

NATIONAL OCEANIC and ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION'S

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE

**STRATEGIC PLAN for
SPECIAL EMPHASIS PROGRAMS**

2005-2007

Working Together to Save Lives



The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Strategic Plan, "New Priorities for the 21st Century," updated for FY 2005 through FY 2010, identifies "Developing, Valuing, and Sustaining World-Class Workforce," as one of six cross-cutting goals critical to mission success. NOAA's National Weather Service (NWS) realizes its workforce is the heart and soul of the NWS. It is the starting point to organizational excellence. Like all Federal agencies, NWS has a mandate to include and maintain a representative workforce: a workforce that looks like America.

The NWS serves the people of the United States every day. We are the sole U.S. official voice for issuing warnings during life-threatening weather situations. We have about 4,700 employees in 122 weather forecast offices, 13 river forecast centers, 9 national centers and other support offices around the country. Our highly trained and skilled workforce maintains our infrastructure and uses powerful workstations to analyze data and issue forecasts and warnings.

Our Mission

The NWS provides weather, water, and climate forecasts and warnings for the United States, its territories, adjacent waters, and ocean areas for the protection of life and property and the enhancement of the national economy. NWS data and products form a national information database and infrastructure which can be used by other government agencies, the private sector, and the global community.

Our Vision

Working together to provide the best weather, water, and climate information in the world by:

- Producing and delivering information you can trust when you need it
- Incorporating proven advances in science and technology
- Measuring, reporting, and evaluating our performance
- Reducing weather-and water-related fatalities
- Working with others to make the weather, water, and climate enterprise more effective

We Value

- Service to our customers and partners
- Respect and trust of others
- Open exchange of information and ideas, and the scientific approach to our mission
- High standards for integrity, teamwork, and self-improvement
- A diverse, innovative, and empowered work-force

To ensure equal opportunity in employment and equal treatment of employees exists in the Federal sector, special emphasis programs were mandated through Federal laws, Executive Orders, regulations from the Office of Personnel Management and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

Special emphasis programs ensure equal opportunity is present in all aspects of employment. These programs promote equal opportunity in the hiring, advancement, training and treatment of each targeted group. These programs advocate necessary change to overcome barriers that restrict equal employment opportunity for women, minorities, and individuals with disabilities.

The goals for the programs are to eliminate discriminatory practices, insure the targeted group is appropriately represented throughout the workforce, and sponsor special activities designed to enhance diversity awareness.

One of the NWS Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity Management's (OEODM) highest priorities has been to undertake a serious effort to strengthen the NWS workforce and management capabilities while addressing workforce diversity issues. Under NWS Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and Diversity Management Policy issued by the Assistant Administrator of Weather Services, managers have an opportunity and responsibility to address the longstanding underrepresentation and underutilization of women, minorities, and people with disabilities in its workforce.

In an assessment done by OEODM in October 2004, women were substantially underrepresented in the NWS workforce. Women represent 46.8% of the National Civilian Labor Force; however, women only represent 18.1% of the NWS workforce, and minorities represent 25.4% of the National Civilian Labor Force, however, minorities only represent 12% of the NWS workforce. Women are also greatly underrepresented in all 7 of the NWS core mission occupations (Meteorologist, Meteorologist Technician, Electronic Engineer, Electronic Technician, Physical Scientist, Hydrologist, and Information Technology Specialist). With a notable few exceptions, minorities are underrepresented in the NWS mission-related occupations.

OEODM has developed six separate and distinct operating plans for the six federally recognized special emphasis programs: Federal Women's Program, African-American Employment Program, Hispanic-American Employment Program, Asian American/Pacific Islander Employment Program, American Indian/Alaskan Native Employment Program, and People with Disabilities Employment Program. These plans have been developed to address and assist in reversing the underrepresentation and underutilization of women and minorities at NWS. The plans seek to recruit talented candidates from outside NWS; retain, promote and develop current employees; and create a pipeline for addressing current and future workforce needs.

This plan is derived from the six operating plans. This plan is tied to the overall NWS Policy on EEO and Diversity Management. The Diversity Management Strategic Plan and this document will be used to manage the diversity of our employees by building an inclusive work force, fostering an environment that respects the individual, and offering opportunities for all persons to develop to their full potential in support of Atmospheric Science. Through this plan the NWS is seeking to build relationships with women and minority communities and engage them in the NWS's vast scientific and technical operations. The plan calls for strengthening the NWS outreach activities in a comprehensive effort to promote partnership opportunities with the women, minority, and disability community in three critical areas: employment, education, and training.

This plan is challenging, manageable, measurable, and consistent with and supportive of the NWS Federal Agency Annual EEO Program Status Report. The women, minority and disability communities need total commitment from all managers and employees to meet its goals and objectives.

