STATUS OF THE COAST GUARD CIVIL RIGHTS PROGRAMS AND DIVERSITY INITIATIVES

(111–106)

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON
COAST GUARD AND MARITIME TRANSPORTATION

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON
TRANSPORTATION AND
INFRASTRUCTURE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH CONGRESS

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Washington, DC 20515

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April 26, 2010

SUMMARY OF SUBJECT MATTER

TO: Members of the Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation

FROM: Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Staff

SUBJECT: Hearing on "Status of Coast Guard Civil Rights Programs and Diversity Initiatives"

PURPOSE OF THE HEARING

The Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation will convene on Tuesday, April 27, 2010, at 10:00 a.m., in room 2167 of the Rayburn House Office Building to continue its examination of the Coast Guard's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and Equal Opportunity (EO) programs as well as of the service's efforts to expand diversity, particularly at the Coast Guard Academy.

Coast Guard Civil Rights Services

I. Booz|Allen|Hamilton Report

The Subcommittee met on April 1, 2009, to examine a report on the Coast Guard's Office of Civil Rights (OCR) conducted at the request of the Office's Director by Booz|Allen|Hamilton and entitled "United States Coast Guard Office of Civil Rights: Program Review." This report, released to the public in February, 2009 (the "Booz|Allen|Hamilton report"), found significant shortcomings in the administration of the Coast Guard's EEO program, which ensures equal opportunity and access for the service's civilian employees, and the EO program, which ensures that members of the military are not subjected to discriminatory practices.

At the time Booz|Allen|Hamilton completed its report, the Coast Guard's OCR was responsible for formulating policies and procedures to guide the Coast Guard's implementation of its civil rights services, for compiling civil rights-related data, and for processing formal complaints once they had been filed at the field level. However, this office did not oversee all of the civil rights

service providers throughout the Coast Guard. Rather, within each field command, the Commanding Officer was "considered the senior EO officer for the particular command"[1] and within commands, those personnel who provided civil rights services were hired locally by individual commands and reported to the leadership of those commands. Additionally, at the time the Booz | Allen | Hamilton report was compiled, the Coast Guard had a mixed team of civil rights service providers – with some personnel assigned to full-time duty as civil rights service providers and some personnel assigned provision of civil rights services as a collateral duty.

The Booz | Allen | Hamilton report documented a number of shortcomings in the Coast Guard's civil rights program, including the following:

- The Coast Guard's management of personally identifiable information was inadequate because the service lacked a strategy to ensure "uniform and secure management of sensitive data"[2] and, as a result, the handling of such data varied from command to command;
- Information pertaining to civil rights complaints filed by Coast Guard personnel had been disclosed on blog sites;
- Not all individuals serving as EEO counselors were documented as having received the training required for individuals in such positions by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC);
- The handling of EEO complaints was decentralized and individual districts and areas were found to have "developed their own sub-processes that induce wide variation"[3] in complaint processing, making it difficult to ensure that all complaints were processed in accordance with applicable Federal regulations;
- The Coast Guard was not regularly analyzing whether any barriers inhibited equal access to employment opportunity;
- The EO Review process led by the OCR "lack[ed] metrics to define success"[4] and in-depth analysis was not done when barriers or other issues were found; and
- Staff in the OCR were found to lack understanding of the unit's goals and vision and a number of climate problems were identified in the OCR.

A review conducted by Subcommittee staff found that many of these same problems with the Coast Guard's civil rights services were identified in earlier third-party assessments of these services and in the Coast Guard's own MD-715 reports (filed with the EEOC).

In its report, the Booz | Allen | Hamilton team provided 53 recommendations for improving the Coast Guard' civil rights services and the functioning of the OCR.

The Subcommittee met on June 19, 2009, to receive an update from the Coast Guard regarding the steps it had taken to respond to the Booz | Allen | Hamilton report in an effort to begin creating a model EEO program and to ensure that its EO program provides efficient and effective civil rights services to members of the military.

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[1] Booz | Allen | Hamilton, *United States Coast Guard Office of Civil Rights: Program Review* (February 5, 2009), at 2-2.
[2] *Id.* at 3-1.
[3] *Id.* at 4-17.
[4] *Id.* at 4-11.

