

UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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BRIEFING ON EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY,
AFFIRMATIVE EMPLOYMENT, AND SMALL BUSINESS

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TUESDAY,
DECEMBER 7, 2021

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ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

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The Commission met in the Commissioners' Hearing Room at
the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, One White Flint North, 11555 Rockville
Pike, at 10:00 a.m., Christopher T. Hanson, Chairman, presiding.

COMMISSION MEMBERS:

CHRISTOPHER T. HANSON, Chairman

JEFF BARAN, Commissioner

DAVID A. WRIGHT, Commissioner

ALSO PRESENT:

ANNETTE VIETTI-COOK, Secretary of the Commission

BERNICE AMMON, Acting General Counsel

NRC STAFF:

DANIEL H. DORMAN, Executive Director for Operations

VONNA L. ORDAZ, Director, Office of Small Business & Civil Rights

TUWANDA M. SMITH, ESQ., Program Manager, Affirmative Employment &
Diversity Management

SCOTT A. MORRIS, Regional Administrator, Region IV

SHANA HELTON, Director, Division of Fuel Management, Office of Nuclear
Material Safety and Safeguards (NMSS)

JAMES COYLE, Chair, Diversity Advisory Committee on Ageism

CANDACE SPORE, Reliability and Risk Analyst, Office of Nuclear Reactor
Regulation

ERIC DILWORTH, Deputy Chief Human Capital Officer, Office of the Chief
Human Capital Officer

1 P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

2 10:00 a.m.

3 CHAIRMAN HANSON: I now convene the Commission's
4 public meeting on human capital, and equal employment opportunity. Twice a
5 year we take the opportunity to receive an update on the agency's significant
6 human capital, and EEO initiatives. Our last meeting was in June. Today we're
7 going to be discussing topics that are very important to ensuring the NRC
8 employees have a safe working environment where they can pursue their
9 career goals, and help the agency fulfill its important mission.

10 Before we go further, I'd like to note that today is Pearl Harbor
11 Remembrance Day. Today marks 80 years since the attack on Pearl Harbor. I
12 believe that we'll be hearing about the work of the Veteran Employee's
13 Resource Group during the presentations today, and I want to give special
14 thanks to that group, and all the others who provide critical support to America's
15 veterans. I'd also like to note that this month is Universal Human Rights Month,
16 and this Friday is Human Rights Day.

17 The United States was recently elected to serve on the United
18 Nation's Human Rights Council for a three year term, and in connection with
19 that event, President Biden issued a statement in October emphasizing that the
20 nation is committed to standing up for the rights of minority groups, and
21 marginalized groups. The work we'll hear about today is critical to ensuring the
22 NRC does our part in meeting that commitment, and I want to thank you in
23 advance for the important work.

24 I also want to welcome, and recognize this morning, Eric
25 Dilworth, our new deputy chief human capital officer to the NRC, welcome Eric,
26 and to your first Commission meeting. So, before we begin with the discussion,

1 I'd like to ask my fellow Commissioners if they have any remarks they'd like to
2 make. Okay, and now I'll hand it over to Dan Dorman, our executive director for
3 operations. Dan?

4 MR. DORMAN: Thank you Chairman, and good morning
5 Chairman Hanson, and Commissioner Baran, Commissioner Wright. The staff
6 is pleased to have the opportunity to highlight this morning the progress, and
7 accomplishments of the Equal Employment Opportunity, Affirmative
8 Employment, and Small Business programs, which demonstrate our continued
9 commitment to ensuring that the NRC is an organization that nurtures, and
10 supports diversity, and inclusion, and believes small businesses are important
11 partners to help us accomplish our safety, and security mission.

12 The Office of Small Business and Civil Rights provides
13 leadership for agency efforts in carrying out our obligations under the various
14 civil rights, and small business statutes. SBCR has done a wonderful job of
15 successfully meeting those statutory obligations while maintaining a steady
16 focus on promoting, and supporting new, and ongoing efforts to recruit,
17 develop, retain, and include a diverse work force.

18 Next slide please. As a modern risk informed regulator,
19 achieving mission excellence depends on ensuring that we have a highly
20 skilled, adaptable, and engaged work force. Our strategic work force planning
21 process helps us identify gaps, and surpluses, and has provided a full
22 understanding of potential work force challenges for the NRC in the coming
23 years. It has also provided us with an opportunity to develop action plans to
24 address critical skill gaps in projected future vacancies which include recruiting,
25 hiring, cross training, or enhancing the skills of the current staff.

26 Our incredible staff is highly skilled. To address current FTE

1 underutilization, and anticipated attrition, we must pursue a deliberate effort to
2 bring additional talented individuals through various recruitment programs,
3 including the Nuclear Regulator Apprenticeship Network Program. And we will
4 need our current staff, and new staff joining the agency to be adaptable,
5 engaged, and willing to take on new endeavors, and implement innovative
6 ideas.

7 We know that in order to recruit, and retain a highly skilled,
8 adaptable, and engaged work force at the NRC, we need to ensure that we are
9 fostering a diverse, inclusive, and innovative work environment. We will
10 continue to promote an organizational culture that embraces inclusion, and that
11 starts with recognizing the importance of a diverse work force. We must be
12 willing to weigh diverse, and competing staff perspectives, demonstrate respect
13 for different thoughts, and ideas, be open minded, and curious, and we must
14 use all available processes to ensure that differing views are aired, understood,
15 and appropriately considered in our decision making.

16 I'm confident that with SBCR's guidance, we will continue to
17 build a diverse, inclusive, and innovative environment that will help us to attract,
18 retain, and develop the very best talent, and ensure that the NRC continues to
19 achieve excellence in protecting people, and the environment. Next slide
20 please. Now I'd like to introduce my fellow presenters. First, Vonna Ordaz, the
21 director of the Office of Small Business and Civil Rights will provide an overview
22 of the Equal Employment Opportunity Diversity and Inclusion and Small
23 Business Program, and senior leadership's commitment to many of the ideas I
24 just discussed.

25 She will be followed by Tuwanda Smith, Affirmative
26 Employment and Diversity Management program manager in SBCR, who will

1 discuss federal requirements, and the progress we have made as an agency.
2 Next, Scott Morris, the Region IV Regional Administrator will discuss many of
3 the accomplishments that the regions have made in the areas of recruiting, and
4 hiring, professional development, and staff engagement, as well as areas
5 where there is still more work to do.

6 Scott will be followed by Shana Helton, NMSS's director of the
7 Division of Fuel Management. Shana will discuss how the Office of Nuclear
8 Material Safety and Safeguards is building, and maintaining an inclusive, and
9 welcoming culture. She will be followed by James Coyle, the chair of the
10 Diversity Advisory Committee on ageism. Mr. Coyle will provide an update
11 about what our Equal Employment Opportunity Advisory Committee and
12 Resource Group have been doing over the last ten months, and how they
13 continue to support the agency's mission.

14 Then Candace Spore, the reliability, and risk analyst in the
15 Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation will discuss the importance of bringing
16 your whole self to work. And finally, Eric Dilworth, our new deputy chief human
17 capital officer will discuss recruitment activities at the NRC. Next slide please.
18 This concludes my introductory remarks, and I'll now turn the presentation over
19 to Vonna.

20 MS. ORDAZ: Thank you Dan, and good morning Chairman
21 Hanson, Commissioner Baran, and Commissioner Wright, and good morning to
22 the NRC staff. It's an honor to brief you today on our Equal Employment
23 Opportunity status, diversity, and inclusion efforts, and the Small Business
24 Program successes. We have a wonderful group of presenters, as Dan
25 mentioned, representing corporate, and technical offices, our regional office,
26 the culture team, and our advisory committees.

1 This year SBCR has chosen the theme through the lens of
2 change, the more you know. As we're adapting to the change before us now at
3 the agency, and the change ahead of us, it's important to be well informed on
4 all facets of our jobs, and responsibilities, our work environment, our culture,
5 the policies that protect us, the guidance that makes us more efficient, the
6 outreach opportunities to build relationships, and ways to recruit, and
7 strengthen agency capacity.

8 Next slide please. In demonstrating senior leadership's
9 commitment to our programs, it's clear that diversity, equity, and inclusion are
10 essential elements. These elements are provided in our SBCR mission, their
11 essential focus of Dan's vision that you just heard, and they're also embedded
12 in our agency's strategic plan. Our Commission identifies agency direction by
13 issuing policies on equal employment opportunity, which provides a declaration
14 against discrimination, diversity, and inclusion, which provides an expectation
15 that the NRC work force uphold, and support a commitment to equal
16 opportunity for all employees, and job applicants.

17 Alternative dispute resolution, which provides a commitment
18 to preventing, and resolving workplace disputes, and conflicts in a non-
19 adversarial manner. Anti-harassment, which was recently updated to include
20 genetic information, gender identity, and gender expression as a basis for filing
21 a complaint. And also, the No Fear Act, and Whistle Blower Protection Policy.
22 We appreciate your commitment to these important policies, and how you
23 model the way for the agency.

24 Agency leadership also supports, and participates in cultural
25 celebrations. During FY21 our eight EEO advisory committees, and the
26 Veteran's Employee Resource Group hosted 21 virtual events including nine

1 special emphasis observances, which had the participation of some, or the
2 entire Commission. Your thoughtful remarks to open many of these events with
3 your personal stories, your engagement with our various groups, and your
4 interactions with agency staff on external environmental issues demonstrate
5 your commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion here at the NRC.

6 So, on behalf of SBCR, we thank you. At this time, I'd also
7 like to recognize our eight amazing EEO advisory committees, our Veteran's
8 Employee Resource Group, and our two affinity groups, Blacks in Government,
9 and the NRC's Technical Women's Network for their tireless efforts, great
10 collaboration, and for the leaps, and bounds they are making to bring our
11 agency together to enhance cultural awareness.

12 I'd also like to recognize our 18 executive sponsors that
13 support these groups. Our dialogue ambassadors, and our collateral duty EEO
14 counselors. As you can see, we have a couple hundred volunteers across the
15 agency that support the SBCR mission, EEO, diversity, and inclusion, plus the
16 EDO's cultural implementation team. And lastly I want to thank my SBCR staff.
17 We have a small office of 13, including me with the determination, and fortitude
18 of an army to make it happen.

