

August 28, 1978

UNITED STATES


NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

SECY-78-476

INFORMATION REPORT

For: The Commissioners

From: Edward E. Tucker, Director
Office of Equal Employment Opportunity

Thru: Executive Director for Operations 

Subject: MEETING WITH BLACK PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES

Purpose: To inform the Commission of a meeting between Chairman Hendrie and a group of Black professional employees.

Discussion: The Chairman met with a group of Black professional employees on August 15, 1978 to discuss what are perceived to be problems Black professionals at the Commission are experiencing with respect to fair treatment in hiring and promotion, and equal opportunities for professional growth.

The group indicated that even though each individual may be part of the pending class action against the NRC they were not there in connection with that matter.

Spokespersons for the group made the following assertions:

- (1) A large number of Black professionals believe that although the system designed to ensure merit selections for new hires and competitive promotions is clearly enunciated in NRC manual chapters and other appropriate policy documents, there are abuses which result in discrimination against Blacks, particularly at the professional level;
- (2) Black professionals do not progress at a rate commensurate with their white male counterparts, and
- (3) that the performance appraisal system is also believed to be used as a mechanism for impeding professional growth.

The group suggested that strict monitoring and accountability should be established by management to ensure that abuses are curtailed. Moreover, eight additional recommendations were left with the Chairman for consideration (Enclosure A), and the Office of EEO offers the following comments with regard to these recommendations:

- Item 1: Have an impartial body perform an assessment of the job announcement and selection process for any abuses - including any prescreening done by personnel or individual administrative offices to determine whether all qualified candidates are given an equal chance at a position - including quantification of the amount of preselection (to include jobs written for specific individuals) that is done.
- Item 2: Have an impartial body perform an assessment of the promotional process in order to determine whether equal consideration and treatment is given in promotions and whether Blacks and other minorities spend a longer amount of time in grade than their white counterparts.
- Comment: The Office of EEO has recently completed two separate analyses on competitive promotions and new hires to help determine whether minorities and women are being fairly considered. Although results do not reveal any abuses of the merit system, monitoring of candidate selections and promotions will continue for an indefinite period on an ad hoc basis. We believe, however, that there may be merit in conducting the type of comprehensive evaluation suggested.
- Item 3: Improve the recruitment effort for Blacks to include the traditional Black institutions and where appropriate, involve Black professionals in the process. (Especially from offices where openings exist.) We really feel some realistic goals should be set in this area.
- Item 4: Establish a program to identify talented Blacks at NRC (both technically and managerially) to be trained to move into middle management positions or higher positions of responsibility on the staff. In those Offices of NRC where there exist a void or very few Blacks, implement an accelerated recruitment effort to fill available or new slots as they become available. Again some realistic goals should be set in this area also.

Item 5: Establish an effective training program for various job series in order to allow advancement out of those locked in positions, such as to better allow mobility from clerical to secretarial - to paraprofessional - to professional and make certain there is a reasonable number of Blacks selected for training.

Comment: Improved or modified recruitment efforts, identification of minorities and women for executive development and training programs to provide upward mobility opportunities are covered in a staff paper currently before the Commission. Proposed action items in the paper could be expanded upon to take into account any specific recommendations of the Black professional group or other interested parties.

Item 7: Insure that Performance Evaluations are prepared fairly and that a better mechanism be instituted for handling differences - other than just telling the individual not to sign his/her evaluation if they do not agree.

Comment: Concerns expressed regarding performance appraisals should be handled by specific instructions to supervisory personnel to ensure that employees are provided the opportunity to have appraisals reviewed at a higher level of management whenever there are differing opinions regarding the appropriateness or fairness of an evaluation.

Item 8: Establish better communications between management and minorities to better inform minorities as to how the agency is meeting its EEO goals and helping to bring about equality at NRC.

Comment: The Office of EEO circulates copies of the Agency Affirmative Action Plan to principal staff, makes copies available to the library, and informs all employees of the availability of this document. The plan contains a complete assessment of the EEO program for a particular fiscal year, and specifically speaks to successes or failures in reaching hiring goals, and any problems associated with these efforts. To improve communications this office will publish a summary of the status of the EEO program in REG News at the end of each fiscal year.

Item 9: Issue a Commission position on Affirmative Action at NRC clarifying the agency's position in light of the Bakke decision. This statement will hopefully assert a commitment to Affirmative Action in seeking out talented individuals and individuals with high potential to train for various positions in the agency.

Comment: The Office of EEO recently forwarded copies of the President's memorandum to Heads of Departments and Agencies reaffirming the need for continued affirmative action in view of uncertainties that may have developed as a result of the recent Supreme Court Bakke decision to all NRC office heads. As a result of the meeting with Black professionals, the Chairman requested that a similar transmittal be developed for all employees. This action has been taken by the Office of EEO.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E. Tucker', with a large, stylized initial 'E'.