At that hearing, the Coast Guard announced several changes to its civil rights programs and indicated that it was working to complete implementation of the 53 recommendations made by Booz | Allen | Hamilton.

Perhaps the most significant change announced by the Coast Guard OCR was its plan to institute a new organizational structure on July 1, 2009, under which civil rights service providers would no longer report to their individual commands; instead, they would report directly to the OCR. Additionally, the Coast Guard reported that it was moving to ensure that all civil rights service providers – including EEO counselors – were full-time staff members; as full-time staffers were hired, the use of collateral duty civil rights service providers was to be phased out.

The Director of the OCR reported that approximately $850,000 in additional funding had been directed to the Coast Guard's civil rights programs (of which a significant portion was for current-year needs) and that appointments had been made to the six additional positions that the Director reported during the April 1 hearing had been authorized to the OCR.

A strategic plan was in development for the OCR and specific goals and performance measures were to be included in that plan. The OCR was also being restructured to ensure that positions aligned with the office's goals and functions.

The Coast Guard reported that to improve its management of personal data, it had designated a Privacy and Records Manager who had been tasked with managing the implementation of specific personal record security procedures throughout the service. A compliance checklist to guide the handling of personally identifiable information had been developed and was distributed among Coast Guard commands on April 1.

The EO Manual was being revised to reflect new operating and reporting procedures. The new Manual was expected to be completed by September 30, 2009. The service also reported it was developing standard operating procedures to guide the provision of civil rights services.

II. Recent Developments in Coast Guard Civil Rights Programs

In July 2009, as part of its ongoing restructuring efforts, the OCR changed its name to the Civil Rights Directorate (CRD). The Coast Guard indicates that the CRD has completed 52 of the 53 recommendations developed by Booz | Allen | Hamilton. The outstanding recommendation involves the production of the revised EO Manual, which the CRD has indicated will be completed shortly.

The budget for the OCR/CRD was increased by $856,372 during fiscal year (FY) 2009 to address training and program deficiencies. Presented below are the annual budgets for the OCR/CRD in FYs 2008, 2009, and 2010.

Budget for the Coast Guard's Civil Rights Programs

FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010
$316,178	$1,134,474	$1,500,000

Source: U.S. Coast Guard

The Coast Guard indicates that the CRD now has 45 full-time civil rights service providers; the use of collateral duty civil rights service providers was discontinued in October 2009. These providers are divided into three regions and the regions are overseen by supervisors located in Washington, DC; Norfolk, Virginia; and Alameda, California. The following chart identifies where the full-time service providers are located.

Location of Civil Rights Directorate's Full-Time Service Providers

No. of Providers	Location of Providers
1	CAPE MAY, NJ
1	ELIZABETH CITY, NC
1	KODIAK, AK
2	BALTIMORE, MD
2	BOSTON, MA
2	HONOLULU, HI
2	JUNEAU, AK
2	NEW LONDON, CT
2	SEATTLE, WA
3	CLEVELAND, OH
3	NORFOLK, VA
4	MIAMI, FL
4	NEW ORLEANS, LA
5	CIVIL RIGHTS DETACHMENT REGION 1, WASHINGTON DC
5	CIVIL RIGHTS DETACHMENT REGION 2, NORFOLK, VA
6	CIVIL RIGHTS DETACHMENT REGION 3, ALAMEDA, CA
45	**TOTAL**

Source: U.S. Coast Guard

The chart below presents the number of complaints filed by the members and employees of the Coast Guard between 2007 and the year-to-date in 2010.

Civil Rights Complaints Filed by Coast Guard Members and Employees

	Complaints filed by Military Members	Complaints filed by Civilian Employees	Total Complaints
2007	17	41	58
2008	26	51	77
2009	15	41	56
2010	7	16	23

Source: U.S. Coast Guard

III. GAO Report on Coast Guard Civil Rights Directorate

At the time of the June 2009 hearing, Subcommittee Chairman Cummings announced that he and Subcommittee Ranking Member LoBiondo together with full Committee Chairman Oberstar and full Committee Ranking Member Mica were requesting the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to undertake a study of the Coast Guard's reforms of its civil rights programs and report findings by April 2010. Specifically, the Committee requested that the GAO:

1. Assess the extent to which the action plans developed by the Director of OCR, including those developed in direct response to findings made by the Booz|Allen|Hamilton team's February 2009 Program Review, are:

    a. enabling the Coast Guard's EEO program to meet the standards of a model program as defined by the EEOC; and
    b. supporting the provision of effective and efficient EO services to the members of the Coast Guard.