19 I am grateful for their time, and significant contributions to
20 make the NRC an even better place to work. Next slide please. And now,
21 moving on to strengthening our outreach through engagement with our NRC
22 family, and others. As you may know, due to the horrific George Floyd event,
23 and various civility issues in the environment, we created the initiative on civility
24 awareness respect, and engagement known as iCARE. To assist offices in
25 communicating difficult topics amongst themselves.

26 This effort has enriched our agency with necessary

1 conversations, self-awareness, and many internal learnings to improve how we
2 interact with colleagues, and with each other. We have a new outreach activity
3 called TEA Time. TEA standing for talk, exchange, and align. To provide an
4 opportunity for agency staff to talk together, exchange information, and ideas,
5 and align on approaches with our affirmative employment, and diversity
6 program management folks.

7 This effort was initiated to provide an effective, efficient way to
8 offer technical assistance on the inclusive diversity strategic plan, and other
9 related items. My deputy, Jeanne Dempsey, and I, have started periodic
10 meetings with each office, and region, including Scott, during the pandemic as
11 a means for reaching out, and staying connected with our internal stakeholders.

12 This collaboration has been fruitful.

13 We've exchanged insights on topics such as recruitment, and
14 outreach, training, and development, career advancement, promotions,
15 diversity, and inclusion, and other best practices. We've also given each other
16 feedback during these periodics, which is critical for self-awareness. We've
17 grown to really enjoy these interactions, and plan to have these sessions with
18 our external counterparts across the federal government over this next year.
19 The more you know makes us stronger individually, it improves our working
20 relationships, and it strengthens our culture across this great agency.

21 Next slide please. And now, our culture. I am serving as one
22 of the executive sponsors for the cultural implementation team, and I've truly
23 enjoyed this great group of colleagues. In this capacity, I've seen a nexus
24 between the agency culture activities, and the diversity, equity, and inclusion
25 area. I'd like to highlight just a few of the accomplishments from the agency's
26 culture team, who have administered a culture pulse survey to measure the

1 agency's cultural norms, and expectations with the desired culture.

2 Requested updated culture plans to facilitate direct
3 engagement between management, and employees. Created conversation
4 guides to facilitate constructive dialogue about key behaviors that support the
5 NRC leadership model. And cultural behavior shifts, and for creating a safe
6 space for candid, and respectful dialogue. They also implemented a bring your
7 whole self to work initiative, which you'll hear about shortly from Candace
8 Spore.

9 They also coordinated with OCHCO to add language to the
10 SES performance plans to include actions to promote the agency's ideal culture
11 in their FY 22 performance plans. Keep in mind that EEO, and DNI, diversity
12 inclusion, were already in these plans, but we expect the addition of culture to
13 make an impact across the SES core, and influence good practices throughout
14 their organizations.

15 This will be the gift that keeps on giving, the more you know.
16 Next slide please. As we embrace our culture, we understand that through
17 interactions, and relations there will be challenges. There are some concerns,
18 issues, and complaints, and our civil rights team works diligently to help resolve
19 these issues at the lowest possible level. We provided the statistics, and charts
20 on the status of complaints processing in the background book, and you will
21 see for FY 21, we have 22 informal complaints, and 15 formal complaints.

22 Which is less than reported in FY 20. Some reasons for this
23 change may be the proactive efforts, and engaging conversations with our civil
24 rights team, fulsome conversation through iCARE, enhancements to our agency
25 culture, and improved communications during our remote work environment.
26 Please note that our agency is still only averaging less than one percent of its

1 work force with complaints, which remains very low in comparison to other
2 federal agencies of our size.

3 Next slide please. So, in this slide you see the top five basis,
4 and issues, which is very consistent with what we've seen in recent years. Of
5 the 15 complaints filed in FY 21, the basis most frequently alleged was reprisal,
6 retaliation, followed by sex, race, age, and color. Of the 15 complaints filed in
7 FY 21, the issue most frequently alleged was harassment non-sexual, followed
8 by promotion non-selection, performance appraisal, assignment of duties, and
9 disciplinary action.

10 So, we want our NRC family to know we hear them. We're
11 taking proactive actions to help ensure the NRC is a discrimination free
12 workplace in keeping with agency policies, and NRC values. Next slide please.

13 And finally, I'm excited to share a video produced by our very own Larniece
14 McKoy Moore of SBCR. This video represents some of my phenomenal staff,
15 and our fabulous colleagues in this agency with examples of items we want you
16 to know.

17 Ms. MCKOY MOORE: The Office of Small Business and Civil
18 Rights reinforces the values of an inclusive, discrimination free workplace
19 where there is equal opportunity for all. We do this through programming,
20 processes, and technical assistance. We're so glad that you've taken a
21 moment of your time to be with us today. Listen, as we highlight some of our
22 innovative new programs, the more you know.

23 MS. GARLAND: Over the last year, SBCR has been working
24 on many diversity, and inclusion initiatives, including the FY 21-26 inclusive
25 diversity, strategic plan, and report. While we were working at home, SBCR
26 has been assisting offices to continue enhancing their efforts to incorporate DNI

1 into the everyday work environment. One mechanism in which AEDM is able to
2 assist these efforts is through the office submission of a semiannual IDSP
3 report.

4 As we return to the office, SBCR will continue to assist with
5 DNI efforts through many venues, such as iCARE, and DIALOGUE, EEO
6 committees, and resource groups, activities, and events, meeting with office
7 points of contact, and many other ways. The FY 21-26 IDSP will help NRC
8 maintain our focus on proactive pursuit of a healthy organizational culture in
9 which employees feel a sense of belonging, can bring their whole selves to
10 work, and accomplish the mission in a high trust environment.

11 MR. KHAN: As we return to the office, NRR will continue to
12 have more diversity, and inclusion town hall meetings on various topics such as
13 multi-generational work force, and micro aggression. This will help us create an
14 ideal work force, which is an inclusive work force that draws on the creativity,
15 and innovation produced by employees with diverse backgrounds,
16 perspectives, approaches, and thoughts as set forth in the IDSP.

17 It's important to remember that diversity, and inclusion
18 requires the participation from everyone. We can help realize the full potential
19 of the agency's work force by fostering a diverse, and respectful, and inclusive
20 environment not only for us, but for the next generation as well.

21 MR. LINDSAY: At NMSS we think DNI is such a high priority
22 that we chose to hold ourselves accountable to keeping it in focus. Did you
23 know that the Division of Fuel Management held division sessions on how staff
24 was feeling with civil unrest in our country, and the importance of pronouns
25 given by the NRC Pride Alliance Advisory committee?

26 MS. GREENE: Did you know that Region IV hosted a round

1 table series of discussions focused on the racial injustice, civil unrest, and other
2 diversity challenges that we were facing as a country heightened in the year
3 2020? It also provided an opportunity for people to support one another in
4 these challenging times. Not only a pandemic of health, but a pandemic of civil
5 unrest. At the end of the day, the whole goal for those discussions were to be
6 the change that you want to see.

7 MS. NEUBAUER: In an effort to remain dedicated to our
8 diverse work force, the civil rights team identified an issue with our official
9 correspondence. In our letters, we would presume a masculine, or feminine
10 gender based upon a person's name. Think Paula, Tina, Sam, or Mike. We
11 recognize this not only presumes to know someone's personal gender identity
12 based upon societal norms, but excludes transgender, and non-binary people.

13 We want you to know the SBCR has taken steps to ensure all
14 our official correspondence is now gender neutral. By becoming gender
15 neutral, SBCR is more inclusive to, and understanding of non-binary
16 individuals.

17 MS. DEEDS: Over the last year, the civil rights team of SBCR
18 has worked diligently to increase productivity, and efficiency in processing EEO
19 complaints. While we were working at home, we began migrating our complaint
20 database from MicroPact icomplaints, to Tyler Technologies Entellitrak, also
21 known as ETKEEO. In addition to Entellitrak, the team is also rolling out efile,
22 which will allow agency employees, and applicants for employment to
23 electronically contact SBCR, request a counselor, initiate an EEO complaint.

24 Enable users to seek up to date status information on their
25 complaint throughout the complaint cycle, and potential complainants will no
26 longer need to mail, or hand deliver paper forms in order to initiate a complaint.

1 Entellitrak.

2 MR. BRIGGS: Hi there, my name is Anthony Briggs, small
3 business program manager at the agency, did you know the NRC was recently
4 recognized by the Small Business Administration for ten consecutive years of
5 excellence, achieving an A, or A plus on the agency's annual score card that
6 measures contract dollars awarded to small businesses supporting agency
7 operations which includes maintaining the agency's operations center.

8 Assisting us transition to the cloud, providing facility services
9 for headquarters such as HVAC, plumbing, and electrical. Modernizing the
10 look, enhanced usability, and mobility of the public website. Conducting a
11 feasibility study on the benefits of virtual reality, augmented reality, and mixed
12 reality would have for technical training courses. And helping us transition the
13 work to a virtual, and hybrid environment. Small businesses, supporting our
14 critical needs, and playing a vital role in how we carry out our mission.

15 MS. DEMPSEY: So, now you've heard from SBCR, and
16 some of our extended family regarding a few of our newer initiatives. There's
17 so much we've been doing, and so much more we aspire to do. However, don't
18 forget that we're here to support you, our small business civil rights, and
19 affirmative employment, diversity, equity, inclusion teams will work with you as
20 a resource, and to get your questions answered. The more you know.

21 MS. NEUBAUER: The more you know.

22 MS. DEEDS: The more you know.

23 MS. DEMPSEY: The more you know about SBCR, the more
24 there is to know.

25 MS. ORDAZ: They make me proud. And now, I'll turn the
26 presentation over to Tuwanda Smith.

1 MS. SMITH: Next slide. Good morning Chairman,
2 Commissioners, EDO, NRC staff, and guests. It is my pleasure to share with
3 you a global perspective of AEDM. The more you know about the federal
4 government's culture transformation EEO, and DEI efforts, the more you will
5 want to know about what NRC is doing. Next slide. Knowing federal
6 requirements is necessary to understand the why, and how surrounding NRC's
7 purpose for achieving our objective.

8 Each agency is required to conduct an affirmative
9 employment program, and conduct a federal equal opportunity recruitment
10 program. As you know, Congress directs federal agencies to serve as a model
11 EEO employer, and serve as a model employer of people with disabilities.
12 Next slide. NRC achieves federal goals, and objectives through our support
13 system. SBCR perceives EEO programs with agency wide support to foster a
14 collaborative work environment.

