recognition of being the best place to work and the other one is a recognition of a

1 best diversity company. We have those displayed in our facilities because we
2 think that one is connected to the other and being the best diversity company is
3 one of the elements that make us successful as a best place to work.

4 CHAIRMAN KLEIN: The picture on here is a lot better than --

5 MR. REYES: We have to work on our IT budget, I guess. But I just
6 want to make a point that the implementation of our Comprehensive Management
7 and Diversity Program has been part of the efforts of being successful in being the
8 best place to work and being the best diversity company.

9 We have a lot of information to provide so I'm not going to delay any more
10 my remarks. I'm going to turn it over to Margie to start the presentation. Margie?

11 MS. DOANE: Okay. Good afternoon. I'm going to tell you about
12 OIP's equal opportunity accomplishments. First I want to start out giving a
13 perspective from OIP and that we are the center of the agency's international
14 program and we have many international efforts that we've supported over the
15 years and through these efforts we've given an understanding, appreciation and
16 acceptance of diverse views. In turn, this has enabled us to develop flexibility in
17 approaching issues facing the agency.

18 One thing I'd like to read to you is OIP's vision and mission statement. Our
19 vision is to expand nuclear safety and security worldwide through lasting
20 partnerships. Our vision is to enhance nuclear safety and security through global
21 partnerships by exchanging information and by licensing the import and export of

1 material and equipment according to U.S. laws and policy. As you'll see in both
2 our vision and mission statement, we refer to building partnerships and we see
3 that as our agency's best opportunity to gain from our international experiences by
4 building relationships here and abroad and also for OIP within the agency.

5 As the agency embarks on a new era with new reactor licensing, that's also
6 fueling activities in the fuel cycle; we also have increased interest in waste issues
7 and radioactive sources. The agency needs to develop and foster an awareness
8 of cultural differences and international perspectives to ensure we remain effective
9 in engaging and interacting with our international counterparts.

10 Let me discuss some of the accomplishments within the Office of OIP.

11 Over the past few years due to retirement and office growth, we've hired staff with
12 diverse backgrounds and levels of experience at the entry level and at junior and
13 senior levels. We utilize staff with diverse backgrounds. We come from varied
14 educational backgrounds including engineering, geology, international relations,
15 health physics, law, business and from diverse work experiences.

16 For example, our staff includes a former resident inspector, several
17 attorneys, staff with export/import licensing experience from the Department of
18 Commerce and from private business and we also have expertise in policy and
19 security and former military.

20 We encourage staff development through formal programs. For example,
21 we do have one of our employees in the Leadership Potential Program who we're

1 very proud of. She's right now in a rotation in FSME. We've also had an NSPDP
2 recently who successfully achieved the journey level within her position and was
3 recently promoted.

4 Other staff development activities include mentoring and training through
5 NRC's PDP and external training opportunities and this might be a little different
6 for OIP staff. We actually have a number of different places where we go, like the
7 Foreign Service Institute and the Department of Commerce. We encourage staff
8 participation in international conferences and visits to expose them to new
9 perspectives and to broaden their experience and knowledge base.

10 We've also done a number of initiatives to ensure that in our application
11 process that we are looking at a diversified candidate pool and some of the things
12 we've done is we've made sure that our rating panel participation is used as an
13 opportunity for growth and we make sure that all of our staff has an opportunity to
14 participate on the rating panels.

15 One of our licensing officers with an interest in background and diversity in
16 the workplace has taken on duties as a Diversity Coordinator for OIP. That's a
17 position that we decided our office needed so we created the position, but we
18 didn't have a new FTE because you know we're small. And so we look to our staff
19 and we were fortunate enough to have someone with a background; actually
20 Carlotta Coates. I'm sure she's here because she has prepared the briefing for us
21 actually today. So, we've been fortunate enough to have her have that opportunity

1 for growth and also it's to our advantage.

2 One of her initiatives has been to encourage staff to participate in the rating
3 panels to review and rate applications for NRC vacancies. And so we believe this
4 gives us a fair application process, but it also gives others an opportunity. She's
5 done another -- several initiatives that were her idea that I'll also touch on today.

6 Communication within OIP is open. We have an open-door policy. All of
7 OIP's management -- because we're very small with just 32 people, we're
8 available. We have an open-door policy and encourage staff to stop by and
9 discuss areas of concern. We also support staff's use of alternative channels for
10 raising concerns through SBCR, OHR, and NTEU.

11 We hold all hands meetings with our staff routinely. This is to ensure that
12 we stay aligned with other NRC strategies. It provides an opportunity to discuss
13 new agency wide initiatives and how OIP will implement those initiatives. It also
14 ensures a common understanding within OIP of how we'll approach initiatives and
15 goals of the agency.

16 We also, something that we're proud of, is we hold -- I'm sorry, we call them
17 stand-up meetings. We hold stand-up meetings daily. After the Chairman's
18 morning meeting, we hold a stand-up meeting where we gather all of our staff. We
19 hold it for about 15, 20 minutes; at the longest a half an hour and we inform staff of
20 the issues and items of interest from the meeting including things that require
21 action from OIP that day.

1 So, the initiatives that come in we share with staff right away and we get
2 their views. It also provides us an opportunity because our staff is traveling so
3 often, it provides us an opportunity for us to come together and share issues with
4 each other and exchange information and make sure that everybody is generally
5 aware of activities going forward with international.

6 Building on this, we also encourage a number of team building initiatives
7 and so we have teams that are divided in various ways. For example, we have
8 regional approaches to some of our issues, perhaps the Far East, it might be the
9 Middle East, it might be an issue. The issues tend to be in an international arena.
10 The issues tend to be regional. Sometimes the politics tend to be regional, so we
11 approach team building in that way.

12 We make sure that we have a diverse staff background when we're taking a
13 regional approach. And it expands the perspectives of all of our staff, newer hires
14 as well. It gives the opportunity for more experienced staff to share their views
15 with newer hires.

16 Our outreach efforts include internal efforts and external. Internal: We
17 have a Web page that has information about OIP's functions, but it also provides
18 traveler information. We hold International Council meetings with all major
19 program offices that conduct international activities. We also involve other offices
20 when the issues warrant. These meetings ensure a common understanding of
21 agency strategies and implementation for the international program across the

1 board.

2 We ensure our job postings are circulated to NRC's EEO Advisory
3 Committees. This is something that started again after our Diversity Coordinator
4 came on board and said this is another initiative, so we made sure that when we
5 have a job posting we get them out to our advisory committees. She also has day
6 to day conversations with our advisory committees to help that along.

7 We've created many rotational opportunities. We're a very popular place
8 for the staff to rotate. We do try to have two or three rotations a year. This year
9 we had a very good year with three rotations in OIP. We get requests at all levels;
10 more senior staff and NSPDP. This year we did have two -- we had an NSPDP,
11 and a senior, and a more middle level staff. Like I said, we had three this year and
12 we have another NSPDP coming on in January.

13 Our foreign assignee program: I do want to touch on this maybe with a little
14 bit more detail. Our foreign assignee program is in an area where we thought we
15 needed to bring a little more focus to it. We see it as a real opportunity for the
16 agency to obtain diverse views because we're bringing someone in that's not only
17 from another culture, but they are also someone who works in an environment just
18 like ours. They're regulatory. It's a real opportunity for our agency and of course it
19 provides an opportunity to them because they can bring back whatever they learn
20 to improve the safety of their program.