2. Track implementation by the OCR of the action plans prepared by the OCR Director.

3. Assess whether the OCR has the resources and personnel necessary to maintain a model EEO program as defined by the EEOC and an effective and efficient EO program.

4. Identify any additional measures necessary to enable the Coast Guard's EEO program to meet the standards of a model EEO program and to ensure the effective and efficient administration and provision of EO services.

To implement the 53 recommendations developed by Booz|Allen|Hamilton, the CRD developed 29 action plans. In response to the request made by Congressmen Oberstar, Cummings, Mica, and LoBiondo, the GAO conducted an assessment of the Coast Guard's design and implementation of these action plans. The GAO selected four specific action plans (encompassing 13 of the 53 recommendations) related to key issues identified in the Booz|Allen|Hamilton report to receive in-depth assessment, including:

- Completing a new Personally Identifiable Information Handbook;
- Restructuring Civil Rights Operations;
- Revising the EO Manual; and
- Training to Address Office Climate.

Regarding the CRD's development of action plans, the GAO found that "[w]hen developing and reviewing the action plans, CRD did not maintain documentation as recommended in federal internal control standards;" consequently, GAO concluded that "CRD lacks transparency and

accountability to stakeholders."[5] Of particular concern, the GAO noted that CRD did not systematically record meeting minutes or the decisions made during key internal meetings.[6]

In its evaluation of the four chosen action plans, the GAO team found that "[a]ll the selected action plans describe an output goal, such as revising the EO manual or attending training, but do not identify measurable objectives or identify the intended results of completing the action plans."[7] The GAO noted that "[w]ithout measureable performance goals, CRD cannot know if an action plan achieves its intended goals."[8] As a result, the GAO found that the design and implementation of the plans did not fully meet generally accepted project management practices.

The GAO recommended that the Secretary of Homeland Security direct the Coast Guard to:

- Going forward, ensure internal controls are in place to maintain the documentation necessary to facilitate oversight and course corrections as plans are designed and implemented;
- Establish measurable performance goals for the action plans to support the management decision as to the completion status of the action plans; and
- Define an evaluation plan for each action plan to assess the degree to which the plan yielded the intended outcome.

IV. Diversity at the Coast Guard Academy

As the Subcommittee has continued to examine the Coast Guard's efforts to expand diversity throughout its ranks, it has been particularly concerned about the low levels of minority representation at the Coast Guard Academy.

The chart below shows the current composition of the Corps of Cadets at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy.

[5] GAO, *Civil Rights Directorate's Action Plans to Improve its Operations Could Be Strengthened by Implementing Several Aspects of Project Planning and Implementation Practices*, Statement of Laurie Ekstrand, Director, Strategic Issues, U.S. Government Accountability Office, at 9.
[6] *Id.*
[7] *Id.* at 13.
[8] *Id.* at 16.

Composition of the Corps of Cadets at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy

Ethnicity	Class of 2010	Class of 2011	Class of 2012	Class of 2013	Total
Asian American	9	10	15	5	39
African American	10	4	6	5	25
Hispanic American	18	18	9	24	69
Native American	4	0	1	2	7
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0	0	0	3	3
White	160	193	209	217	779
Chose not to Report	0	0	0	3	3
Two or More Races	0	0	0	2	2
Other	3	3	2	0	8
Foreign Nationals	3	3	3	6	15
Total	207	231	245	267	950

Source: U.S. Coast Guard (as of 4/11/2010)

The chart below profiles the Class of 2013, showing the number of students sworn in to the class and the current composition of the class

Overview of Coast Guard Academy Class of 2013

Ethnicity	Class of 2013 as Sworn In	Current Composition of the Class of 2013
Asian American	5	5
African American	5	5
Hispanic American	26	24
Native American	3	2
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	4	3
White	240	217
Chose not to Report	3	3
Two or More Races	2	2
Foreign Nationals	7	6
Total	**295**	**267**

Source: U.S. Coast Guard (as of 4/11/2010)

The charts below provide data on applications and appointments to the U.S. Coast Guard Academy beginning with the Class of 2009.