15 At the Chairman commissioner level, the agency's vision, and
16 commitment are identified through issuing policies approving cultural
17 celebrations, and supporting EEO, and DNI activities. Our Chairman is a
18 member of the International Gender Champions Impact Group. The OEDO
19 demonstrates importance in many ways. OEDO holds meetings for EEO
20 advisory committees on conditions, actively contributes to the IDSP, and
21 created an agency culture key.

22 NRC offices that conduct EEO programs coordinate
23 alignment, and compliance with SBCR. Management, and other NRC offices
24 support employee's involvement in EEO, and DEIA initiatives. And most
25 importantly, NRC employees display support at all levels. Example, EEO
26 counselors, EEO advisory committees, executive sponsors, DMIC, DMAC

1 affinity, and resource groups, and the culture improvement team, as well as
2 NTEU.

3 Next slide. Promoting culture, EEO, and DEIA principles is
4 essential to NRC's transformation. Culture changes, notable outcomes include
5 SBCR supported culture events, lunch, and learns, roundtable discussions,
6 iCARE dialogue sessions, and diversity training. The agency culture team
7 partnered with OCHCO to update the awards and recognition management
8 directive to include the importance of creating a culture that encourages, and
9 supports an innovative mind set, and culture shift that aligns with NRC's
10 mission, vision, and desired culture.

11 Identifying good practices for cultivating culture, and identify
12 change agents who are modeling desired behaviors. OCHCO designed a
13 mentoring program, career enhancement guide, and made changes to help
14 recruit, and retain resident inspectors. Ally held a training on rebuilding Ally's
15 culture, and strengthening leadership, and organizational development. OCIO
16 ensured accessibility to IT, and devices through the section 508 share point
17 site. Next slide.

18 Facilitating agency wide achievements includes appreciating
19 everyday success. For example, AEDM assisted offices to provide language
20 translation services to people who are limited English proficient. Efforts were
21 also made to improve employment opportunities, and conditions in
22 communities. For example, AEDM collaborated with OCHCO on recruitment,
23 outreach, and hiring. Presented on NRC's MSIP, other programs, and funding
24 opportunities announcements at the White House HBCU Student Opportunities
25 Forum.

26 Hosted a meeting on federal programs, grants, and provided

1 guidance to assist the American Indian program manager from DOE's Idaho
2 office. Kudos to Patrice Williams-Johnson, who coordinates the SummeRISE
3 programs to provide opportunities to high school students. We also work to
4 spur innovation, commercialization, and infrastructure building. For example,
5 AEDM research, and admin coordinated efforts to ensure equity in the pre, and
6 post award grant process.

7 AEDM, and small business participated in the White House
8 HBCU Contracting Competitiveness Academy pilot, and industry day. And
9 assisted the president's federal procurement policy office, and DOE to conduct
10 outreach about their crowd sourcing campaign to identify barriers faced by
11 underserved groups that prevent full, and equal access to procurement
12 opportunities.

13 In response to Commission SRMs, SBCR updated the
14 internal AEDM, and external NRC web pages with assistance from NSIR,
15 OCIO, and OCHCO, and helped ACRS solicit for a new board member. With
16 support from other offices, SBCR submitted the annual MD715, and 462 reports
17 to EEOC. The No Fear Act report to Congress, and the Age Act report to health
18 and human services. SBCR also assisted OCHCO draft the annual FEORP
19 and DBAC report.

20 Next slide. As you see, focusing the lens to a future
21 perspective, a path forward. There is lots of progress that has been made. Our
22 plan for continuous growth, and improvement includes using the Be RiskSmart
23 framework to promote compliance with federal requirements, MD715
24 provisions, and the IDSP implementation at the office level. This includes
25 efforts to increase employment of individuals with disabilities, usage of LEP
26 translation services, and MSI participation in programs, grants, and contracts.

1 Next slide.

2 Thank you for the opportunity to share agency wide efforts
3 through an AEDM lens. This concludes my presentation. I now turn the
4 presentation over to the next speaker.

5 MR. MORRIS: Thanks Tuwanda. This is Scott. Good
6 morning Chairman, Commissioners, I'm very pleased to be here this morning,
7 especially in person, to represent the regional offices, and to share some of the
8 activities we've been engaged in to enhance diversity, and inclusion in our
9 workplace. Each regional office has established its own vision statement
10 tailored to the unique challenges, and objectives associated with their specific
11 organizations, and are intended to inspire, and drive cultural improvements that
12 enhance mission accomplishment.

13 Next slide. For example, nearly three years ago, Region IV
14 management, and staff collaborated to develop the following aspirational vision.
15 Together we work to foster a culture of high trust that maximizes professional
16 development, and inspires leadership at all levels. The four key elements of
17 this vision are fully developed in our transformation action plan, and are
18 bolstered by several focus objectives, and key results.

19 These elements again are together, in other words we
20 promote teamwork, and collaboration. High trust, we routinely discuss, and
21 practice the 13 speed of trust behaviors. Professional development, we actively
22 encourage individual development plans, training, and rotational assignments,
23 and finally leadership at all levels. We leverage the NRC leadership model, and
24 empower staff decision making. Each of these areas influence, and are
25 influenced by our actions to achieve our desired culture, and fully leverage the
26 benefits of equal opportunity, and diversity, and inclusion.

1 Next slide. All of the regional offices have been on
2 aggressive recruiting, and hiring campaigns over the last few years, and Region
3 IV is no exception. Attrition rates are historically high due in large part to an
4 aging work force. We recognize the urgent need to infuse our organizations
5 with new talent, and transfer key knowledge from senior staff if we are to remain
6 a strong, credible nuclear safety regulator. We also recognize that this need for
7 external hiring gives us the opportunity to shape our future work force to more
8 fully leverage diversity, and inclusion.

9 Let me share a few numbers with you. Region IV has about
10 170 professionals, and I might add, 42 percent of which are veterans. We've
11 experienced about ten percent annual attrition rate over the past several years,
12 and in just the last two years we have hired 45 new staff, 32 of which were
13 external to the NRC. Of the 32 external hires, 41 percent were women, or
14 people of color, and numerous veterans among them as well, 13 to be exact.

15 Nearly all of these new staff are early to mid-career
16 employees, and a few straight out of college, some who we've converted, some
17 are interns to co-ops. During the same period, we've offered 17 permanent
18 promotions to higher grades based on merit, 53 percent of which were to
19 women, and people of color. Next slide. Another key element of our efforts to
20 realize our desired culture, and shape our future work force is to focus on staff
21 engagement, it is the essential ingredient to the four aspects of our Region IV
22 vision, and action plan.

23 For example, we focus on mentoring both formal, and
24 informal. Laura Dudes, my Region II counterpart of course, and I were both
25 very proud to serve recently on the Federal Women's Program Advisory
26 Committee's annual agency wide mentoring panel. Region IV is currently

1 hosting, and facilitating the Dallas, Fort Worth area federal executive board
2 inter agency mentoring program, and some of our Region IV leaders, including
3 myself, mentor individuals from other federal agencies in the DFW area.

4 We actively embrace our diversity management advisory
5 councils, all of which have sponsored numerous affinity group activities, and
6 events even during the pandemic, with a focus on inviting inspirational, and
7 informative outside speakers. We regularly conduct speed of trust huddles, and
8 provide monthly opportunities for staff to share real life examples of individuals
9 who demonstrated trust behaviors.

10 We routinely recognize, and celebrate individual, and
11 organizational achievements at monthly all employee meetings, and in weekly
12 success emails. And finally, we host weekly virtual open door sessions with our
13 entire staff. Next slide. This slide illustrates a few of the many diversity, and
14 inclusion related activities that the regional offices have sponsored recently,
15 highlighting many of the various affinity groups.

16 Staff attendance, and participation in these voluntary events
17 has notably increased as well. In the video we saw earlier, Region IV's Dr.
18 Natasha Greene described a staff developed series of six roundtable
19 discussions examining racism, and how to overcome it. These sessions were
20 held over a several month period, and enjoyed very active engagement from
21 staff, and management throughout the regional office, and the agency.

22 Next slide. Region IV was humbled, and proud to be
23 recognize this year by our peers on the DFW area federal executive board with
24 the outstanding public service award because of the staff's initiative, and
25 facilitate the antiracism roundtable sessions. In addition, the Atlanta area
26 federal executive board similarly recognized the Region II diversity

1 management advisory council with their annual award for outstanding
2 achievement in diversity. Next slide.

3 Finally, it is important that we continue to emphasize, and
4 build on these, and other successes as we move forward. We are by no means
5 done, though we've made great strides toward achieving our vision, we are
6 acutely aware that there is much more work ahead. As such, we will continue
7 to focus on diversity in our recruiting, in our hiring efforts to offset attrition, and
8 to strengthen our future work force. We will continue to support, and encourage
9 the merit selection of staff with diverse backgrounds, skills, and talents, and to
10 participate in leadership development programs, and rotational assignments.

11 And most importantly we will continue to promote, and
12 demonstrate the behaviors that foster mutual respect, and build trust among all
13 NRC employees. Through these committed efforts, we are confident that we
14 will continue to achieve our vital nuclear safety, and security mission in a more
15 fully engaged, diverse, and inclusive work environment. Thank you very much
16 for the opportunity to share with you today, and I'll now turn the presentation
17 over to Shana.

18 MS. HELTON: Thank you Scott. Good morning Chairman,
19 and Commissioners, I'm honored to represent NMSS here today this morning to
20 brief you on some of our activities to support diversity, and inclusion activities.
21 Next slide please. This slide shows the fiscal year 2022 NMSS management
22 focus areas. The central of which is to focus on our people, and our future. It is
23 vital for us to maintain the health culture that supports the evolving hybrid work
24 environment is receptive to new ideas, and risk informed decision making, and
25 is intentionally inclusive, and welcoming of all staff.

26 We know we can only meet our mission, and our goals with

1 our people, our subject matter experts, project managers, administrative team,
2 mission support, supervisors, and other partners. All engaged, motivated, and
3 working in concert. We have a full workload, and we have invested much effort
4 into optimizing, and prioritizing our work while maintaining a healthy life work
5 balance. We are investing a good deal of energy into developing norms for a
6 hybrid work environment that support our mission, and our culture of continuous
7 learning, professional growth, participative decision making, and intentional
8 inclusion.