Edward E. Tucker, Director
Office of Equal Employment
Opportunity

Enclosures:

- A. Recommendations
- B. Memo for Hendrie
 fm Black professionals

GOAL: IMPROVE THE PERCENTAGE OF BLACKS IN VARIOUS GRADE LEVELS
(ESPECIALLY UPPER LEVELS) THROUGHOUT THE NRC DURING THE COMING
YEAR.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

We recommend that the Commission:

- (1) Have an impartial body perform an assessment of the job announcement and selection process for any abuses - including any prescreening done by personnel or individual administrative offices to determine whether all qualified candidates are given an equal chance at a position - including quantification of the amount of preselection (to include jobs written for specific individuals) that is done!
- (2) Have an impartial body perform an assessment of the promotional process in order to determine whether equal consideration and treatment is given in promotions and whether Blacks and other minorities spend a longer amount of time in grade than their white counterparts.
- (3) Improve the recruitment effort for Blacks to include the traditional Black institutions and where appropriate, involve Black professionals in the process. (Especially from offices where openings exist.) We really feel some realistic goals should be set in this area.
- (4) Establish a program to identify talented Blacks at NRC (both technically and managerially) to be trained to move into middle management positions or higher positions of responsibility on the staff. In those Offices of NRC where there exist a void or very few Blacks, implement an accelerated recruitment effort to fill available or new slots as they become available. Again some realistic goals should be set in this area also.
- (5) Establish an effective training program for various job series in order to allow advancement out of those locked in positions, such as to better allow mobility from clerical to secretarial - to paraprofessional - to professional and make certain there is a reasonable number of Blacks selected for training.

- (7) Insure that Performance Evaluations are prepared fairly and that a better mechanism be instituted for handling differences - other than just telling the individual not to sign his/her evaluation if they do not agree.
- (8) Establish better communications between management and minorities to better inform minorities as to how the agency is meeting its EEO goals and helping to bring about equality at NRC.
- (9) Issue a Commission position on Affirmative Action at NRC clarifying the agency's position in light of the Bakke decision. This statement will hopefully assert a commitment to Affirmative Action in seeking out talented individuals and individuals with high potential to train for various positions in the agency.

MEMORANDUM FOR: Dr. Joseph Hendrie, Chairman
Nuclear Regulatory Commission

THRU: Mr. Edward E. Tucker, Director
Office of Equal Employment Opportunity
Nuclear Regulatory Commission

FROM: NRC Committee of Black Professionals

SUBJECT: "EQUAL HIRING AND PROMOTIONAL OPPORTUNITY
FOR BLACK PROFESSIONALS AT NRC"

We are a group of professional Black employees, representing practically every major office or unit within the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

We have discussed a number of issues relating to the recruitment, hiring, and promotion practices within the Commission. Through individual circumstance and collective observation, we have concluded that these practices have resulted in adverse impact and subtle discrimination against black professionals. Highly qualified black employees have been systematically excluded from equitable promotional opportunities and the initial selection for, or advancement into managerial and supervisory positions. Also, the number of Black professionals being hired by the agency is conspicuously low.

The intent of this letter is threefold:

- . We want to bring to your attention our consensus regarding the failure of management to recognize and rectify these obvious and blatant practices and their resultant effects.
- . We want to strongly recommend that you initiate a Commission inquiry into the hiring and promotional opportunities for Black professionals and devise a program to alleviate inequities in the agency. It has been pointed out in the House Appropriations Bill (H.R. 12355) for NRC that the current NRC EEO program is inadequate. The recommended Commission inquiry should help to improve the situation and program.
- . We want to advise you that our Committee intends to monitor the Commission's actions (and assist if asked) to ensure that results include positive steps and not continued rhetoric and indirect management overview. Through design, the EEO Office of NRC does-not have the power or authority to effectively bring about change-and only action at the Commission level, hopefully with the Chairman's support, can meaningful change be brought about.

There is no need to unduly encumber this letter through inclusion of specific instances within which our current number have been embarrassed and insulted by the political maneuvers practiced in various offices of the Commission. We are not composing a formal discrimination complaint, at this time, nor are we taking issue with NRC's written policies and procedures. However we cannot, and will not quietly recess to our desks at NRC and continue to be circumvented or repressed from the main stream of management, supervisory, and decision making positions.

We trust that you will give our concerns your personal and timely attention.

Respectfully yours,

The NRC Committee of Black
Professionals (NRCCBP)*

cc: L. V. Gossick, EDO

*The names of the persons comprising this Committee have been filed with the NRC EEO Office, in confidence. They may be revealed to any of the Commissioners or others who have been officially designated to inquire into this matter.