Profiles of the Coast Guard Academy Classes of 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, and 2014

Class of 2009	Male	Female	Asian	African American	Hispanic	Native American	Pacific Islander	Not Reported	Other	White	All Minority
Started Application											
Completed Application	957	245		55	113					1,023	179
Offered Appointment	316	101	25	8	20	3		7	7	347	63
Sworn In	219	85	15	6	16	2		5	6	254	45

Class of 2010	Male	Female	Asian	African American	Hispanic	Native American	Pacific Islander	Not Reported	Other	White	All Minority
Started Application											
Completed Application	1,047	293		52	138					1,055	285
Offered Appointment	300	90	17	15	31	6		1	6	314	75
Sworn In	207	63	12	13	22	5		0	5	213	57

Class of 2011	Male	Female	Asian	African American	Hispanic	Native American	Pacific Islander	Not Reported	Other	White	All Minority
Started Application											
Completed Application	1,187	288		39	130					1,232	243
Offered Appointment	269	118	20	8	30	1		0	6	322	65
Sworn In	187	81	12	8	24	0		0	5	219	49

Class of 2012	Male	Female	Asian	African American	Hispanic	Native American	Pacific Islander	Not Reported	Other	White	All Minority
Started Application											
Completed Application	1,088	282		37	73						183
Offered Appointment	304	106	25	9	15	2		0	2	357	53
Sworn In	211	81	17	6	10	2		0	2	255	37

Class of 2013	Male	Female	Asian	African American	Hispanic	Native American	Pacific Islander	Chose Not to Respond	White	All Minority
Started Application	2,682	689	121	162	251	50	32	50	2,705	616
Completed Application	1,325	336	55	35	111	20	16	26	1,398	237
Offered Appointment	296	115	16	8	32	3	6	5	341	65
Sworn In	209	86	5	5	26	3	4	3	240	43

Class of 2014*	Male	Female	Asian	African American	Hispanic	Native American	Pacific Islander	Not Reported	White	All Minority
Started Application	3,625	955	207	440	435	70	49	72	3,307	1,201
Completed Application	1,773	438	92	152	179	30	16	29	1,713	469
Offered Appointment	286	135	21	22	44	2	7	7	318	96
Accepted Appointment	112	54	5	10	26	0	0	2	123	41

*Data current as of April 19, 2010.

Source: United States Coast Guard (Note: boxes are left blank when the Coast Guard is unable to provide the data indicated.)

The following charts detail the number of completed applications to and appointments offered by the Coast Guard Academy on the indicated dates.

Coast Guard Academy Applications and Appointments

As of January 18, 2010,

Class of 2014	Male	Female	Asian	African American	Hispanic	Native American	Pacific Islander	Not Reported	White	All Minority
Completed Applications as of Jan 15	933	238	34	41	71	14	6	17	988	166
Offered Appointment as of Jan 18	105	64	10	5	12	1	2	2	137	30

As of February 15, 2010,

Class of 2014	Male	Female	Asian	African American	Hispanic	Native American	Pacific Islander	Not Reported	White	All Minority
Completed Applications as of Feb 15	1,352	325	64	82	116	22	10	24	1,359	294
Offered Appointment as of Feb 15	137	72	11	6	14	1	2	2	173	34

As of March 15, 2010,

Class of 2014	Male	Female	Asian	African American	Hispanic	Native American	Pacific Islander	Not Reported	White	All Minority
Completed Applications as of March 15	1,715	420	89	139	158	29	15	29	1,676	430
Offered Appointment as of March 15	164	82	12	6	15	1	3	4	205	37

As of April 19, 2010,

Class of 2014	Male	Female	Asian	African American	Hispanic	Native American	Pacific Islander	Not Reported	White	All Minority
Completed Applications	1,773	438	92	152	179	30	16	29	1,713	469
Offered Appointment	286	135	21	22	44	2	7	7	318	96
Accepted Appointment	112	54	5	10	26	0	0	2	123	41

Source: U.S. Coast Guard Academy

The data reported here indicate that the Coast Guard Academy's incoming Class of 2013 was comprised of approximately 15 percent minority members. By comparison, as of April 19, 2010, approximately 23 percent of the individuals offered admission to the Academy for the Class of 2014 were minorities. Of the 166 individuals who had accepted admissions offers by April 19, 2010, 41 (or approximately 25 percent) were minorities.