9 Over the last several months, we wanted to find a way to hold
10 ourselves more accountable to being a model within the NRC for our work
11 force's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, and to be known as an
12 office where people can bring their whole selves to work. We use the objective,
13 and key results concept described in the book Measure what Matters to set
14 aspirational, yet measurable goals on diversity, and inclusion.

15 Using this construct ensures that the management team
16 routinely focuses on these important topics, and they are part of our day to day
17 activities. We have two objectives for 2021 related to people. The first is to
18 create a culture of continual learning, and to strengthen each of us, and all of
19 us. The second is to build, and maintain an inclusive, and welcoming culture of
20 a diverse staff engaged in achieving our mission.

21 Examples of some of the key results that we have focused on
22 to support these two objectives include conducting, and assessing culture pulse
23 surveys to help gauge how our efforts are resonating with staff, encouraging
24 participation in agency advisory committees, and resource groups by
25 emphasizing to managers, and staff that this participation helps us complete
26 our mission, and it should not be considered extracurricular.

1 We set a goal for NMSS to be represented on 100 percent of
2 the committees, and we are very close to achieving this goal. We also hosted
3 office wide training on unconscious bias to ensure we are inclusive in all of our
4 business processes, and we encourage continual learning through the
5 increased use of Nuclepedia pages, the career enhancement, and career
6 journey portals. And I'm pleased to say that we have strong engagement by
7 our vibrant culture, and innovation teams, as well as other teams in NMSS.
8 Next slide please.

9 Being intentionally inclusive, and welcoming is key to further
10 engaging our people, and our NMSS mission, and goals. You already heard
11 from Holly, Lindsay in the video talk about a couple of NMSS activities. This
12 slide also shows other activities including the NMSS culture team in action. A
13 nice team photo of the group in together mode. This team did a wonderful job,
14 even while working remotely, and have helped us transition to the hybrid
15 environment we are working in now.

16 The second graphic is a tool that NMSS developed for staff to
17 highlight ways to communicate, and ensure awareness of opportunities to ask
18 questions, and have open dialogues. These opportunities helped us maintain
19 connections while most of the staff were working remotely during the pandemic.
20 We have held weekly, or biweekly online open door sessions at both the office,
21 and division levels, and we've had regular all hands staff meetings where we
22 discuss topics focused on diversity, and inclusion such as the use of pronouns,
23 and check ins on staff well-being.

24 Additionally, we have made it a routine practice to use the Be
25 RiskSMART decision making framework to ensure that diverse views are heard,
26 and considered in all our important decisions. For example, the template for

1 any decision making meeting, office briefings reflects the Be RiskSMART steps.
2 The simple change management step increased everyone's use of the
3 RiskSMART model in our daily work, and helps ensure that we bring diverse
4 views to the forefront.

5 We've made full use of our technology as well. The NMSS
6 sharepoint site has been revamped to be user centric, and our technology
7 gurus help to keep us connected through our transformation hub, and our One
8 NMSS Teams channel. In keeping with the inclusive diversity strategic plan,
9 NMSS has begun to partner with SBCR to pilot a dashboard using a data driven
10 approach specifically to assess employee engagement, and inclusion
11 perceptions, and to maintain overall accountability for our diversity, and
12 inclusion efforts.

13 Next slide please. We're preparing for the new challenges of
14 our future needs by ensuring we have a work force at the ready. In addition to
15 continuing our efforts to cross train our staff, and to encourage mentoring within
16 our existing staff, we need to seek diverse candidates by leveraging the types
17 of recruitment tools that you've already heard about from some of the other
18 panelists this morning. We will continue to focus on fostering a welcoming,
19 inclusive environment, one in which staff feel that they may bring their whole
20 selves to work.

21 And as we move forward, we will continue to engage staff to
22 ensure that our efforts are being well received, and effective. Everything that
23 I've discussed today is very encouraging, and NMSS is proud of our efforts to
24 focus on diversity, and inclusion, and equity. But we recognize we're on a
25 journey. Efforts to build, and maintain a welcoming, and inclusive environment
26 will always be a top priority if we want to attract, and retain top talent.

1 We at NMSS recognize this, and we look forward to
2 continuing on our journey. This concludes my presentation, and I'll now turn it
3 over to Mr. James Coyle.

4 MR. COYLE: Okay, thank you Shana. Good morning
5 Commissioners, let me express appreciation, and gratitude for your continued
6 participation, and support in the various diversity, and inclusion efforts
7 throughout the agency. At the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission the
8 Diversity Management Advisory Committee, or DMAC, represents the collective
9 voice of nine volunteer groups. Eight equal employment opportunity advisory
10 committees, and one employee resource group.

11 And these groups are the Advisory Committee for African
12 Americans, or ACAA. The Advisory Committee for Employees with Disabilities,
13 or ACED. The Asian Pacific American Advisory Committee, or APAAC. The
14 Diversity Advisory Committee on Ageism, or DACA. The Federal Women's
15 Program Advisory Committee, or FWPAC. The Hispanic Employment Program
16 Advisory Committee, or HEPAC. The Native American Advisory Committee, or
17 NAAC. The NRC Pride Alliance Advisory Committee, or NPAAC. And the
18 Veterans Employee Resource Group, or VERG.

19 I'm honored to speak to you today on behalf of DMAC, which
20 represents the collective voice of the NRC's volunteer advisory committees, and
21 affinity, and resource groups. DMAC works with SBCR to support recruitment,
22 professional development, retention, and diversity as stated in the agency's
23 inclusive diversity strategic plan. Two affinity groups support DMAC in its
24 efforts, the NRC Blacks in Government, or BIG. And the NRC Technical
25 Women's Network, or NTWN.

26 This statement communicates the joint perspectives of the

1 DMAC members on two matters of great interest to our constituencies, and the
2 NRC staff at large. These are adapting to major obstacles during the public
3 health emergency, and career development in hiring. Next slide please. Like
4 last year, the agency continued adapting to the public health emergency, and
5 the virtual work environment.

6 Despite the technical challenges, the advisory committee, and
7 affinity, and resource groups saw success with virtual events, and presentations
8 of interest to both our individual constituencies, and to all NRC employees.
9 This was due in part to the increased collaboration among our various groups in
10 planning, and presenting events, such as the lunchtime session on COVID-19
11 cosponsored by DACA, and ACED. Our groups have also presented concerns
12 from our various constituencies regarding reentry for consideration by agency
13 management.

14 Next slide please. The advisory committees, and affinity, and
15 resource groups are all aware of the factors presently limiting promotions.
16 Therefore, career development, and hiring are of great interest to us. Training
17 in skills offered for the continuing development of NRC employees supports
18 diversity inclusion at the NRC, which prepares employees of all demographics
19 for promotion, and leadership positions.

20 This has been demonstrated through examples such as
21 AACA's lunch and learn with OCHCO, developing your IDP, and intro to new
22 employee journey. HEPAC hosting a virtual OCHCO seminar to all EEO
23 committees discussing the NRC guide to career enhancement. TMS, IDP's,
24 and the NRC journey site. And ACED's participation in government wide work
25 force recruitment program, and hiring events for persons with disabilities.

26 APEC, and NAAC hosted three lunch, and learns on

1 competency modeling at the NRC. Representatives from OCHCO provided an
2 overview of the framework, the status of competency modeling development,
3 and how the system can be used to support employee development. As the
4 advisory committees, and affinity, and resource groups of the NRC, we seek to
5 ensure that women, people with disabilities, veterans, people of color, and all
6 individuals regardless of their age, sexual orientation, or gender identity are
7 receiving the developmental opportunities to become future leaders of the
8 agency.

9 We also look to engage with management to see that
10 performance related decisions are based upon non-discriminatory factors.
11 Finally we encourage NRC to continue building partnerships with diverse
12 groups, and organizations who may assist NRC with attracting, recruiting, and
13 retaining a larger talent pool of employees to include underrepresented
14 minorities, and persons with disabilities.

15 These partnerships will help shape the NRC as an employer
16 of greater diversity, and inclusivity. In 2022, we look forward to continuing our
17 support of the agency, and maintaining a diverse, and inclusive workforce, and
18 providing a forum for interactive dialogue, and team building on issues that are
19 important to the principles of diversity, and inclusion. Thank you for the
20 opportunity to speak with you today about how resourceful the advisory
21 committees, and affinity, and resource groups are to the NRC. Next you will
22 hear from Candace Spore. Thank you.

23 MS. SPORE: Good morning Chairman, and Commissioners.
24 My name given to me by my Kiowa people is Agoyma (Phonetic.) which
25 translates in English to Eagle Plume Woman. My name my parents gave me is
26 Candace Spore, and my pronouns are she, her, and hers, and I'm a member of

1 the Kiowa Tribe of Oklahoma, and a nuclear engineer. I'm also a reliability, and
2 risk analyst working in NRR, and I'm currently on rotation to NMSS as an inter-
3 governmental liaison program manager.

4 The music I just played for you is the Kiowa victory song. It
5 was played when the warriors returned from war with a victory. I've chosen to
6 share this song with you to give you a small preview of how I bring my whole
7 self to work at the NRC. Today I will briefly discuss some of the key tenets that
8 define this strategy, and how it has helped me connect with others more
9 authentically, and openly as a lesbian Native American woman.

10 Ever since I joined the NRC as an intern in 2013, I
11 experienced a sense of belonging that was created in part by my lived
12 experiences being acknowledged, and valued, and not being overlooked. The
13 support I experienced since the start of my tenure at NRC has allowed me to
14 draw upon my natural strengths, and in turn bring more authenticity, clarity,
15 wisdom, and passion to my interaction with colleagues.

16 Next slide please. So, why do we bring our whole selves to
17 work? During my time on rotation to the agency culture team earlier this year, I
18 had the opportunity to explore the concept of bringing your whole self to work,
19 and how it has served as a performance multiplier in accomplishing our
20 mission. What I have found is that having the opportunity to bring your whole
21 self creates connection that is best defined by a sense of belonging where
22 people feel seen, and better understood as their full selves.

23 Cultivating a sense of belonging in the workplace is a
24 fundamental part of creating a work force that is inclusive, engaged, and
25 inspired to achieve mission excellence. If we do not create that space to
26 understand these experiences, we run the risk that good employees will leave,

1 or sit silently, unable to fully show up to work, and share their talents. Last
2 year, the agency culture team conducted a baseline culture survey, and
3 facilitated focus groups with NRC employees to identify a starting point for our
4 culture improvement strategy.