21 So, we concentrated on the foreign assignee program last year and what

1 we realized is we can do a better job of helping them assimilate into the agency.
2 And so what we did, again, our Diversity Coordinator has worked on this with also
3 our senior person who handles foreign assignments, we have put together a
4 handbook for foreign assignees that has everything soup to nuts that you might
5 need when you come on board.

6 For example, restaurants in the area all the way to banking to all kinds of
7 services that are offered at the NRC; everything you can think of. What we hope
8 is that handbook will then be able to be given to other new hires. So we're
9 continuing to figure out what's best in that handbook.

10 We also looked at the other side of the equation which is the first line
11 supervisors that are bringing the foreign assignees in and we realized they had a
12 number of questions because they don't have a familiarity. Some of them have
13 never traveled internationally. They might not have a familiarity with the program
14 from which the assignee is coming.

15 So what we've done is we've now looked at what we need to do next and to
16 work with the first line supervisor. The easy things are just to provide them
17 information about the program that the foreign assignee is coming from, whether
18 it's a more sophisticated, more developed program or whether we're providing
19 them regulatory assistance; things like that.

20 So, we also have a number of other initiatives for cultural awareness. OIP
21 managers have participated in and encourage staff to participate in the cultural

1 and diversity awareness activities and we provide cultural awareness training to
2 NRC travelers to make them aware of any cultural sensitivities and differences,
3 especially where customs are different to enable a more effective interaction with
4 our counterparts.

5 Our external outreach efforts include a wide variety of scope of information
6 for the public on the Web, links to Web sites of international organizations such as
7 the IAEA and NEA and many of our activities. Also lot of information for licensing,
8 import-export licensing.

9 We have GNOSIS which is a summary of items of interest of the nuclear
10 industry and nuclear regulation. It's compiled, as you know, by an NRC staffer.
11 It's done several times a week. We distribute job postings. We distribute them to
12 try to attract a talented pool of applicants. So we go to many different places.
13 Most recently we've been doing most of our -- because we've had so much
14 interest in international activities from within the agency the last few hires this year
15 have been from within the agency, but when we go external we have a number of
16 places that we direct our postings.

17 We hold interagency meetings. We frequently -- at our interagency
18 meetings we try to encourage both senior level and newer hires to go to the
19 meetings because we think it provides an opportunity for them to grow. We also
20 look at these interactions as an opportunity for the NRC to put on a good face
21 because we then attract talented staff from other agencies as well. So, we use

1 those interagency meetings both ways. And then we also encourage our staff to
2 participate in other bilateral activities and also activities at multilateral
3 organizations. So, that's all I have.

4 MR. REYES: Let's have Lauren Quinones address perspectives from
5 the advisory committees.

6 MS. QUINONES-NAVARRO: Good afternoon. I would like to thank
7 the Commission and the EDO for the opportunity to present the joint EEO
8 statement for the advisory committees. The EEO Advisory Committees continue
9 to work with the Office of Small Business and Civil Rights and the Office of Human
10 Resources to ensure the agency has greater success in promoting diversity within
11 the agency.

12 The EEO Advisory Committee's joint statement includes input from a
13 diverse cross section of the population: African Americans, Asian, Hispanic, Native
14 Americans, women and from the Committee on Age Discrimination.

15 I will brief the Commission on the Committees' acknowledgements and
16 suggest some recommendations. Increased diversity in hires for entry level
17 positions. The NRC goal is to build a high performing, diverse work force at all
18 levels in the organization that is reflective of the ethnic diversity in the country. A
19 lot of progress has been made particularly in the entry level positions.

20 The facilitated mentoring program continues to provide sound career
21 guidance, coaching and inspiration. Currently there are approximately 230

1 mentoring pairs participating in this program. Feedback from participants indicate
2 satisfaction with this program.

3 Selective 48% minorities and women in the SES CDP program. The
4 developmental programs provide an excellent opportunity for NRC employees to
5 continue to demonstrate its commitment to diversity and this was demonstrated
6 with the selection of 48% of women and minorities in the SES Candidate
7 Development Program Class of 2007.

8 Increase outreach to minority serving institutions and students professional
9 associations targeting women and minorities. Recruitment activities are very
10 important elements in the effort to increase presentation of women and minorities
11 in the NRC. Every year the NRC visits universities and professional conferences
12 with minority representation to recruit permanent and temporary summer and co-
13 op positions. We should strive to continue participating in these recruitment
14 activities and increase the presentation of NRC minority groups in the teams that
15 attend these recruitment activities. Next slide, please.

16 The agency has been promoting diversity among the work force as well as
17 among management, but a slight decrease in the number of women and minorities
18 in SES positions due to retirements raise some concerns about future challenges.
19 Some of these challenges are diversity in succession planning. Commitment to
20 the goals and objectives of the CDMP will help the agency create a common
21 structure approach to view a highly skilled and diverse work force in a positive

1 work environment.

2 Linking EEO, diversity management, performance plans, human capital and
3 the agency's Strategic Plan ensures we make continued progress toward
4 achieving our goals. The agency development programs such as the LPP and
5 SES candidate program continue to serve as a primary tool to train NRC future
6 leaders. Selections for the LPP, SES and the new Team Leader Development
7 Program have included a diverse group of participants.

8 The significant increase in women and minorities selected for 2007 SES
9 candidate class will enhance the agency's ability to increase diversity in SES
10 positions. The percentage of representation has not changed significantly for all
11 employee groups. It is clear to us that increasing representation in the feeder
12 groups is key to success in diversifying senior and managerial levels. Therefore,
13 we encourage Management to remain proactive to enhance the advancement
14 potential of all employees, especially women and minorities.

15 Continued rotations and formal training for women and minorities to support
16 promotion into senior positions. A commitment to support the developmental
17 needs of minority employees with both internal and external training and
18 development opportunities is very important. This will allow high performers to be
19 recognized and enhance their advancement potential to more responsible
20 positions. Next slide, please.

21 Perform NRC appraisal trends, study periodically and include appraisal

1 study results in leadership training. Dr. Dan Lurie conducted a study for the
2 second time on performance appraisals, included job series 800 and 1300 from
3 fiscal year 2002 through 2006 using 785 employee records. The study showed
4 that the average appraisal for employees younger than 52 is higher than the
5 average for employees older than 52. The reasons are beyond the scope of the
6 analysis. Next slide, please.

7 We recommend the results of the study be included in the agency's
8 leadership training, SES, LPP and TLDP. We also request that the study be
9 performed periodically to establish if this is a consistent trend.

10 COMMISSIONER JACZKO: Can I just clarify this bullet? Reasons
11 are beyond the scope of the analysis means that they didn't look for what the
12 reasons were or they looked, but it was too complicated to discuss at this point?

13 MS. QUINONES-NAVARRO: They didn't analyze.

14 COMMISSIONER JACZKO: Okay, so they just haven't analyzed it.
15 So, there's no -- the people that did the review don't have a sense of where this is
16 coming from at this point?

17 MS. QUINONES-NAVARRO: Yes. In closing, the agency should
18 continue to promote and support the objectives of the CDMP as a roadmap to
19 become an agency where all employees are valued and have an equal chance to
20 succeed. Appropriate training and development along with strategies to ensure
21 employees embrace diversity and broaden their experience will enhance their

1 advancement potential. NRC is the 2007 best place to work in government and
2 we are all very proud of being part of it. Our collective efforts in all areas including
3 diversity will continue to help the NRC to be a great place to work. Thanks.