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

The Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation held a hearing on "Diversity in the Coast Guard, including Recruitment, Promotion, and Retention of Minority Personnel" during the 110th Congress.

On April 1, 2009, the Subcommittee held a hearing entitled "Civil Rights Services and Diversity Initiatives in the Coast Guard" to examine the findings of the Booz | Allen | Hamilton report on the Coast Guard's EEO and EO programs and to continue its examination of the Coast Guard's diversity initiatives.

On June 19, 2009, the Subcommittee held a hearing entitled "A Continuing Examination of Civil Rights Services and Diversity in the Coast Guard" to continue its examination of the Coast Guard's EEO and EO programs and to examine the Coast Guard's progress in implementing the recommendations developed by Booz | Allen | Hamilton. The Subcommittee also received an update on diversity outreach initiatives at the Coast Guard Academy.

WITNESSES

PANEL I

Ms. Terri Dickerson
Director, Civil Rights Directorate
United States Coast Guard

Ms. Laurie Ekstrand
Director, Strategic Issues
Government Accountability Office

PANEL II

Rear Admiral Ronald T. Hewitt
Assistant Commandant for Human Resources
United States Coast Guard

Rear Admiral J. Scott Burhoe
Superintendent
United States Coast Guard Academy

STATUS OF THE COAST GUARD CIVIL RIGHTS PROGRAMS AND DIVERSITY INITIATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2010

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON COAST GUARD AND MARITIME TRANSPORTATION,
COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE,
Washington, DC.

The Subcommittee met, pursuant to call, at 10:05 a.m., in Room 2167, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Elijah E. Cummings [chairman of the Subcommittee] presiding.

Mr. CUMMINGS. The Subcommittee will come to order.

The Subcommittee convenes to consider the results of the Government Accountability Office's assessment of the efforts undertaken by the United States Coast Guard to implement the 53 recommendations made by Booz Allen Hamilton to improve the provision of civil rights services. Booz Allen Hamilton made these recommendations in an assessment of the Coast Guard's civil rights services released in early 2009.

The director of what is now known as the Coast Guard Civil Rights Directorate, Ms. Terri Dickerson, and the GAO's director of strategic issues, Ms. Laurie Ekstrand, will testify on our first panel.

The Civil Rights Directorate report has implemented 52 of the Booz Allen Hamilton's 53 recommendations, and I applaud the speed with which the Civil Rights Directorate has moved to seize the initiative and to respond to the findings of the Booz Allen Hamilton report.

However—and we will hear more about this from the GAO during their testimony—the GAO's report would suggest that implementation of these recommendations may not—and I emphasize "may not"—really be completed.

The GAO's report argues that achieving long-term changes in the Civil Rights Directorate and ensuring the effective provision of EEO and EO services to civilian and military members of the service rest on the articulation both of a clear vision of outcomes to be achieved by reforms and of measurable steps that can be used to assess progress towards the achievement of these outcomes.

The GAO is arguing that simply producing outputs without considering whether and how they contribute to the achievement of overarching strategic objectives or respond to the actual needs of the users of civil rights services is not likely to be adequate to overcome what have been longstanding challenges in the Coast Guard's provision of civil rights services. And, as I have often said in these

hearings, I am most concerned about what is effective and efficient—effective and efficient.

The GAO's findings suggest that more remains to be done, and we look forward to hearing the Coast Guard's responses to these findings.

The Subcommittee's second panel, comprised of Admiral Ronald Hewitt, an assistant commandant for human resources, and Rear Admiral J. Scott Burhoe, the superintendent of the Coast Guard Academy, will detail the ongoing efforts taken by the Coast Guard to expand diversity at the Academy and throughout the service's ranks.

Last year, the Coast Guard Academy undertook vigorous efforts to expand their recruiting outreach to qualified minority students. Completed applications to the class of 2014 increased significantly among African Americans, Hispanic Americans, Asian Americans, and Native Americans, compared to the number of completed applications received from minorities to the class of 2013.

Further, according to current data, approximately 16 percent of the appointments offered to the class of 2013 went to minority students, and the incoming class was similarly comprised of approximately 15 percent minorities. By comparison, as of April 19, 2010, 23 percent of those offered admission to the Academy's class of 2014 were minorities, and approximately 25 percent of those who had accepted admission offers were minorities.