5 One of the key findings that surfaced as an area of
6 improvement is what we now describe as bringing your whole self to work.
7 Next slide. Conversations, and considerations surrounding the area of
8 belonging, bringing your whole self to work are important, and often very
9 nuanced. The agency culture team worked with our partners in the Office of
10 Small Business and Civil Rights to define this concept that would create a
11 space to welcome, and leverage the talents, and personal characteristics that
12 help us meet our mission of protecting the public health, and safety.

13 Bringing your whole self to work is the permission to be more
14 of your authentic, and multi-dimensional self, and an invitation to show more of
15 your personality, your talents, your skills, and desirable characteristics that help
16 us accomplish our mission. It's also about using good judgment, reading the
17 room, honing your emotional skills. Ultimately, it's about a place of choice
18 where there is freedom to bring your whole self, but also not to do it.

19 For some, the notion of bringing your whole self into your
20 professional life is inspiring. It's an opportunity to fully express, and reveal more
21 of your true personality at work. It's also about showing up more fully with your
22 humanity. We also acknowledge that for others, bringing your whole self to
23 work may be perceived as a difficult challenge, as people may feel unclear
24 about what it means for them. There are people who choose not to talk about
25 their lives, or stories, or feelings because they don't want to.

26 So, it's important to note that there is freedom to do it, but

1 also not to do it. Next slide. The agency culture team has since created a
2 space on their SharePoint site where employees can share their personal
3 stories. I would like to share one of the stories we received from a staff
4 member on how he brings his whole self to work. Ron Harrington, a reactor
5 systems engineer working in research shared the following.

6 My mother passed away just a few months ago. The most
7 important part of the legacy she left behind was something she taught us, she
8 taught us the importance, and value of sharing as much love, and respect as
9 possible. In the workplace, this doesn't always have to include giving thoughtful
10 cards, and gifts, but it should taking the time to see all people as important, and
11 special individuals with hopes, dreams, fears, and joys.

12 Most of the time, this is as simple as looking people in the
13 eye, and speaking to them with sincerity. When done well, with true concern,
14 and feeling, the impact is amazing. For me to bring my whole self to work
15 would mean fulfilling my mom's legacy by creating a world with more neighborly
16 love, and fewer strangers. As you just heard, bring your whole self to work can
17 take different forms, and may look different from one person to the next.

18 In Ron's example, his vulnerability, and courage to share
19 about his mother's legacy created the opportunity to connect in a different, and
20 perhaps more insightful way. When we feel the freedom to share about
21 ourselves, we feel more connected to each other. Next slide. I would like to
22 close with a quote from my favorite author Jamey Austin, when people are
23 hiding, when people are playing it safe, when people aren't bringing their whole
24 true selves to work, they'll never be what they could be for an organization,
25 they're along for the ride, and not leading the change.

26 Thank you for allowing me to share about how I bring my

1 whole self to work. I now turn it over to Eric Dilworth.

2 MR. DILWORTH: Good morning Chairman, and
3 Commissioners. It's my pleasure to be here today to provide highlights of our
4 diversity, and recruitment efforts. NRC has a long history of partnering with a
5 variety of professional organizations, colleges, and universities, and NRC staff
6 to recruit a diverse, and highly qualified pool of candidates for both our
7 technical, and non-technical positions. Our campus space outreach programs
8 have existed for decades, and we continue to benefit from our investments.

9 For example, our University Champions Program includes
10 dedicated NRC employees who engage with faculty, university career service
11 offices, students, and alumni from 39 institutions including 13 minority serving
12 institutions, or MSIs. In FY 21, we attended 24 events in which 63 percent were
13 targeted at diversity. 18 of the events were campus raised recruiting events,
14 and 39 percent of these were hosted by MSIs.

15 These events included career fairs, student information
16 sessions, mock interviews, and class presentations. In addition, we publicize a
17 campus newsletter twice a year that is sent to 146 university career service
18 centers, and to university points of contact for NRC grants programs. These
19 activities support our efforts to build a diverse pipeline to ensure the agency has
20 the work force it needs to meet future requirements.

21 These opportunities include temporary student internships
22 that take place over the summer, also includes our co-op programs, and our
23 entry level hires, including the aforementioned Nuclear Regulator
24 Apprenticeship Network program, or NRAN. Recruitment, and outreach
25 activities are conducted to fill mid-career positions, and also ensure we're
26 recruiting veterans, and people with targeted, and non-targeted disabilities.

1 These activities include networking with state rehabilitation
2 offices, veterans organizations, and also advertising in various publications.
3 We've participated in events sponsored by professional societies such as the
4 Society of Women Engineers, the American Indian Science and Engineering
5 Society, and the Navy Nuclear Power Officer Career Conference. The NRC's
6 partnership with the Operation Warfighter Program, we are recruiting Warfighter
7 interns.

8 In fact, this partnership led OCHCO to host an intern for six
9 months last year. In our outreach materials, and recruitment communication,
10 NRC works to promote a strong employer brand by demonstrating that
11 employees can bring their whole self to work. This includes ensuring our
12 recruitment materials portray images that reflect a diverse work force. We also
13 share information on NRC values, as well as on programs we have to promote
14 diversity.

15 For example, our career opportunities web page includes a
16 diversity section that provides information on our demographics, and
17 information on programs such as our affirmative employment, and diversity
18 management program, as well as information on accessibility, and reasonable
19 accommodations. We strive to ensure that our recruitment teams reflect a
20 diverse group of NRC employees, and that the target teams who interview, and
21 make selections for our summer internship, and NRAN programs represent a
22 diverse mix of supervisors.

23 In summary, although we have many programs, and efforts in
24 place to recruit a diverse work force, we have to continue to strive to look at
25 new, innovative avenues to enhance our diversity while we also build the NRC
26 work force. Thank you sir.

1 MR. DORMAN: Thank you Eric. Chairman, and
2 Commissioners, as you can see, the NRC staff throughout the agency are
3 engaged in a broad variety of activities that support our efforts to be a modern
4 risk informed regulator that achieves mission excellence in a diverse, inclusive,
5 and innovative environment with a highly skilled, adaptable, and engaged work
6 force.

7 To help us move into this vision, last week I asked the chief
8 human capital officer to provide me a plan to recruit, hire, and develop our staff
9 consistent with our strategic work force planning outcomes to provide full
10 utilization of our allocated FTE by the beginning of next fiscal year. The
11 accomplishments we have discussed today are due to the staff, and
12 management in the Office of Small Business and Civil Rights.

13 The Office of our Chief Human Capital Officer, the members
14 of our EEO advisory committees, and affinity groups, and staff, and
15 management all over the agency who model our NRC organizational values
16 every day. I'm grateful for their efforts, and I'm confident that with their support,
17 we will continue to enhance our equal employment opportunity, affirmative
18 employment, and small business programs. And finally, I want to express my
19 appreciation to Larniece McCoy-Moore. of SBCR, and all the staff who helped
20 prepare for this meeting, and all the staff who work tirelessly every day to make
21 the NRC a great place to work for everyone.

22 This concludes the staff's presentations, and we look forward
23 to your questions.

24 CHAIRMAN HANSON: Thank you Dan, thank you everyone
25 for your presentations, we'll start the questions this morning with Commissioner
26 Baran.

1 COMMISSIONER BARAN: Well, thank you all for your
2 presentations, and for your efforts to support inclusion, and diversity at NRC, it's
3 incredibly important work. As we've heard this morning, NRC is at a point in
4 time where we have a significant challenge that also presents a real opportunity
5 to boost our diversity, and inclusion efforts.

6 The agency's overall workload is pretty flat, so we're going to
7 need to maintain our current work force at around its current budgeted size for
8 the coming years. But we have a large number of employees who are eligible
9 for retirement, and we're seeing attrition each year of about six to eight percent.

10 That means we need to hire about 200 people from outside the agency every
11 year to sustain our work force.

12 Compared to the last several years, that is a lot of hiring. And
13 that hiring is necessary for the agency to be ready for the work ahead of us. It
14 also presents a huge opportunity to reach a diverse pool of applicants, and then
15 bring people into the agency that really represent a cross section of America.
16 It's a bit daunting, but really very exciting. Eric, I know that OCHCO has its own
17 resource challenges, and is a bit stretched to do the necessary hiring. Can you
18 talk a little bit about how that's going, and what strategies OCHCO is using to
19 ramp up hiring?

20 MR. DILWORTH: Yes sir, thank you Commissioner. Well,
21 first you did mention, we have our own resource challenges within OCHCO, so
22 we've been attacking that first. We're looking for current employees that we can
23 reassign from other federal agencies, a lot of outreach. Mary our CHCO is
24 reaching out, all our staff, we actually made three offers this week. So, that's
25 the first, get our vacancies filled, so we can fill the agency vacancies, that's
26 going well.

1 Then secondly, as you stated, we have to focus on excellent
2 recruitment to build those numbers up, it's a great opportunity though. So, as
3 Dan mentioned, we're putting our strategy together. Now, the key to that
4 strategy is we have to get input from all participants across the NRC. You said
5 that idea also, we have smart people on OCHCO, and we need to use our
6 resources to figure out. Also, the important groups that were mentioned, you
7 send them to help us recruit.

8 So, it's an all-out effort, use new, innovative ideas, we've used
9 some, but we can use LinkedIn, we can use a lot of other tools, but it's going to
10 be a multifaceted approach. The other thing is to flip our work loads. If you
11 have 70 percent of your work internal, we only have so much throughput in
12 OCHCO, and we need to put more of our efforts towards external.

13 But do that strategically, work with our managers to identify
14 the external recruitments, because we also have to continue to provide
15 opportunities for our internal.

16 COMMISSIONER BARAN: That highlights a really important
17 point that I was going to ask about, which is one of the issues we face is it's
18 generally easier, and quicker to hire internally to fill a spot than to open it up to
19 applicants outside the agency. But internal hiring doesn't really get us where
20 we need to go, right? Because it's not replacing people who are leaving the
21 agency, it's not bringing new talent in, we're moving people around rather than
22 bringing new people in the door.

23 Can you talk a little bit more Eric, or Dan, about how do we
24 get more focus on external hiring throughout the agency?