4 MR. REYES: Now Ren is going to bring it home.

5 MS. KELLEY: Thanks, Luis. Good afternoon, Chairman Klein,
6 Commissioner Jaczko, Commissioner Lyons. I thank you for the opportunity to
7 give a status of the agency's Equal Opportunity and Diversity Programs. I want to
8 start by acknowledging the support of the Commission, the EDO, the Deputy
9 EDOs, Office Directors, Regional Administrators, managers, supervisors, and the
10 entire NRC staff for helping the agency achieve unprecedented success in all our
11 program areas.

12 We work with all the offices and regions throughout the year in a number of
13 different capacities, but there are some offices with which we work on a daily basis
14 to get the job done. I want to mention those and that's of course the EDO's office,
15 the Office of Human Resources, the Office of Administration, the General Counsel,
16 and those partnerships are very important as well. And last but not least in my list
17 of thank yous, I want to acknowledge the SBCR staff for its hard work and for the
18 efforts that my office puts in place to help with this part of the agency's mission.

19 Next slide, please.

20 In terms of highlights in the area of overall highlights for the agency, the
21 agency enhanced diversity overall by hiring 441 employees and 60% of those are

1 women and minorities. We refined the comprehensive diversity management
2 measures and those measures will be included in operating plans.

3 We eliminated the backlog of EEO complaints and we conducted regional
4 assessments and also assessments of the Technical Training Center. This is the
5 first time that we've done that and this effort was done in connection with EEOC's
6 Management Directive 715.

7 We established a formalized outreach and compliance program and that
8 program has 10 subprogram areas. We met four of five small business goals. We
9 issued the largest contract ever in our service disabled veteran owned category
10 and for the first time ever the agency met its HUBZone goal. Just to name a few
11 of the highlights of our accomplishments.

12 In the affirmative employment area -- next slide please -- mentoring
13 continues to be a very vital part of this program area and I just want to touch on a
14 couple of things in this area. We have right now 230 pairs of mentors and
15 mentees in our formal mentoring program, but informal mentors across the agency
16 continue to do a lot of work in this area in terms of sharing experiences and
17 backgrounds. And we held three orientation sessions to continue to build these
18 relationships.

19 Also during this year working with HR, we added a skills mentoring
20 component to the knowledge management strategy. Next slide, please.

21 With regard to representation as Lauren indicated, the representation of the

1 various demographic groups has been pretty constant. The breakdown for
2 African-Americans represents about 14%, Hispanics 4%, Asians 9%, Native
3 Americans .56%, white women 24%, and white men at 48%. These numbers
4 have been pretty constant across the last few years, even considering the growth
5 of the agency.

6 Again, I'll mention that total hires of 441 and 60% of those being women
7 and minorities. That definitely does serve to enhance the diversity of the agency's
8 work force. We hired three individuals with targeted disabilities. Right now, all
9 Federal agencies have about a 2% goal. That goal is established by OPM and
10 EEOC. We right now are at about 1% and we are looking at some strategies to
11 update the information on where we are with our numbers. It could be that we're
12 higher than 1% and we don't know it because the qualifications for targeted
13 disability has changed in recent years.

14 In addition, we haven't asked people recently. And a number of us have
15 been here for a long time, so we're looking at a communications strategy to update
16 those numbers to get a good barometer as to where we really are. And the class
17 of '07 includes 52 NSPDP and 57% of those are women and minorities. Next
18 slide, please.

19 The Honor Law Graduate class that OGC has includes eight individuals and
20 five of those are white women. The summer employment program across the
21 agency included 60% women and minorities, two minority faculty members

1 participated in our summer program and a program that HR implements, a new
2 student career experience program, which allows employees to work and go to
3 school. Students can be in school and also work at NRC part of the time. That
4 program was also very diverse, included 63% women and minorities. All of these
5 things serve to enhance the diversity of the agency. Next slide, please.

6 As a part of the requirements from the SRM from our last EEO briefing, we
7 talked about departures of females from NRC and we were asked to give some
8 comparative analysis with other agencies. We were able to obtain some
9 information at mid-year numbers from NASA, EPA and DOE and NIST for 2007.
10 The others represented 2006 data.

11 NRC for 2006 we had a 47% departure rate for female employees. That
12 dropped to 31% for '07. In NASA, that percentage is 36%, 51% for EPA and 38%
13 for DOE. For NIST for 2007 its 47%. So, basically it shows that NRC's female
14 departure rate is equal to or less than that of the other agencies to which we
15 compared it.

16 Now, in terms of why this is and what do we know about it. In May of this
17 year, HR implemented a new exit interview process and we have very preliminary
18 information data that's collected from that new process. It tells us a little bit. We
19 have information. It's very limited and sparse and it's not enough to really make
20 any quantum leaps, but there are a couple of indicators of things that we certainly
21 will monitor and work very closely with HR on.

1 This does not relate specifically to females, but across the agency there
2 were some of those who left who did indicate a reason. Nine of them mentioned
3 fear of reprisal and discrimination and several mentioned problems with the
4 supervisor. Of course, we don't know the details behind that, but it does indicate
5 to us that that is something we will continue to watch and respond to as
6 necessary. Next slide, please.

7 We've revised the Comprehensive Diversity Management Plan based on
8 feedback. We took part in the agency's overall working group and strategic group
9 looking at the measures across the agency. So, those have been issued as a part
10 of the EDO guidance to offices and will be included in operating plans and
11 reported progress against those measures will be reported periodically.

12 This is the year also that we are refreshing managers and supervisors
13 training and we have held a number of sessions already. We're well under way in
14 getting managers and supervisors refreshed with that training and that process will
15 continue into '08, but we expect to have all managers having completed that
16 training by probably early '08. I would estimate probably February or March time
17 frame.

18 In addition to that, we implemented an initiative which we call "Thought of
19 the Week". We put a thought, hopefully an inspirational thought, out on the Web
20 for anyone just to help you with your thought process. If you're having a tough
21 moment, you can go look at that and hopefully it will cause you to count to 10 or

1 do whatever you need to in order to make your day better.

2 MR. REYES: I use it right after my meeting with you every morning.

3 CHAIRMAN KLEIN: Does it work?

4 MR. REYES: Sometimes.

5 MS. KELLEY: Next slide, please. Concerning the assessments that
6 we conducted in the regional offices and the technical training center, we
7 completed the on-site work. We're in the process of writing the results from those
8 assessments and they really were very positive news. They demonstrate to us
9 that the regions are very much committed to the principles that the agency has
10 included in the Comprehensive Diversity Management Plan in building a positive
11 environment. The employees were very happy.

12 Of course, there are always some exceptions to the rule and we did get
13 some of those, but overall it demonstrated very positive work environment and
14 some good practices for enhancing communication and strengthening the overall
15 commitment and engagement of its employees. And the same was true for the
16 Technical Training Center. We are in the process of planning assessments for
17 headquarters offices. We started with the regions because of the EEO's guidance
18 to us that it's good to do these especially for organizations that are physically in a
19 different location than our offices are. So, more to come on that.

20 As you know, -- next slide, please -- the Commission issued an anti-
21 harassment policy in January of '07. This policy is intended to assist the agency

1 with bringing workplace issues to the attention of management soon and resolving
2 those quickly. We believe that has been the case.

3 We've had about 22 such cases and we've seen somewhat of a decline in
4 our informal complaint activity in SBCR. However, I will note that the formal
5 complaint activity more than makes up for it because we are dealing with very
6 complex and multifaceted cases and probably unlike any other year, but at the
7 same time we continue to have a number of contacts to the office prior to a
8 complainant coming into the complaint process. If they're dealing with an issue,
9 they can come and they can talk and we'll work with them to try to resolve those
10 issues even though they do not have a formal or informal complaint.