I am very heartened by the progress that has been made in expanding diversity at the Academy. However, maintaining such increased levels of minority applications and enrollments will likely continue to require a concerted outreach effort. I am eager to hear how this effort will be sustained going forward, including the level of resources that are needed to continue it.

That said, as I have argued during my address to the Coast Guard's recent diversity submit, which was an outstanding event and one which I congratulate the Coast Guard for organizing, the provision of effective civil rights and the increased recruitment of minorities to an incoming class at the Academy and to all ranks throughout other recruitment programs are necessary but not sufficient steps to ensure that the Coast Guard has achieved true diversity.

The Coast Guard succeeds because its members never forget that they must depend upon each other, trust each other, and protect each other, even as the service defends the rest of us. Any attack upon any link in this chain of defenders that guards our Nation has the potential to endanger us all. And attacks can come in many, many forms. Any action that is meant to threaten or intimidate or to rob a fellow American of the sense of personal freedom and security that we take to be our right is an attack upon all of us and all that we hold so very, very dear.

Any act of discrimination threatens the unity that keeps our Coast Guard strong. The Coast Guard must be a place where such an incident is unthinkable and where, if it does occur, the response is swift, certain, and decisive. The Coast Guard must be a place where fairness and mutual respect are embedded deep in every heart and embodied in the opportunities that made equality avail-

able to all. In other words, it must be embedded in the DNA of the Coast Guard.

And so, just as it must continue in the American society as a whole, work must continue in the Coast Guard if the vision of national unity constructed on a foundation of respect for the dignity of every human being is to be realized.

And, with that, I now recognize the distinguished Ranking Member of our Committee, Congressman LoBiondo.

Mr. LOBIONDO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, very much.

Over the past 2 years, the Coast Guard has launched several new initiatives to increase and retain the number of minorities within its enlisted officer corps. These initiatives, along with other efforts through the Office of Civil Rights, are geared toward creating a more inclusive workplace that offers every individual the opportunity to fully contribute to Coast Guard missions. This is important because, as the country becomes more diverse, it is important for the Coast Guard to follow suit if the service expects to continue to conduct their missions successfully.

Through the Subcommittee's oversight on this issue, it appears that the Coast Guard is having a difficult time reaching out to certain minority groups through the recruitment process. Like all branches of the Armed Forces, the Coast Guard is a completely volunteer force. However, unlike the other military services, the Coast Guard does not enjoy the same level of name recognition among certain segments of the American people as their partners in the Department of Defense. For that reason, the Coast Guard needs to employ all methods in its arsenal to strengthen its brand.

Unfortunately, the President's fiscal year 2011 budget request for the Coast Guard cuts the recruiting budget by nearly $3 million, eliminates over 1,100 service members, and caps the number of new recruits at historically low levels. As a result, the Coast Guard is already turning away or delaying opportunity to record numbers of potential recruits that are highly qualified and interested in serving the Coast Guard.

I am not sure how the service is going to be successful in recruiting a diverse and qualified workforce under the drastic budget cuts proposed by the President. I will be very interested in hearing from the witnesses on how they intend to carry out this mission under these very difficult circumstances.

In addition to the need to focus on recruitment, the Coast Guard is also revamping the Office of Civil Rights to address allegations of mismanagement and recommendations made by an external review. The directorate has been diligently working to address more than 50 items identified by an outside review, and I am encouraged by the news that many, if not all, of these programmatic changes have been made.

I am still concerned, however, by the findings of the Government Accountability Office that the service still lacks a clear view of outcomes that are desired from these and other initiatives.

Unfortunately, this failure to look at the wider scope of impacts does not appear to be confined just to the Coast Guard's civil rights program. I am particularly concerned about the process by which the Coast Guard designed last week's diversity summit and the apparent lack of any plan on how to use that opportunity and the

more than $200,000 spent on the summit to improve training and awareness of the service's diversity goals and programs.

For example, the service had no plans in place to ensure the message from the summit got back to the field units. The summit does not appear to be meaningfully addressing any of the training goals outlined by the diversity action plan; did not provide solutions to the service's problems in recruiting a diverse workforce; and represents what I feel is a lost opportunity to efficiently use taxpayer money at a time that the Coast Guard is facing dire budget cuts.