25 MR. DORMAN: Thank you Commissioner, and I want to
26 acknowledge what you've acknowledged, and what Eric has acknowledged of

1 the challenges for our currently staffed OCHCO to meet the task that I've given
2 them. And it is going to be an all of agency effort. I need all the offices, and
3 regions to participate in implementing the plans that I've asked the chief human
4 capital officer to give me.

5 I think it's a focus toward external, but obviously we can't take
6 our eye off the internal as well. So, I think there will continue to be
7 opportunities for professional growth in the organization as we see people
8 retire, and so forth. But I think that the challenge before us, as you said, that's
9 important for the growth of our current staff, but we're not going to get where we
10 need to be without a very concerted focus on the external.

11 You mentioned some numbers around some anticipated
12 attrition, but there's also the gap that we've carried for a number of years as
13 we've come down in size in underutilization, and that's what we need to close.
14 So, it's an aggressive effort to close that gap in the coming year, and even after
15 that, we're going to continue to have, I think a continued higher level of hiring
16 than what we've been accustomed to in the past years.

17 So, I think we'll also be looking at from the corporate support
18 side, ensuring that we not only help Mary, and Eric help us this year, but also
19 position them well to continue to support us going forward.

20 COMMISSIONER BARAN: Well, as you mentioned, in the
21 context of increased external hiring, full utilization of budgeted FTEs is really
22 pretty important. You mentioned that a little bit, can you talk a little bit about
23 that, the importance of it from your perspective, and how you're approaching
24 that?

25 MR. DORMAN: Yeah, thanks for that Commissioner. It's
26 tremendously important, I mentioned we've been under utilizing for some

1 period, as we've come down from an agency of about 4000 people, to an
2 agency of about 2800 people, where we've always been trying to get to next
3 year's lower budget number as we go, and to do so through voluntary attrition,
4 because we are an agency that's committed to our people, and we don't want to
5 put ourselves in a position of having to take involuntary actions.

6 So, that's how we got to where we are, and as a result, we
7 have a very experienced work force that is highly capable, and efficient in
8 accomplishing our mission today. But that gap of FTE utilization is the
9 investment for the future. So, part of that gap of what we haven't been doing is
10 training, and developing new people that are coming into the agency. We're
11 going to need to make that investment more as we achieve the goal of bringing
12 those people in. That's where some of that unutilized FTE is going to go, is just
13 in growing those new folks as safety regulators.

14 COMMISSIONER BARAN: I totally agree, I really appreciate
15 your focus on that, and I know Scott's had a lot of success on this issue in
16 Region IV, which I really appreciate. I'm also really glad to hear about the
17 reinvigoration of our recruitment efforts with an emphasis on diversity. My
18 sense is that those efforts are largely focused on finding good candidates for
19 NRAN, internships, and co-op positions, in other words the more formal entry
20 level programs, which is terrific.

21 Can you talk a little bit more about what we're doing for mid-
22 level openings, or for any open position that we post, and need to fill? How do
23 NRC's recruitment activities connect to hiring for those positions? Because
24 that's likely going to be a significant chunk of the 200 or so we're going to fill
25 every year.

26 MR. DORMAN: Yeah, I'll turn to Eric in a second, but I think

1 probably the majority of those 200, or so are going to be mid-career, addressing
2 critical skill gaps in our strategic work force plan. So, we want to be very
3 intentional, and lean into the entry level, but even with an intentional leaning
4 into the entry level to meet our mission needs, and our strategic work force plan
5 gaps, it will be -- a majority of those will probably be mid-career folks. I'll let Eric
6 speak to how we pursue that.

7 MR. DILWORTH: Exactly, reaching out, and finding the skill
8 sets we need to come to work right now, and help us meet our mission is key.
9 So, we'll use some of the different groups that are available that we talked
10 about, Society of Women Engineers, make sure we're out there recruiting with
11 that, Black Engineering Society, all of those, those are good vehicles for us to
12 recruit.

13 Also, we've found that most people are learning about NRC
14 through USAJobs. We have a lot more opportunity to publicize our
15 opportunities outside of USAJobs, and we need to take advantage of that. So, I
16 think educating the work force, getting out there, getting our positions so that
17 people know what type of positions are here. I had no idea before I came here
18 90 days ago. So, educating the work force outside of the NRC, and then
19 recruiting in for that.

20 But we have to go -- and working with our managers on the
21 type of skills, and taking them out with us, that's key to recruit for folks, so that
22 they can talk about the jobs we have in the NRC.

23 COMMISSIONER BARAN: That's great.

24 MR. MORRIS: Can I just comment very briefly?

25 COMMISSIONER BARAN: Please, yeah.

26 MR. MORRIS: So, a lot of the midcareer gaps so to speak,

1 we're filling with internal promotions. So, as our more senior people leave the
2 agency for retirements, or what have you, we tend to fill those voids with people
3 who are already here, internal to the agency, and that's where you're seeing, for
4 example Region IV bringing talent in from other regions, and headquarters, et
5 cetera, or within our own region, promotion, and then back filling those gaps
6 with the new hires, and externals.

7 COMMISSIONER BARAN: Well, that makes a lot of sense,
8 because for years people have been waiting for those promotions, and we've
9 had kind of a dearth of promotional opportunities, so if that 15 opens up, it's
10 totally logical for a 14 with the right experience to get that position, and then
11 maybe you're backfilling the 14, or maybe a 13 is moving up into 14, and you're
12 going outside the building for the 13. Of course, that's a lot of work for you all.

13 But important to kind of balance those interests. Well, I really
14 appreciate all of your focus on this, and the leadership you're showing on this. I
15 think this is really important, when I think of kind of the big organizational
16 challenges we have as an agency, I think this is really the front, and center,
17 right? I mean all this additional new hiring we have to do to kind of really tread
18 water, and have a sustainable work force.

19 And then the opportunity that presents for us to really get out
20 there, and reach a diverse pool of applicants, really exciting. Thanks so much.

21 CHAIRMAN HANSON: Thank you Commissioner Baran.
22 Commissioner Wright?

23 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Thank you Chairman, and good
24 morning. Thank you for your presentations, as usual, they're very interesting,
25 very educational too, so thank you. And I don't have questions for everybody,
26 we'd be here all day, but I'm really impressed with what all's been going on,

1 especially over the last couple of years, and how you've just continued to churn
2 it, and do things the right way, and try to accomplish everything you can to
3 improve the NRC as a whole.

4 So, I'm going to go back in a minute, and follow up with some
5 questions that came from Commissioner Baran. But Dan, I want to thank you
6 for your leadership, and attention to the work force planning. Having the right
7 people is vital, as you know, and I appreciate your recognition that we can't
8 succeed without a diverse, and inclusive workplace, and work force.

9 And you even addressed that in your EEO update last
10 Thursday, when you rolled out the senior management's vision statement,
11 which I'm going to take time to read right now. It was as a modern risk informed
12 regulator we achieve mission excellence in a diverse, inclusive, and innovative
13 environment with highly skilled, adaptable, engaged work force, and we heard
14 that a lot in the presentations here today. Those precise words over, and over
15 again.

16 So, I wish you the best of luck, and much success as you try
17 to move forward, and make that vision a reality, so thank you for that. So, now
18 I'm going to follow up on Commissioner Baron's questions. So, Eric welcome,
19 it's your first Commission meeting, you did a good job. And I appreciated the
20 question, and the exchange that you, and Dan were having with Commissioner
21 Baran. I wanted to ask one other question though.

22 I know the resource thing was addressed, but is there
23 anything that you don't have that would be helpful in innovating, and improving
24 our recruitment efforts as an agency?

25 MR. DILWORTH: I think we're going through that process
26 now, as we put together our strategy. We know we need some key resources,

1 which we've been given some of those already, so we're hiring to that. I think
2 that once we get our vacancies, we have probably around 15 vacancies, that'll
3 help us. But as we form our strategy, that'll give us more information on what
4 we need. Do we need more money to do some contracting out that's going to
5 help us publicize our jobs?

6 Do we need funds for that, and those type of things? So, I
7 would say we'll learn more in the next 30 days on that. But right now, we're
8 filling our vacancies, and then as we put our plan together, we'll know more.

9 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Okay, do you need access to
10 any tools, or anything that you don't have?

11 MR. DILWORTH: That will be the key, our system that we
12 use now I think is great, as far as our personnel system. But if we need access
13 to tools, whether it's having a special contract with -- I keep using LinkedIn,
14 because I've used it in the past, but other organizations, or private sector tools
15 like that, that's what we have to identify. And if it is a need, we'll put together
16 the game plan, and the cost benefit analysis on it, and be able to present that.

17 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: So, you're in the process of
18 identifying those potential tools now?

19 MR. DILWORTH: Yes.

20 MR. DORMAN: Yeah, and I think I've asked Mary to give me
21 the plan in mid-January, so at that time we'll have that better developed for you.

22 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: So, then I'll follow up, you made
23 a statement you made just a minute ago in the conversation, you said that we
24 have what we need for today, and you were very emphatic today.

25 MR. DORMAN: Yes, I'm glad you noticed that.

26 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Which brings some concern,

1 because that begs the question for me to ask you going forward, where are we
2 short? Where are we lacking, what are the needs that you've identified that we
3 need to hire? That we don't have going forward, because we've got a lot of big
4 things on the plate.

5 MR. DORMAN: Right, and so that's our strategic work force
6 planning process helps us to identify those particular gaps, and there are
7 specific things related to advanced reactor technologies coming down the road,
8 health physicists on the material side. So, there are a number of things that are
9 identified in those areas, and it also identifies what our needs are.

10 So, where we may not have a particular gap right now, but we
11 might anticipate attrition over time that there are other professionals both in the
12 technical programs, and in the corporate support side. So, that's all laid out in
13 there, but I think going back to where are we today, versus what I'm looking at
14 over the next five years I mentioned in the Commission's all hands meeting in
15 October, that I anticipate with the kind of attrition that Commissioner Baran
16 mentioned.

17 That by the end of say, 2025, we may have one out of every
18 three NRC employees who has joined the NRC since the beginning of the
19 pandemic. And so, when I look at the work force that we have today, that's very
20 experienced in doing their jobs, we're able to accomplish the work that's on our
21 plate today, drawing on that depth of experience. But that experience is not
22 always going to be here, I hope they stay as long as they want.

23 I value their experience, but I plan to retire someday, and I
24 pretty much assume that everybody else in the room does at some point.

25 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: You can't.