11 In addition to that, we do get managers coming for guidance, whatever or
12 suggestions to help work through issues and so that process is still alive and well.
13 And we want to keep our resolution of issues early in the process as possible for
14 the sake of continuing to resolve those matters.

15 In addition to that, EEO counselors along with the staff in SBCR promote
16 alternative dispute resolution as a manner of resolving workplace issues and we
17 offer ADR to complainants 100% of the time. Of course, it's not always used, but
18 we continue to look for ways to try and encourage the use of ADR as a way to try
19 to resolve workplace matters. Next slide, please.

20 As I mentioned earlier, we eliminated the backlog of complaint activities and
21 we're doing everything that we can to keep from there being another backlog of

1 complaints. I mean, obviously, that takes a team to do that, not just the SBCR
2 staff. But as I mentioned before, we appreciate the efforts of HR and OGC and
3 the managers and staff and supervisors.

4 If you get a call to speak to an investigator, sooner is better than later to try
5 to have that conversation and help us with keeping that backlog or not having a
6 backlog in our complaint process activity. This slide also gives information on the
7 basis and the issues that our complaint activity covers. In the interest of time, I'm
8 going to move forward. Next slide, please.

9 Concerning the No FEAR Act, we issued the first report to Congress in
10 March of '07. One of the messages in that report is that less than 1% of the work
11 force has filed a complaint. I won't say that that means that only 1% of the work
12 force is complaining, but you know in terms of the number of those who have
13 come forward to file formal complaint activity, that's about what it represents.

14 Another part that's important to note is that of the 441 new employees that
15 we have brought on board, 69% of those have already completed the training
16 that's required. They have 90 days to complete that training, so there will always
17 be some who have not taken it, but that seems to be something that new
18 employees are attending to pretty early in their employment. Next slide, please.

19 We formalized the outreach and compliance coordination program. The
20 purpose of this program is to ensure access, participation and benefits in Federally
21 conducted and financially assisted activities. This program includes about ten

1 subprogram areas including the Minority Serving Institutions Program.

2 We have done some work in various of the ten subprogram areas. One of
3 the things I will note is that we did 60 pre-award compliance reviews. When we
4 give money away, that's one of the things that we're supposed to do and we've
5 conducted 60 of those in '07. Next slide, please.

6 This slide basically gives some of the accomplishments in our Minority
7 Serving Institutions area. That continues to help the agency assist young students
8 with considering science and math as a field, developing their careers and we also
9 assist schools with enhancing their capacity and building their programs so that
10 they can educate and train our future scientists. Next slide, please.

11 Just more information in terms of the things that we've accomplished in this
12 particular program area. Next slide, please.

13 One thing I will mention is that we do have a road map for the additional
14 things that we need to do to implement this program and we expect to have done
15 those things by 2010. We believe that's the outset of the time that we will have the
16 program fully implemented. As I mentioned, there's ten subprogram areas, so
17 there's a lot of things to do and we are taking a careful approach of making sure
18 that the things that we do are the things that are necessary. It's not too much or
19 too little in terms of the work that we need to do to be in compliance with Federal
20 requirements. Next slide, please.

21 In the small business area as I mentioned, we met four of our five goals for

1 the first time. We met our HUBZone goal and I will also mention that we had a
2 very large contract issued to a service disabled veteran owned business and that
3 was issued by NSIR and it certainly did make the agency's numbers grow from
4 next to nothing to a representative, almost 2% and the goal is 3%. So like in the
5 HUBZone, we're making progress in this area and we continue to be very vigilant
6 with strategies to help us improve. Next slide, please.

7 I'll also mention that in the reactor area, the new reactor area, three of the
8 four contracts went to small businesses and I think that's a really noteworthy
9 accomplishment and that was NRO. Next slide, please.

10 In 2006, the Small Business Administration instituted a scorecard process.
11 The NRC was yellow in 2006 because we met at that time three of five goals and
12 we were green in that our strategies that we had in place, they liked those, so we
13 were green. Going forward, we expect to be green and green because we've met
14 four of five goals and that's what it takes in order to be green. We expect to
15 continue our efforts to remain green on the quantitative measures and qualitative
16 measures as well.

17 One thing I will mention in connection with our Small Business Program is
18 that we are losing our Small Business Program Manager who is going to another
19 agency for an SES position. So, I'll take that SES position so we can keep him. I
20 appreciate that, but I'd like to acknowledge Mauricio Vera and all his hard work
21 and we're going to miss him. I just wanted to let you know that he'll be missed.

1 Next slide, please.

2 We've talked about successes and it has been a great year for the agency.
3 Certainly do not intend for that to sound like we can declare victory. This is an
4 area where it takes continued vigilant support, attention or your progress can
5 easily be taken away. We've listed there some of the areas that we see as
6 challenges. It means for us that we've got a lot of work to continue ahead of us
7 and we know that it's a joint effort on the part of all the members of the agency and
8 so we look forward to trying to meet the challenges.

9 The one that I will note is remaining a best place to work and a best
10 diversity company. We are very much aware that that is something that is worth
11 working toward. So, we are, as everyone else, very much focused on that and
12 attentive to the things that we can do and being watchful across the agency to see
13 where there are areas that we need to attend to in order to keep that noteworthy
14 position. With that, thank you very much.

15 MR. REYES: Chairman and Commissioners that concludes our
16 prepared remarks. We're now open for questions.

17 CHAIRMAN KLEIN: Thanks for a very fine presentation. Before we
18 start, Dale, would you like to make some comments?

19 MR. YIELDING: Thank you. My name is Dale Yielding. I'm the
20 President of our Local Chapter 208 of the National Treasury Employees Union.
21 Thank you for the opportunity to make a few comments. I'll try to keep them brief;

1 under five minutes.

2 For the people who don't realize, the union isn't permitted to speak at formal
3 meetings by statute at the end of meetings like this with management and
4 bargaining unit employees, so I appreciate the opportunity.

5 I would like to keep my comments connected to EEO and diversity and my
6 first couple of subjects will be directly related and my next ones will be indirectly.

7 The harassment program that Ren mentioned was developed and implemented in
8 January of this year and administered by Human Resources, not SBCR, was
9 negotiated with the union prior to implementation.

10 I had reservations at first, but once I finished the negotiation process and
11 understood what this new harassment program was all about, I supported it and
12 actually spoke at all the briefings which announced the program in support of it.
13 Sorry to say I have some reservations about it right now. And I'll try to explain
14 those.

15 The agreement that I signed on implementation of the harassment program
16 basically gave birth to a form. There was a notification form so that someone
17 initially entering a harassment claim -- and maybe I should define harassment real
18 quick here for people. This is harassment associated with the six or seven
19 protected classes. The same protected classes as Equal Employment
20 Opportunity, which includes sexual harassment and that's where the connotation
21 usually people refer to harassment, but it does not include work place supervisory

1 harassment to get the job done so to speak.

2 Sometimes employees come up and say my boss is harassing me because
3 I've got to meet a deadline, but that's not included in this harassment program. So
4 the program is definitely a program associated with EEO and discrimination. So
5 my concern was would someone enter their case into this program and not be
6 notified of all the other venues in which to resolve, so the form informs the
7 employee that they can file an EEO complaint, they can file a grievance, they can
8 go to the Inspector General, Merit System Protection board, so it identifies all of
9 the other venues to resolve their harassment claim or allegation.