Nevertheless, the Coast Guard has done a great deal of work to present itself as a viable career option to all Americans and to improve internal conditions which may impact the ability of individual Coast Guardsmen to carry out their responsibility. However, more can be and should be done.

I want to thank the witnesses for their continued cooperation with the Subcommittee, and I look forward to hearing their testimony on how the service plans to address these important issues.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Thank you very much.

I ask unanimous consent that the Chairman of the Committee on Homeland Security, Congressman Bennie Thompson, may include a statement in the record of today's hearing. And, without objection, it is so ordered.

We now come to our first panelists. Ms. Terri Dickerson is the director of the Civil Rights Directorate with the United States Coast Guard, and Ms. Laurie Ekstrand is the director of strategic issues with the Government Accountability Office.

Welcome, Ms. Dickerson. And then we will hear from Ms. Ekstrand. Please keep your voice up.

TESTIMONY OF TERRI DICKERSON, DIRECTOR, CIVIL RIGHTS DIRECTORATE, UNITED STATES COAST GUARD; LAURIE EKSTRAND, DIRECTOR, STRATEGIC ISSUES, GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE

Ms. DICKERSON. Thank you. Good morning, Mr. Chairman and distinguished Members of the Committee. I am Terri Dickerson, the director of the Coast Guard's Civil Rights Directorate, CRD. And, as before, I am privileged to be here today.

I would like to submit my statement for the record.

Mr. CUMMINGS. So ordered.

Ms. DICKERSON. This morning, I plan to address myself to the Government Accountability Office, GAO, findings, and also highlight progress we have made.

In 2008, I asked the Department of Homeland Security to review the Coast Guard's civil rights program and to offer recommendations for how we could improve. DHS consented to participate in a review by a contractor, and in September of 2008 Booz Allen Hamilton was awarded that contract.

You are well aware from my previous testimony of the many steps I took to ensure a transparent process, including: sending a message to Coast Guard leadership to indicate that the review had begun and enlisting their support in allowing any employees identified by the team or desiring to participate to do so; ensuring that the methodology included expansive outreach to stakeholders ask-

ing what they thought was wrong about the civil rights function and what could bring about desired outcomes; posting the entire review, including all collateral documents, on our Web site; setting up an e-mail address for questions and comments and responding to all that I personally received; sending a message to all Coast Guard employees directing their attention to the Web site and the results; briefing Coast Guard senior leadership on the findings, recommendations, and plans to address them; sharing plans with the workforce and refining them based on their feedback; traveling to each and every Coast Guard district, where I discussed the changes with all levels of the workforce to ensure clarity; notifying union personnel of plans and answering all questions posed on the potential impact on employees; holding teleconferences and conducting an alignment summit at the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute; publishing at least 10 stories in our monthly newsletter, each edition of which provides readers with our contact information.

Through these avenues and many others, I ensure that the leadership—you—and Coast Guard workforce remained aware of our changes and progress. You might notice my emphasis on transparency. That is because Coast Guard and the Civil Rights Directorate have been extremely outward in our efforts to reform and provide the best possible services to our employees.

The financial dictionary defines ″transparency″ as ″the full, accurate, and timely disclosure of information.″ This is a source of my first notation on the GAO report: that because our processes did not always include meeting minutes and similar documentation constituting a historical track of how we implemented change, transparency to shareholders, they said, was weakened.

The other notation I raised concerned GAO's retroactive sorting of the Booz Allen recommendations into the EEOC elements for a model program, mainly the overstatement of their association with element one: demonstrated commitment from leadership. Booz Allen Hamilton did not subject the recommendations to this EEOC template for a model program, and GAO attempted to do so retroactively.

I am very familiar with the six elements offered by EEOC and actions—for example, training and developing a PII handbook—GAO classifies under the leadership demonstration, though I think the EEOC community would associate it with the other elements.

But they did a thorough job—GAO, that is—and to quibble here consumes time I would rather direct to a greater imperative, specifically whether or not Coast Guard is moving toward a discrimination-free work environment, one that says to employees and applicants that they will be dealt with fairly. I accept the GAO recommendations and will institute the practices they recommend for future project planning.