26 MR. DORMAN: Thank you sir. But where we've gotten to

1 over these years of a very experienced work force, that's where I'm looking out
2 three to five years, and saying we need to bring the skills on board, acclimate
3 them to being a safety regulator, and help us to continue to achieve the
4 success that we're capable of today, I want to ensure that we're continuing to
5 be capable of that three to five years from now.

6 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Thank you. And Scott, I know of
7 all the regions, you have probably been the most impacted with a number of
8 openings that you have had to fill, you, and I have had many conversations
9 about that over the last couple of years. Is there anything that you've had to go
10 through in your region doing -- I'm sure you're recognizing kind of what Dan has
11 made the point of, and I know you all are probably sharing. Is there anything
12 that you can add, or?

13 MR. MORRIS: Yeah, thanks for the question. I mean it
14 started with data, and it started with building a compelling basis for making,
15 being more aggressive, and showing the charts of where we are
16 demographically, and where we are in our strata. I think in Region IV, we still
17 have ten times more people over the age of 60, than we have under the age of
18 30.

19 So, looking at all that data, then working through our strategic
20 work force planning efforts, working collaboratively with our counterparts in the
21 other parts of the agency, and particularly OCHCO. Having, looking at all the
22 opportunities for bringing in new talent externally, it's not just the internal piece.
23 The internal is important, but we did specifically in Region IV, we created this
24 compelling data based need, challenge, and then we challenged each of our
25 leaders, including our staff to help us overcome that challenge.

26 And we keep it in front of us, it's one of our four Region IV

1 priorities that we've kept in front of us for the last year, and a half. We talk
2 about it every week, we celebrate all our new hires, we encourage people to
3 refer their friends, and colleagues from outside, et cetera, et cetera. So, it's
4 really all that. But ultimately it's communicating the challenge, and the need,
5 and keeping it in front of us as a high priority item, and holding each other
6 accountable to meeting that.

7 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Thank you. I know we have
8 about a minute, and a half left here, but I know we've got a lot of programs,
9 NRAN, we've got the apprentice network, we've got the high school stuff that
10 we do, which I can probably pitch one to Tuwanda, a question to her. So,
11 Tuwanda I want to thank you for your participation, and your presentation, but
12 you mentioned the SummerRISE program, and the opportunities it provides for
13 high school students.

14 Can you tell me a little bit more about the program in the time
15 we've got left here, and how the NRC has used it, and what plans do you have
16 for it in the future?

17 MS. SMITH: Well, first, and foremost, I hope to do justice to
18 giving you an explanation. I recognized Patrice Williams, because she has
19 been the leader, and making sure she works with the Montgomery County
20 system, and they work with employers. These students actually are unpaid
21 interns, and she's been able to introduce them to NRC, and what we do to
22 stimulate interest in the career field, and place them.

23 We had five interns this past year, so being able to create that
24 pipeline early in the system, and let people see what the professionals are
25 doing, what they look like, and to be able to see a diverse group of people
26 literally help us create the pipeline that we're looking for. So, I would have to

1 get Patrice to give you even more on that, but it's been a stellar program, and
2 I'm so proud of her effort.

3 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Well, and we're proud of her
4 efforts too, and Patrice, thank you so much, and we will have that discussion
5 later, thank you. Mr. Chairman.

6 CHAIRMAN HANSON: Thank you Commissioner Wright,
7 very much for that. I guess I'd like to take a minute to talk about something that
8 I've been pretty interested in since I've joined the Commission. And that is
9 strengthening the Commission's relationship with minorities serving
10 educational institutions. And certainly Eric, I appreciate your discussion about a
11 lot of the outreach, and recruitment efforts that we're undertaking.

12 But one of the programs that we used to have in the agency
13 was what was known as the Minority Serving Institutions Grant Program, and
14 that program was, I think eliminated as part of the kind of project aim
15 rebaselining efforts several years ago. And I just happened to run across it
16 when I asked Vonna, and maybe OCHCO well more than a year ago now,
17 about kind of information on HBCUs, and how many HBCU graduates we had
18 in the agency.

19 And there was this little sentence in the stuff that they gave
20 me that said well, there used to be this program, and since then support to
21 minority serving institutions has really declined. And it kind of caught my
22 attention, and since then I've been, as catch as catch can, kind of pulling the
23 thread on that a little bit, and comparing, and contrasting what that program
24 used to do with what the Integrated University Program, or what we're calling
25 now the University Nuclear Leadership Program does.

26 And IUP, and UNLP, Congress gives us money every year for

1 that, and we've assiduously implemented it. It's been really important. I pulled
2 some data from 2019 to 2021 on the IUP, and the number of awards in support
3 of faculty, and other research are really important, but the scope of that
4 program is somewhat limited to universities with nuclear engineering programs
5 really. And in support of nuclear engineering education.

6 And the number of MSIs as part of that has kind of shrunk as
7 well. So, I think in that period of 2019 to 2021, we had something like 90ish
8 awardees under UNLP, or 90ish awards basically, and about 16 of those were
9 for MSIs, and only one HBCU. So, that kind of caught my attention, because
10 the old Minority Serving Institution Grant Programs, we put out about 20 million
11 dollars between 2007, and 2017 to dozens, and dozens, and dozens of
12 institutions.

13 Lots of -- a broad swath of HBCU, South Carolina State,
14 Alabama A&M, Southern University, Morgan State, lots of -- University of
15 Puerto Rico, University of Texas at El Paso, lots, and lots of places. And as
16 some of you know, I took a little detour in my career through local government
17 for a couple years, and I think the lesson that I learned in local government is
18 you can do a lot of good in the world with 50, or 75, or 100,000 dollars, which is
19 what the size of some of these awards were for internships, and mentorships,
20 and so forth.

21 So, believe it or not, there is a question at the end of this. But
22 kind of in the spirit of potentially revitalizing that program, and that tool as a
23 recruitment effort, and in the MSI program, having a much broader scope for
24 mechanical engineering, and other kinds of discipline, and so forth, Vonna, I
25 just wanted to kind of get your feedback about that kind of scattershot speech I
26 gave on this issue.

1 MS. ORDAZ: I fully support your interest to revitalize the MSI
2 program. You've covered the background very nicely. I will say that we have
3 just a few that are still spending down on their multiyear grants. And once that's
4 done, the book is closed. I would ask though, we have an expert here on this
5 presentation here, which is Tuwanda Smith, who has worked tirelessly through
6 the years on the MSI program. So, I would love for her to have an opportunity.

7 CHAIRMAN HANSON: Please, I'd love that.

8 MS. ORDAZ: And she also works closely with the White
9 House Initiative Group on HBCUs.

10 CHAIRMAN HANSON: Great.

11 MS. ORDAZ: Tuwanda?

12 MS. SMITH: Thank you Vonna, and chairman. I think the
13 chairman covered it quite well. I've been program manager for the Minority
14 Serving Institutions Program since 2006, and so I was at the helm of initiating
15 the agency's program. And so, the program had in it, the grant components,
16 along with other components that went to helping institutions, and their efforts
17 to increase academic excellence to be able to develop faculty, and students as
18 well as to gain an interest in programs in the federal government, such as
19 NRC's programs, and activities.

20 So, we still do those things as well. But to also provide them
21 with infrastructure, and building capacity, and being able to effectively compete,
22 and win. It is not enough to be invited to the table, you have to be invited to the
23 table, and then given the opportunity to be able to participate. And so those are
24 large parts of what the MSIP program does. Yes, we are absent an MSI grant
25 component.

26 We don't fulfill the other obligation to provide not only support,

1 and assistance, but to be able to allow those types of institutions, whether
2 they're tribal colleges, and universities, whether they are HBCUs, predominantly
3 black colleges, or whether they're Asian, Pacific Islander institutions. But those
4 institutions can take part of the competitiveness that the government presents.

5 So, to answer your question the long way around, having, or
6 not having a grant program that covers those other needs that allows us to help
7 transfer knowledge, and skill that are necessary literally puts as at a
8 disadvantage. Because one of the things is that it also allows us to get to
9 groups of individuals early. We can transition from the classroom to the
10 workspace quite easily, and we can convey to the faculty the type of things that
11 are necessary to be able to train, and bring up that next generation. Hopefully
12 that answered your question.

13 CHAIRMAN HANSON: That's fantastic, no, thank you very
14 much, that's super helpful.

15 MS. ORDAZ: I think Tuwanda covered it, but that would be
16 lovely to bring that program back. I mentioned the size of our office, so we'd
17 have to consider how that comes to play to -- we're looking for rotational
18 opportunities right now too, to help in other areas in the outreach, and diversity,
19 inclusion, so that might be of assistance.

20 CHAIRMAN HANSON: Well, I know there are a number of
21 factors to cover, Tuwanda is continuing to do great things, and probably has
22 three other jobs on top of potentially bringing those programs back, along with
23 everybody else. So, I know there are other factors to consider, but I think it
24 would be helpful if we could get -- if the Commission could get some paper from
25 SBCR, and maybe OCHCO about how this program might be reconstituted
26 going forward.

1 MS. ORDAZ: Fantastic, really appreciate that.

2 CHAIRMAN HANSON: Even potentially outside of the normal
3 appropriations process, so we don't have to necessarily wait too long to be able
4 to do that, but if you guys could get back to us, that would be much
5 appreciated.

6 MS. ORDAZ: Yes sir, will do.

7 CHAIRMAN HANSON: Okay, thank you. I just -- Candace, I
8 appreciated your being here. I've had the opportunity to meet you in other
9 forums like this, and it's always -- you're such a powerful advocate for diversity
10 inclusion efforts in the agency, so it was great to see you this morning. I got a
11 chance to look at the Kiowa tribe website a little bit, and noticed some of the
12 pictures from your presentation this morning are also out there on the web.

13 And I really -- I admire you for the way you do bring your
14 whole self to work, and wonder if you have advice for other employees in the
15 agency about how they might do that themselves, or how they might encourage
16 others to do that.

17 MS. SPORE: Sure, thank you for the question. I think that it's
18 really important whenever we're engaging with each other, we just are sincere,
19 and that's what I would tell my fellow colleagues. And also, I talked to some --
20 and it's also in the definition about bringing your whole self to work about
21 reading the room, and emotional intelligence. Because some people don't want
22 to over share, and some people want to have a little bit more privacy in their
23 work life.