10 And the deadlines associated because once you enter your issue into this
11 program, you may or most probably will miss the deadlines to file under a more
12 formal program. So, that was the whole purpose of the form. Sorry to say the
13 form is not universally being used.

14 I had one situation -- I don't want to get into individual cases here like you
15 said we shouldn't, but managers use the "H word" and they actually said "H" rather
16 than the word "harassment" because once they use the word harassment then
17 they've got to enter the program and go to Human Resources and start a case.
18 So they avoided the word harassment by using the first letter of the word, "H".
19 Senior management attempted to resolve the case without entering into the
20 program, so it was a bypass of the program. I think training by Ren of senior
21 managers by mid next year will hopefully resolve that.

1 In another case, the form was just never used. The situation went through
2 a long stage and the employee finally came into the union office and was never
3 aware of the other venues to use. So, I guess long story short, what can the
4 Commission do is -- I haven't had a chance to read through the three ring binder,
5 but add tracking of this new harassment program to these every six month
6 meetings so that -- I think Ren said there was 21 cases out, but do some more
7 tracking other than 21. How long were those cases in? What's the backlog? Are
8 they getting resolved in a regular manner? Are any of these cases serious cases
9 because the threshold for this harassment program is supposed to be somewhat
10 lower than the threshold for an actual EEO complaint?

11 I applaud the agency to stop harassment no matter what form it is way
12 before it gets to a legal level. So you can even do a measure of that. How many
13 of these informal harassment policy claims were really serious? I know one of
14 them already ended up in a resignation of a person, so they do get very serious
15 even though they're being resolved informally. So much for that subject.

16 I applaud SBCR for resolving quickly a conflict in which a member of an
17 advisory committee was told they couldn't also be a steward at the same time. So
18 that was something that got resolved real quick. I'll identify if there's any members
19 of advisory committees who would also like to represent employees in a
20 stewardship, they're more than encouraged to do so.

21 But on a more humorous note, there was a mistake, but the first reason that

1 the steward was given for why they couldn't hold a combined steward job along
2 with being on an advisory committee was that stewards often take positions on an
3 issue against management and that advisory committee members are not
4 permitted to take a position against management. That was later corrected and
5 said the conflict dealt with time, but I thought that was rather humorous reason.
6 But we have that situation resolved.

7 Grievances not necessarily connected with EEO, but a person could have a
8 problem with merit selection or an appraisal or something where they just file a
9 grievance. It could have discrimination attributes to the case, but they just elected
10 not to claim because it's harder to prove discrimination so they elected to use the
11 grievance process.

12 So the Commission might want to look at how many grievance cases are
13 issued and what some of the metric breakdowns of ethnic groups and protective
14 classes are with grievances to see if maybe that could be a measure of content or
15 discontent of employees in the agency.

16 Merit selection process. Basically that's hiring in our diverse work force.
17 We're hiring a lot more, so HR is I guess, under the gun a little bit with 400-some
18 people they hired in the past year. I was a little bit disenchanted when I saw that
19 orientation for new employees went to every two weeks; worrying about the new
20 employees that would have to be hired in the intermediate time having to spend a
21 week at the agency without the advantage of the six hours of orientation, but that

1 hasn't happened very often, but it has happened a few times.

2 There's been some selection problems in cases, but they've been very few.

3 I guess one more serious was associated with having more than one selecting

4 official share the interview pool. Everyone feels that if you interview one

5 candidate, you interview them all and the selecting official should have the full

6 gamut of everyone in the best qualified list to interview.

7 We saw a situation where two selecting officials were selecting out of the

8 same pool. They divided it up and that didn't seem to be fair, but it didn't violate

9 the letter of the law as we determine through our legal counsel.

10 And I guess I'll end by supporting something that Commissioner Merrifield

11 supported and pressured years ago was the training of senior management and

12 SES staff on EEO. In fact, I think every meeting he asked for the statistic of how

13 many were trained and how many were going to get completed because that was

14 something that took quite a long time to get all the managers trained on that

15 aspect. The only reason why I bring that up is because we had a senior office

16 director make a comment about hiring a young deputy and if -- I didn't see our

17 Committee on Age Discrimination person sitting next to me, but they were notified

18 and I'm anxious to see if they will look into if all of a sudden we're looking at hiring

19 younger people, which would not give the proper merit and experience to older

20 applicants. So thank you very much for the opportunity.

21 CHAIRMAN KLEIN: Thank you for your comments. Before we start

1 with the questions, I'd just like to make a general comment. I think this has really
2 been a great program, the EEO and the SB program and certainly our hiring
3 success. I think that reflects on all of you, so all of you in the audience this really
4 is an agency effort. It's not just the victims here at the table.

5 I think all of you deserve recognition for all of your hard work and those that
6 aren't here, it really is reflective very positively on our agency on the advisory
7 committees that help us do it right. But I also think it starts at the real level where,
8 Ren, I think your personality and your devotion, your seriousness, your willingness
9 to really go to bat really makes a big difference.

10 Before we start the questioning, do you want to make a plug for the
11 upcoming Heritage event?

12 MS. KELLEY: I will indeed, yes. We have the Native American
13 dinner is tomorrow night at 6:00 o'clock at PGA tour. If you have not signed up,
14 please do so. You'll miss a great event if you don't come. So thank you very
15 much for the opportunity to do so.

16 CHAIRMAN KLEIN: We'll begin with Commissioner Lyons.

17 COMMISSIONER LYONS: Let me start by thanking all of you for
18 excellent presentations and also start by echoing the Chairman's remarks that
19 really all the employees in the agency contribute to making this an outstanding
20 place to work. But having said that, I think the six of you sitting on the other side
21 of the table deserve tremendous extra appreciation certainly from me, I hope from

1 the whole Commission, for the roles that you play in making this a great place to
2 work and trying to keep us as a great place to work.

3 There are so many things I could compliment in the figures and facts that
4 you've presented. I hardly know where to start, but just to mention a few. The exit
5 interviewee process I think is outstanding. To me, almost incredible progress or
6 accomplishments in diversity and hiring; truly amazing. The small business
7 accomplishments and I was delighted to read about those in the recent release.
8 Again, just outstanding.

9 Certainly I want to echo the thanks to Mary Ellen and I hope you reconsider
10 your decision. And then in light of Luis' comment about his use of the "Thought of
11 the Week", it did occur to me that you didn't ask the Chairman when he used the
12 Thought of the Week. You may use it coming out of the meeting --

13 MR. REYES: I was afraid to ask that question.

14 COMMISSIONER LYONS: But he may use it going into the meeting
15 with you. So, in any case, it's nice to see that being used. A couple of quick
16 comments to Margie. I've had so many compliments on the IP Program, but
17 specific to your presentations here today. I've had a number of opportunities to
18 work with some of your very new staff; outstanding individuals that you're bringing
19 into the program and just been super impressed.

20 Lauren your comment on the importance of rotations and training. Just
21 wanted to note how much I second that comment and Ren you also mentioned the

1 importance of rotations and training. I've occasionally, certainly not very often,
2 had folks perhaps mention that, "Well, we do so many rotations that we don't
3 always have perhaps the most technically qualified individual leading a particular
4 position." To me that may be true, but I think it's far more important that we're
5 trying to use the rotations to build expertise across the agency and if someone
6 uses a rotational experience as a learning experience, I think overall the agency is
7 the winner.

8 Whatever short period of time it may take for someone to get up to full
9 speed; I still think the benefits far outweigh any problems. So count me as a great
10 fan of the rotational programs and I think one of the real strengths of the agency.