The successful accomplishment of the OEODM goals is predicated on three strategic actions:

- Creating effective working partnerships with both internal and external organizations in order to correct the underrepresentation and underutilization of women and minorities at the NWS.
- Communicating the successes and activities of women and minorities across all sectors of the NWS community to focus attention on issues surrounding their employment at the NWS.
- Make management aware of the barriers to senior level positions and launch an effort to put in place active recruitment and retention initiatives.

NOAA's National Weather Service Special Emphasis Program Strategic Goals

Goal 1: Promote Equal Employment Opportunity

Objective 1: Make written materials available to all employees and applicants, informing them of the variety of EEO programs and administrative and judicial remedial procedures available to them.

Completion Date: Continuously

Objective 2: Publicize to all employees and post at all times the names, business telephone numbers and business address of the EEO Counselors; a notice of the time limits and necessity of contacting a Counselor before filing a complaint; and the telephone numbers and addresses of the EEO Director, EEO Officer (s) and Special Emphasis Program Managers.

Completion Date: Continuously

Objective 3: Ensure that an EEO official is represented on each selection committee, especially those selecting senior managers.

Completion Date: II Quarter FY 2006

Objective 4: Establish a procedure which would allow EEO officials to review vacancy announcements before posting them officially to the Office of Personnel Management's website.

Completion Date: I Quarter FY 2007

Goal 2: Enhance/Develop Employee Potential

Objective 1: Create awareness among NWS recruitment personnel about the wide variety of women, minority, and people with disabilities recruitment sources that can yield potential SES applicants.

Completion Date: I Quarter FY 2006

Objective 2: Create awareness among NWS women, minority, and employees with disabilities of existing executive/leadership training programs.

Completion Date: II Quarter FY 2006

Objective 3: Identify and promote awareness of government-wide and NOAA executive development training programs among high-potential women, minority candidates in order to increase opportunities for inclusion in SES selection pools.

Completion Date: II Quarter FY 2006

Goal 3: Improve Retention

Objective 1: Create a NWS-wide informal mentoring program targeted to women, minorities and people with disabilities.

Completion Date: IV Quarter FY 2006

Objective 2: Review NWS internal employment practices undertaken to retain women, minorities, and employees with disabilities (e.g., use of retention bonuses, awards, promotions, etc.).

Completion Date: I Quarter FY 2006

Objective 3: Review exit interview procedures, questionnaires, and data for women, minorities, and employees with disabilities and make recommendations for improvement.

Completion Date: Continuously

Goal 4: Disseminate Accurate and Compelling Information and Training and Development Opportunities

Objective 1: Review women and minority participation in existing skill-building training programs, conferences, and seminars.

Completion Date: III Quarter FY 2006

Objective 2: Review nomination process for participation in leadership and executive potential programs and other developmental programs.

Completion Date: II Quarter FY 2006

Goal 5: Recruitment and Hiring

Objective 1: Initiate dialogue to establish long-term relationships with women, minorities, and disability organizations and advocacy groups.

Completion Date: IV Quarter FY 2005

Objective 2: Identify and assess utilization of current entry-level intern programs to develop diverse groups of professional, administrative, and scientific trainees.

Completion Date: III Quarter FY 2005

Objective 3: Identify women, minority, and students with disabilities interested in NWS related sciences.

Completion Date: IV Quarter FY 2005

Goal 6: Monitor and Ensure Accountability

The NWS senior-level management is primarily responsible for ensuring and emphasizing efforts to achieve a fully diverse workforce, inclusive of women, minorities, and people with disabilities. OEODM, through existing tracking and reporting mechanisms will assist the NWS Assistant Administrator, Deputy Assistant Administrator, Headquarters and Regional Directors, managers, and supervisors in accomplishing workforce diversity by implementing and monitoring workforce profiles and measures. The NWS will use the following action items to promote accountability and results with respect to the employment of women, minorities, and people with disabilities.

Objective 1: Periodically update and review organizational workforce goals and achievements.

Completion Date: **Semiannual**

Objective 2: Submit Annual Status Report to the Assistant Administrator, on the NWS's progress towards improving the promotion potential of women, minorities and people with disabilities.

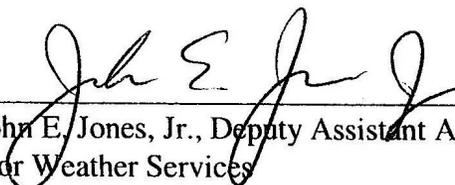
Completion Date: **Annual**

This plan was written by OEODM. It is a living document. Adjustments will be made as deem necessary and appropriate. To review the specifics of each Special Emphasis Program Operating Plan, refer to the OEODM's website.

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David L. Johnson, Assistant Administrator
for Weather Services



John E. Jones, Jr., Deputy Assistant Administrator
for Weather Services