24 So, I think that if we just engage with each other authentically,
25 and have the courage to be vulnerable, then we really can work together, and
26 have success in our goals, and really meet the mission. And so, it's just really -

1 - it's not crazy, it's just engaging as humans to humans, and we all have
2 different needs, and things that we want to do to succeed at work.

3 And so, if we just authentically engage with each other, I
4 really believe that we can move whatever goals we have forward, personally,
5 and professionally.

6 CHAIRMAN HANSON: I can't remotely say it any better than
7 that, so I'm going to leave it there. I think this morning we have the opportunity
8 to hear from Sheryl Sanchez, which is a real pleasure as always, as our NTEU
9 representative. Sheryl?

10 MS. SANCHEZ: Yes, thank you. Good morning Chairman
11 Hanson, Commissioner's Baran, and Wright, EDO Dorman, managers, staff,
12 and most importantly, NTEU bargaining unit employees. I am Sheryl Sanchez,
13 president of NTEU Chapter 208, and I'm pleased to be able to provide the
14 union's comments this morning. NTEU Chapter 208 is the exclusive
15 representative of bargaining unit employees at the NRC.

16 I am joined by a large number of NTEU team members who
17 work hard every day on your behalf, such as stewards, labor partners, and
18 executive board members. Without such a dedicated team, NTEU would not be
19 able to work together to strive to ensure that every NRC employee is treated
20 with dignity, and respect. I especially enjoyed Candace's presentation, and I
21 like where she indicated that you can choose to bring your whole self to work,
22 or not.

23 Because I don't think after the year I've had, you all really are
24 ready for my whole self, but maybe next year. The biggest news we've had
25 since we last met, is that we are now under a new collective bargaining
26 agreement, and we look forward to working for you under this new improved

1 contract. We are better positioned to fight for you to get the telework post
2 COVID that you want, and deserve.

3 This is a bargaining success story, where the agency, and
4 NTEU really played well together to benefit bargaining unit employees, as well
5 as the agency. The agency's lead negotiator was top notch, and she's recently
6 retired, and I really miss her, but our amazing NTEU negotiators will be there at
7 midterm negotiations for you seeking even more improvements to your benefits,
8 and working conditions.

9 I hope you all are adjusting as well as possible to the recent
10 reentry, and were able to get the telework plan in the short term that meets your
11 needs to feel safe, and comfortable, and keep yourself, and your family safe.
12 It's not a secret that NTEU does not agree that the November 7th, 2021 reentry
13 date was not -- we do not agree that that was appropriate.

14 I know a lot of managers agree with this position, but these
15 managers did not have the authority to change this. NTEU was very
16 disappointed that not one SES manager stood up, and disagreed on the record
17 with the decision to move forward when we are still dealing with the pandemic.
18 Employees feel like they were lied to when they were told the six month special
19 circumstances telework agreement would be widely approved by Office
20 Directors, and Regional Administrators, and then the agency changed their
21 position.

22 Many employees thought they would have a six month buffer
23 until May 7th, and were not happy when the rug was pulled out from under
24 them. If the agency would have started with the current position, it would have
25 been palatable to employees, but the rub was that the employees believe they
26 were lied to. So many employees told NTEU that they don't think our SES

1 managers care about their safety at all.

2 And this is very sad for me to hear from those employees who
3 used to be so proud to be NRC employees. Most employees do think their
4 lower level managers care about them, but they have to follow directions from
5 higher managers. I certainly hope I am not correct, and that this is not the
6 case. I would love to be wrong, but morale seems to be at an all-time low, and I
7 feel this will be reflected in our next FEVS scores, which may be the worst ever.
8 If, according to slide eight, culture will be integrated into SES performance
9 plans, then I think that our SES's should be concerned. I see that there is a
10 decrease in both informal, and formal EEO complaints, but I also hear from
11 employees that they're giving up, and they're excusing discrimination, and bad
12 behavior, because they're giving up hope that anything will ever be done about
13 it. Can't win, don't try.

14 This makes me really sad, because the NRC is better than
15 this. We have so many dedicated, highly skilled, hardworking employees, and
16 we need to do better. In reflecting on slide 16, which states the challenges of
17 leadership are human, not technical, I couldn't agree more. The most common
18 complaint we heard from employees regarding reentry was that our SES
19 managers were extremely defensive, and lacked empathy.

20 While this may not actually be true, if employees feel that it is,
21 then the damage done to our culture is real. In one case, where an employee
22 pointed out that there is still a lot of COVID cases reported at the NRC, the
23 answer was that COVID is out there, so of course there will be cases. The
24 employee felt that this was a very cold answer. The employee said so, if you
25 bring COVID home, and your child gets sick, or dies, what will they say?

26 That children die, unfortunately death is out there, there will

1 be death? Empathy is so important for high level leaders, yet it is often
2 misunderstood. Empathy can help an agency remain strong during the
3 toughest of times. Employees need to know that the agency is concerned
4 about them as a person, not just due to their output. With much more remote
5 work, it's easy to be distracted, and multitask.

6 I know this, because I'm sometimes guilty of this, and it's an
7 easy trap to fall into. But if someone is trying to tell you something that is really
8 important to them, they'll feel much more valued if you give them your full
9 attention, and in turn they will be more likely to return the courtesy when the
10 situation is reversed. I'm going to end by reading a summary prepared by Dale
11 Yeilding, he's one of our stewards, and a DACA member.

12 And I'd like to ask the agency to help NTEU make the NRC a
13 better place for our older employees. On October 20th, 2003, the EDO
14 informed the Commission of a statistical analysis of performance appraisal
15 information facilitated by SBCR, and performed by an NRC statistician. A
16 subsequent analysis was again performed four years later. This is ML number
17 21309A758.

18 Both confirmed that older employees were disadvantaged by
19 appraisal scores, and a trend was confirmed that as employees got older,
20 performance appraisal ratings decreased. DACA has requested data to
21 perform a follow up analysis of information from 2017 to confirm if older
22 employees have remained disadvantaged. DACA has been denied the
23 opportunity to perform an independent analysis, and denied the data.

24 Three decades ago, on September 11th, 1990, the EDO
25 advised all supervisors, and managers that performance appraisal statistical
26 disparities existed for older employees, and urged to be sensitive, and not

1 permit any bias to influence performance evaluations. Since DACA has been
2 thus far ineffective to obtain data for further analysis, and a disparity has
3 existed for decades without correction, NTEU encourages the Commission to
4 direct further investigation to ensure the fair treatment of our older employees,
5 and direct the information to be provided to the EEO advisory committee.

6 Early in 2019, Dale Lechet (Phonetic.) developed a report
7 entitled the dynamic futures for NRC missionaries, which explored the NRC's
8 external environments potential impact on NRC's future operations, and
9 staffing. The report included numerous references to replacing the aging NRC
10 work force with younger staff. Since DACA brought to light this to senior
11 managers, the report's younger initiative, the term younger has been replaced
12 with the term entry level.

13 Simply changing the name, but not the practice of moving the
14 agency average age lower, and negatively impacting older applicants. On a
15 more recent similar note, OPM issued a rule to allow college interns to be hired
16 into temporary positions without competition, or posting jobs on USAJobs.
17 These interns can be promoted, or converted into permanent positions without
18 further competition.

19 A competitive, and merit based civil service system is the
20 cornerstone of federal employment. NTEU has strong concerns about any
21 program that might weaken the system, and has submitted comments to the
22 Office of Personnel Management. This rule may disadvantage veterans, and
23 result in discriminatory treatment against older applicants who are less likely to
24 be post-secondary students.

25 Replacing retiring employees with experienced qualified
26 employees regardless of age would be in line with merit selection lawful hiring

1 practices. Age discrimination exists throughout the federal government, and it's
2 time for the agency to acknowledge this, and take definitive action to protect our
3 older work force, and older applicants by treating them fairly, and with dignity,
4 and respect.

5 Thank you for your attention, and do not hesitate to reach out
6 to NTEU if you have any questions, or concerns, or if you would like us to assist
7 you. It is our honor to be of service to our bargaining unit employees.

8 CHAIRMAN HANSON: Thank you Sheryl, very much, for
9 those remarks. Just want to wrap up quickly this morning. It was under a week
10 ago that the three of us were on the other side of the table, quite literally, and
11 got a little bit of a taste of where you are. And I was thinking about the hearing
12 last week, and I think the questions, and comments from both Commissioner
13 Wright, and Commissioner Baran this morning, and I think there are kind of
14 three themes that emerge for the three of us, if I may.

15 One is a shared appreciation, and that is -- we said it
16 definitely during the hearing last week, and that's a deep appreciation for the
17 staff, and what we've been able to accomplish during a really difficult time
18 during the pandemic. And to also kind of successfully transition to our new
19 hybrid work environment. So, I want to stand by those remarks that the three of
20 us made last week, and reiterate them, and thank you all again for the work.

21 And particularly, I think we've seen this morning, a lot of the --
22 not just the technical work in accomplishing the mission that we've done, but a
23 lot of supporting activities that really do make this such a great place to work.
24 And it's -- we know these things are going on, but it's extra nice to have the
25 external recognition of places like the Federal Executive Board in Dallas, and
26 Atlanta.

1 Even while we know that there are other really good things
2 happening here at headquarters, and the other regional offices. I think the
3 second thing that I hope people heard was kind of a shared commitment to --
4 on the part of the Commission to helping you all meet our hiring, and diversity
5 goals going forward. Questions like Commissioner Wright saying what else do
6 you need for this? And Commissioner Baran really kind of probing on external
7 hiring, and mid-career hires, and this kind of thing.

8 I hope the message gets across about kind of this shared
9 commitment that we have. And then finally there's always the aspect of shared
10 accountability too, right? All of us to each other, I think Candace spoke
11 articulately about that, and kind of behaving authentically with each other. And
12 that doesn't necessarily mean always sharing, and being yourself at the level at
13 which you're comfortable in the workplace, which I think is really important.

14 We heard a lot about the really important work that's going on
15 at NMSS in this area as well. And of course, I think Senator Stabenow last
16 week, she used the phrase sacred trust, right? We have, I think as
17 Commissioners, we're accountable to each other, we're accountable to you, the
18 staff is accountable to us, and of course ultimately we're all accountable to the
19 American people, and I think that's critically important as well.

20 So, with that, we will wrap this up, and I think all of you, and I
21 thank my colleagues, and we're adjourned.

22 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter went off the record at
23 11:44 a.m.)

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