11 By way of just a few questions, Ren, you talked about the Minority Serving
12 Institutions Program. I've been very, very interested in that program. I was just
13 curious, I know it's relatively recent, but are we to the point of seeing, if you will,
14 tangible benefits from the minority serving programs in terms of our ability to
15 recruit individuals or are we at least setting up metrics to track the success of the
16 minority serving programs because I think they will be very successful?

17 MS. KELLEY: We are. At one time when we sponsored students for
18 summer work, we were not tracking whether they came to work for NRC or for the
19 Federal government at all. We have now begun to do that so that we can know
20 whether there's a direct success or benefit to NRC from a recruitment standpoint.
21 We are watching that now and the students since we started to track, I don't know

1 that we've had any come to work for NRC. I know that we have on our summer
2 program and I will turn to Tuwanda Smith. Tuwanda, do you know -- can you
3 answer whether we've had -- Tuwanda is the Program Manager for that area.

4 MS. SMITH: We are actually not tracking them by numbers, but we
5 are seeing students that are applying. We're seeing a lot of interest from
6 graduating students as well as faculty interested in coming and gaining learning
7 experience and sharing their expertise. I think that your point -- is it's very easy for
8 us to track those numbers when we have them available.

9 COMMISSIONER LYONS: I would encourage that we do that
10 tracking. I think those are already very successful programs, but by tracking them
11 we can learn how to make them even more successful.

12 MS. KELLEY: One thing that I will add is I went on one of the recent
13 recruitment trips and we do couple the two, the Minority Serving Institutions
14 Program with our recruitment efforts so we are using that as a recruiting vehicle at
15 our recruiting outings. And so they certainly do know and I would venture to say
16 that we have had an individual from Tuskegee who was previously, but I will
17 double check that. I believe we have. Jim is nodding yes.

18 MR. REYES: If I could add, we track on our recruitment efforts all the
19 students that we get from those places, which includes the minority serving
20 institutions. What we don't have is this connection that you were asking about.
21 We can add that dimension to the information. We track our success recruiting

1 from all the institutions we visit because we want to know how much return for the
2 investment we're getting.

3 COMMISSIONER LYONS: I'm glad you're doing that and since you
4 mentioned some of the recruiting trips, I've enjoyed participating in at least several
5 visits at different schools which I guess you could call a recruiting trip along with
6 other reasons for being there. Certainly the support from Jim and Mary Ellen in
7 terms of providing recruiting materials on those trips and just the opportunity to
8 interface with the students I find very, very illuminating and a lot of fun.

9 Ren, maybe a leading question. Certainly, a lot of growth in the staff. I'm
10 guessing that leads or could lead to an increasing range of challenges in your
11 office. You mentioned some areas where there's actually decreases in formal
12 complaints and that's great. But I am curious, do you feel that you've got the staff
13 you need to carry out the range of missions that we've asked you to take on?

14 MR. REYES: Tell him! Tell him, "Help me!"

15 COMMISSIONER LYONS: I said it was a leading question.

16 MS. KELLEY: I will say that we have grown and that was a much
17 needed increase in our resources. I believe we are still somewhat challenged to
18 do the job to the level where it should be done in some cases and so where we
19 are able to be successful it comes at a lot of overtime and it's a really high price on
20 the staff. And so, I would say that there may be areas where additional resources
21 would be very helpful.

1 MR. REYES: We have -- success brings unintended consequences
2 and one of the successes we have -- we just mentioned Mauricio getting a much
3 deserved recognition and promotion to another agency and we had that happen to
4 a lot of Ren's staff. We're bringing extremely good quality individuals coming in,
5 but it's a transition. So now they know who we are. They know what successes
6 we have and they clearly said we would like to emulate that. Why don't we go and
7 take some of that talent. So there's some unintended consequences on success.

8 COMMISSIONER LYONS: That's always going to be the case. We'd
9 better just admit that it will be the case and welcome it. Maybe one last question
10 on the mentoring program. Lauren, you mentioned the importance of that as you
11 did too, Ren. Certainly over my career I've had many opportunities for mentoring
12 and always been very, very appreciative of the outcomes. I'm just curious, is there
13 a formal process that you use to place people on the mentoring program? You
14 referred to both formal and informal mentoring. I'm wondering if you could expand
15 on that just a tiny bit.

16 MS. KELLEY: Okay, yes. We have a facilitated mentoring program.
17 That is a formal process. When we get an individual who would like a mentor, we
18 have many managers who are signed up to be mentors. As an intake interview
19 with that individual we get information on where they are, where they'd like to go
20 and what their interests are. We get information about them and that helps us to
21 suggest three or four individuals that they may interview and it's a joint decision.

1 That individual -- they may have a certain synergy with one person that they
2 didn't necessarily feel with another one. And so, it's a decision that the individual
3 has some input into and the manager as well. Sometimes you may select a given
4 manager, but that manager may have so many and many of them do. They do a
5 great job for us. So, there is a process that we go through to assist an individual
6 with finding the right mentor for their goals.

7 COMMISSIONER LYONS: Do you track the outcome? Do you track
8 those individuals over a period of time?

9 MS. KELLEY: Yes, we do. We have orientation sessions and that
10 gives an opportunity for both of the individuals in that relationship to come and
11 participate in that and we get information from the mentor and the mentee. So,
12 yes we do. We keep records in terms of our numbers and what's going on with
13 those mentoring pairs.

14 A lot of times they go off and the help from us is rather minimal, but we do
15 provide material, we answer questions. We're there to assist -- we play more of an
16 assist mode once that relationship is formed -- if there's a need to move from one
17 mentor to another or to provide any additional information, but normally the pairs
18 work very well once they're established.

19 COMMISSIONER LYONS: Again, my compliments on the briefings,
20 the program. I do apologize, but I've got to head for the airport, but again thank
21 you very, very much.

1 CHAIRMAN KLEIN: Thanks, Commissioner Lyons. A few questions.
2 Lauren, you mentioned on it looks like slide 7 -- or slide 11 you talked about areas
3 of concern the decline in women and minorities in SES positions. I guess I'll direct
4 it to Luis. Could you talk about the trend and what you think the future will --?

5 MR. REYES: Our goal is to have diversity throughout the
6 NRC at all levels and the information that you have in your book and that's
7 available to the staff counts SES as once they have been approved by the Office
8 of Personnel Management. So, using that information you may get to the
9 conclusion that the numbers have gone down.

10 If you consider our SES candidate development program is very diverse
11 and we have 14 individuals who have been selected and actually are in SES
12 positions, but they cannot be counted because OPM has not certified them. Six of
13 those are females and minorities. So when you look at what's coming out of the
14 SES candidate development program, we are improving on our profile of diversity
15 at the executive level.

16 Now, I don't want to undermine -- I think it's a real challenge that we
17 continue to do that. If you look at the feeder groups that lead us to that, the
18 Leadership Potential Program and the SES Candidate Development Program,
19 those programs are very diverse. So, as we go through the retirement process
20 and all that we think we have a success formula in terms of making sure that the
21 diversity of the NRC is represented at all levels.

1 CHAIRMAN KLEIN: Okay. Thanks. I think clearly to have diversity
2 at all levels it starts with the hires. I was amazed at the success that 60% were
3 women and minorities of the 441. What would you claim, Jim and Mary Ellen that
4 resulted in those kinds of positive numbers?

5 MR. McDERMOTT: Part of it is the supply. The supply out there has
6 many more -- relatively more women and minorities in the engineering and
7 scientific disciplines that are our main feeder groups. And the other part is the
8 sensitivity and awareness on the part of the managers who are making selection
9 decisions.

10 They are becoming --just my observation - increasingly aware that talent
11 exists and can be found in all these groups. I think that has really -- chime in Ren
12 -- I think that has really significantly lowered some barriers that might have existed
13 in the past.

14 CHAIRMAN KLEIN: Have you seen that management vision change
15 over the last say three to five years?

16 MS. KELLEY: I would agree with what Jim said that at one time there
17 may have been a mind set that this is a technical job and there is a particular
18 group that can do that job best. And I believe that the successes that we've had
19 have demonstrated that you can have quality employees in a diverse number of
20 groups.

21 I believe that that helps to make that a comfortable decision and the one

1 thing I will say is that without compromising merit selection processes or law that
2 you can reach qualified employees in all groups. So, I agree that the supply
3 definitely does help and targeted recruitment where you can put emphasis. And at
4 one time the agency probably was more narrow in its recruitment efforts and I
5 think we've really broadened that and we are being attentive to casting the net
6 wide. So, that probably has helped us as well.

7 MR. REYES: If I could add to that. There's one element that's hard
8 to capture. To me, it's the final ingredient to let us achieve some of the records
9 that we have achieved. It's the Comprehensive Management and Diversity Plan. I
10 show it because it's a piece of paper; it's easy to show, but what it does it creates
11 an environment where diversity is celebrated. Not accepted, celebrated. And we
12 celebrate it. I think that that creates an environment where people look at diversity
13 as a mechanism to make us a better organization. That is a different place than
14 we were many years ago. So, the mechanics that Jim and Ren talk about are
15 true.

16 When we go out to engineering schools, the diversity is there when it was
17 not there a decade ago. That helps. But you have to have an environment where
18 diversity is celebrated. Not accepted, celebrated. I think -- we are not perfect, but
19 that's the area we're trying to move into.

20 CHAIRMAN KLEIN: Having spent a few years in a higher education
21 arena, we worked hard at getting more women and minorities in the engineering

1 programs and that's one in which you have to work at it every day. I was surprised
2 in getting women into technical fields you need to really make the programs at
3 seventh grade, which I was surprised because if you don't target them at that age
4 oftentimes when they get into high school you've already missed them. They
5 haven't taken the preparatory courses and so we have to backup and start early
6 and it takes a while for that to catch up.

7 Senator Voinovich has always been concerned about the NRC's ability to
8 hire to meet the workload that's coming at us. At the recent round table program
9 that he had, it was nice to be able to say not only of the numbers that we hired but
10 the diversity. He was very complimentary to the NRC's effort and I think that
11 reflects on all of the employees and certainly you all at the table. So, keep up the
12 good work. On the exit interviews that you've been conducting, any surprises?

13 MR. McDERMOTT: I wouldn't characterize them as surprises mainly
14 because the sample was so small. It's a work in progress. We started out with a
15 form that was replete with wife-beating questions. Did this make you that mad?
16 Did that make you mad? Did this make you madder than that? As opposed to
17 saying tell us about your experiences at NRC. What did you actually like? Wasn't
18 there something? We're tooling it that way.

19 We've set up the mechanism so that we can gather that data and track it
20 and we're trying to put some realism into this. We made such a deal about
21 anonymity in our earlier effort that we guaranteed that the information was virtually

1 useless once we got it. So now, we have interviews that occur and as the result of
2 some guidance at the recent senior leadership meeting, we're going to formally
3 incorporate supervisors in the process and the supervisor is going to talk to us a
4 little bit also and we're going to capture that information when somebody leaves to
5 see if we can get a better -- it's not going to be overnight and it's not going to be
6 easy, but I'm looking forward to getting a real years' worth of data so I can see
7 some serious trends. We have data from like June to September.

8 MR. REYES: If I could add -- the last senior leadership meeting we
9 concentrated on how to remain a best place to work and we spent a lot time on
10 this topic because we want to hire, develop and retain a high quality diverse work
11 force. So this part comes in the retain part. We need to get feedback not only
12 from the employees that are here, but from some who are departing about good
13 things and things that need to be improved.

14 We spent a lot of time on the executives working with this and I think the
15 tool is going to get much better and it's going to be able to help us to give you the
16 insight. Right now, I think it's limited. Better than in the past, we're making it
17 better in the future to be able to help us.

18 CHAIRMAN KLEIN: One aspect of your program, Ren, that I really
19 think is good is the informal contacts. When people have issues and questions,
20 the more we can do that early and informally I think we will be better to solve the
21 problems, catch them early, solve them early rather than before they get to the

1 formal complaint. That tends to be so bureaucratic rather than really solving the
2 issue up front and early. Is there any way we can advertise that better to get the
3 word out?

4 MS. KELLEY: Well, I'm sure the answer to that is yes. So, we'll take
5 a look and see. Maybe bringing to the attention of the agency at large that that is
6 an option to employees. Many employees use it already. Before they go to a
7 counselor they contact the office and come and visit and ask for help in a lot of
8 cases. Sometimes they ask for anonymity and they don't want us to go back to
9 management, but we always encourage the reestablishment of the lines of
10 communication. You cannot resolve this matter without your manager.

11 And so, that's something that we definitely encourage, but in terms of
12 communicating that, we could send out an announcement just letting individuals
13 know that that is an option and we can look at other possibilities as well.

14 CHAIRMAN KLEIN: Maybe a happy flyer that we would hand out or
15 something to get the word out or coffee and doughnuts in your office every
16 morning. Something like that. Commissioner Jaczko?

17 COMMISSIONER JACZKO: I guess I'll just touch briefly on the issue
18 of the exit interviews. I was just going through the data as I prepared for this and
19 one of the things that stuck out to me is that on the approximately 100 or so
20 responses we had about 50% or so when asked the question, "What are the
21 factors that are contributing to your leaving?" 50% responded none of the factors.

1 I hope that's something we're tuning so that we're getting meaningful information
2 out of it.

3 It seems like it's something that still is a work in progress, but I do think it is
4 a crucial piece of information, in particular if we get into an area in the next several
5 years where there is more of a pull on our staff to other outside employment that
6 we'll want to have good information to know how we can continue to improve the
7 agency to ensure that we are retaining our work force. So I certainly encourage
8 the staff to really work on that survey and make sure that it is really providing us
9 with good useful information.

10 One of the questions I wanted to focus on is just slightly related, maybe not
11 necessarily directly, but indirectly related to the discussion and that really has to
12 do with some of what I'll call diversity of views throughout the agency. We have
13 now implemented a non-concurrence policy. We have the DPO policy that's been
14 in existence for some time.

15 These continue, I think, to be areas where I think we can do better. The
16 DPO process in particular, I think, is one that I don't think yet really will be able to,
17 I think, achieve the goals that is designed to achieve. I think fundamentally as I
18 look at the program and as I look at particular incidents where people have used
19 the program, I continue to hear frustrations sometimes with the way the program
20 works. I think simply because of the way it's designed.

21 It's essentially designed to have a technical issue be re-evaluated through a

1 process that's already evaluated. It's very rare that whenever you do that you get
2 the same -- or you get a different outcome. So, I think it's one that we should take
3 a look at because some of the things certainly we have historically seen through
4 some of the culture surveys that we've done at the agency is the idea of wanting
5 people to make sure they feel comfortable bringing forward differing views. I think
6 that's an important area and one where I think that would be important to continue
7 to look at how we can improve the DPO.

8 As I said, with the use of the non-concurrence, I think there's an opportunity
9 there to provide that in a more formal way for people to non-concur rather than
10 having to go through the more formal process of the DPO. I think it's one that's
11 important.

12 One other question and this is perhaps more of a question than a
13 statement, but I did want to ask is some of the things I've noticed with the SES
14 program and again these are somewhat anecdotal from my perspective seeing
15 individuals go through some of these programs is some of the challenges that staff
16 may have with elements of the SES Candidate Development Program that require
17 individuals to be away from home for an extended period of time.

18 They're required to do, I think it's about four weeks at the Federal --

19 MR. REYES: Federal Executive Institute.

20 COMMISSIONER JACZKO: FEI. Thank you. Federal Executive
21 Institute and then two to three month rotational assignments. In particular for

1 individuals that have families, these may be challenges to be away from home or if
2 you're a single parent, those kind of things. I'm wondering if this is something that
3 we've looked at or if you've gotten any feedback from any of the individuals that
4 may have not applied that expressed an interest and decided they couldn't do it. I
5 don't know if you've heard anything like that or it's something you've looked at?

6 MR. REYES: Just a couple of things. First of all, when I went to FEI
7 there was only one choice: four weeks at a time and I didn't go home for four
8 weeks, but now the program has options. You can take the four weeks or you can
9 split it in two weeks go home and take two weeks later. That's an option. The
10 other one is that there are some cases where individuals -- part of their rotations
11 are in their same geographical area. They go to another government agency and
12 get that kind of experience. We have done that, too.

13 COMMISSIONER JACZKO: Has that usually been at the request of
14 an applicant or candidate?

15 MR. REYES: There's a plan that's designed between the individual
16 and the program manager and the mentors and you work your way through that.
17 It's a combination through there. So if the individual has an interest; I want to go
18 to another agency, another organization and that gets worked out. It typically
19 starts with that dialogue on what is your plan. Do you want to add to that?

20 MR. McDERMOTT: To answer your question, I think most of the
21 outside agencies were brokered by the rotating individual who ran into somebody

1 at FEI or at some bar or something and said come on.

2 COMMISSIONER JACZKO: Is that part of the candidate --?

3 MR. REYES: The bar part we're not paying for.

4 MR. McDERMOTT: They've been very successful. Tony Gody went
5 to NASA. Now NASA wants to send somebody to us because they said this is a
6 smart thing to do. So we're going to pay back.

7 MR. REYES: When I was in Region II, we had an individual and they
8 went to work at rotation for Delta under safety organization. It happened to be a
9 female, a mother of one child. She went to a rotation within the NRC to another
10 office that kept her away from home at the FEI, but we did all of the above.

11 COMMISSIONER JACZKO: I'm glad to hear that these opportunities
12 are out there. I wasn't too aware of those kind of differing ways to complete some
13 of the requirements, but I certainly think it's important to highlight those so that
14 people are aware that those opportunities exist; that it's not necessarily that you
15 have to follow the kind of standard process and that it's not necessarily looked at
16 in a negative way if you don't do the four weeks in a row or do something in an
17 alternative way for the rotational assignment.

18 MR. McDERMOTT: We're trying to make that not a showstopper for
19 a very good candidate. We're saying, "Let's talk, let's figure what we can do."

20 MS. BEACH: If I could comment. Based on feedback, we did
21 change the application and the announcement about the opportunity to apply for

1 the Candidate Development Program at this time to make sure that people
2 understood that a geographic rotation to some other area was not a barrier to
3 applications.

4 COMMISSIONER JACZKO: Good. Well, I encourage you to
5 continue to make that known because I think that's important as we continue to
6 want to have a good diverse pool there.

7 The last thing and this is perhaps more a general question, but I know since
8 -- I think my tenure on the Commission is about the same time as the age of the
9 Comprehensive Diversity Management Plan. I think that came out about the same
10 time. I've kind of watched that grow up a little bit as I've been a Commissioner and
11 I think it's a very good program. Just having the booklet itself, I think, is extremely
12 useful.

13 I was wondering perhaps if Ren or Luis or anyone wanted to comment on
14 where we are right now. I think the latest stage we're at is having performance
15 measures and beginning to use those. I don't know if you have any comments or
16 feedback on how that's working at this point; if the measures are capturing the
17 information you'd like and working the way you'd like them too?

18 MR. REYES: We're in the crawl/walk/run scenario. They are now
19 part of the operating plan for FY08 for all the offices. The first reporting of the
20 measures will be after the first quarter of this fiscal year. But I feel optimistic that
21 this is going to help us because when you add anything new like that to an

1 operating plan having been in this agency for many years and in many positions,
2 you wrestle with it. It was interesting how we mature from the original proposals to
3 one that we want to take back and analyze and then eventually we have the office
4 director saying, "Hey, let's stop discussing this. Let's put it in plan and let's go for
5 it." It kind of gave me a good feeling.

6 We're probably going to fine tune them as we go along, but the fact that we
7 have them on our operating plan now is interesting because this week we have
8 two visits from two government agencies. Guess what they're looking for? Not
9 only our Comprehensive Management and Diversity Plan, but how are we putting
10 metrics on operating plans. We'll share what we have. I'm sure we can improve it.

11 We think it will be a great start in this area and we'll fine tune it. It will be
12 after the first of the year when we get the first report on the FY08 first quarter
13 operating plans.

14 COMMISSIONER JACZKO: I certainly encourage you to use that as
15 an opportunity. As I said, I think it's a good evolution in the use of the plan and I'm
16 sure as you said there will be areas that need to be fine tuned, but I'm sure you'll
17 do that if you get some feedback from them. I certainly encourage the use of it
18 and I think it will be an important program and an important evolution in making
19 sure that the diversity management plan continues to be an effective tool.

20 I didn't have any other questions. I just would say that this is always an
21 interesting briefing for me and I appreciate the work of the staff to continue to

1 make this a wonderful place to work. I think a lot of that goes to some of these
2 issues we've talked about with diversity and other areas of the management that
3 we have here. I think it's always a good opportunity to recognize the
4 accomplishments of the staff and senior managers.

5 I certainly appreciate your work and look forward to more briefings. I would
6 only put in a plug again for this year's upcoming Diversity Day. I think it was at this
7 briefing last year that I mentioned that I thought attendance wasn't as good as it
8 had been in the past. I think attendance was better this year. Unfortunately, I
9 wasn't there. I intend to make sure that I'm there this year and again I certainly
10 encourage staff to participate because I do think it's a good opportunity, I think, as
11 you said Luis not only to have diversity, but to celebrate diversity. I think that's
12 really important. Thank you.

13 CHAIRMAN KLEIN: Thanks. Well, I think as we say in a lot of
14 programs, it's a journey, not a destination and we always need to do better. I do
15 think -- I've been fortunate to be in private industry, at universities and in several
16 programs within DOD. I think the program that we have here is the best I've seen.
17 We always want to make it better.

18 I guess my final comment to you Ren is for those of us sitting on this side of
19 the table what can the Commissioners do to make it better?

20 MS. KELLEY: I would say to continue to champion the programs. I
21 think that we are very fortunate to have support at the highest level and that

1 makes a difference through an organization. If we look the EEOC's description of
2 a model EEO program and how do you achieve that, the number one thing is that
3 commitment from the top. I want to just express again appreciation for that and to
4 say continue to champion the program areas and to give the support that you do.
5 Thank you.

6 CHAIRMAN KLEIN: Well, thank you for a very good program. Keep
7 up the great work and we look forward to great data at the next EEO update.
8 Thank you.

9 Meeting adjourned.

10