The overwhelmingly more important point is that, rather than spend time on additional measuring and studying, we acted. Leaders need to be able to assess the risk of devoting resources to moving forward versus less action but more documentation. In my assessment, we didn't need more study, examination, minutes, task forces' reports, or working groups. Most of what had been identified to Coast Guard by third-party assessments, most predating me,

had been described, measured, and validated in earlier studies. Stakeholder input on desired outcomes was embedded in the Booz Allen methodology.

Like any leader, I value precision and accuracy, but a leader must have the experience and judgment to know when to study more and when to act. With the commandant's leadership and the Committee's oversight, we didn't allow this review to become shelfware. Why? Because this is our time. This is our watch.

Let it be said that, in July of 2009, on our watch, Coast Guard began to deliver civil rights services through a centrally managed, national structure by full-time specialists. On our watch, we accepted all 53 of the recommendations offered by the Booz Allen review team and are on the threshold of completing the last; that is, our revised EEO manual is entering final stages of vetting and clearing before publication. And while an EO manual is not a requirement, Coast Guard took the time to develop the best one it could, because doing so is a good practice consistent with model element number three.

And, under Admiral Allen's bold leadership, we initiated the Senior Executive Leadership Equal Opportunity Seminar, and he directed all in Coast Guard leadership positions to attend. In January, on our watch, he signed into effect the anti-harassment and anti-hate policy which, to my knowledge, is the only one of its kind in the Federal workforce.

I hope to, during my watch, give focused attention to the military complaint decisions that Coast Guard resumed last year from DHS so that service members, who sometimes live and work in extremely close proximity to parties with whom they have active disputes, would get quicker decisions. In 2008, DHS completed no military decisions. They transferred the entire workload, more than 50 complaints waiting for a decision, to Coast Guard last year. Thus far, this fiscal year 2010, Coast Guard, the Civil Rights Directorate, has issued 40 decisions.

During this, our watch, we have increased the number of personnel attending sexual harassment prevention training from 35,000 in 2007 to 47,000 in 2009. In 2007, we increased the requirement for equal opportunity climate surveys from triannially to annually. Thus, in the first 6 months of fiscal year 2010, more than 14,000 employees participated in climate surveys, and this is more than the total number who participated during the entire previous year.

And we issued a command checklist to ensure that civil rights policies and procedures are trusted, respected, vigorously enforced, and that fairness and mutual respect are embedded and permeate throughout, as you said, the DNA of the Coast Guard culture. Other military services have told us they are emulating this tool.

On our watch, Coast Guard's compliance with EEOC Management Directive 715 factors has risen from 84 percent in 2004 to 100 percent last year. We are one of very few agencies to have posted our MD-715 assessment on the public internet even in the years before we achieved 100 percent. That is transparency.

None of us act so that people will like us or for accolades. In fact, because of the decisions we make, people sometimes won't like us. That is okay. We act to make sure Coast Guard sustains a model

EEO civil rights program among Federal agencies and Armed Forces. We act because, at the end of our watch, we will be able to say we did everything we could to ensure the government's promise to its employees of a discrimination-free work environment.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I look forward to your questions.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Thank you very much.

Ms. Ekstrand?

Ms. EKSTRAND. Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, thank you for inviting me to testify concerning Coast Guard Civil Rights Directorate's progress in developing and implementing action plans to improve its operations.

You asked GAO to assess these action plans in relation to three dimensions, and let me speak to each in turn.

First, you asked us to review how Coast Guard's action plans align with EEOC's six elements of an equal employment opportunity program. These elements, as listed in more detail on page 8 of our written testimony, are: demonstrated commitment from leadership; integration of EEO into agency mission; management and program accountability; proactive prevention of discrimination; efficiency and responsiveness; and legal compliance.

Our review showed that 25 of 29 action plans related to the six elements, with the largest number relating to the leadership element. CRD has questioned our decision to place some action plans within the leadership element, and we concede that, because of the overlapping nature of some of these elements, disagreement about classification can rightfully occur. However, even if some of these changes were made, the leadership element would still be a prominent focus of activities.

Your next interest was to have us assess how Coast Guard developed and reviewed its action plans. We found that CRD leadership moved quickly to form a functional review team of senior staff, assigned project officers, and met with the commandant and agency leadership. However, CRD did not maintain documentation that would have helped them track progress, make midcourse corrections, and ensure greater transparency.

CRD used the functional review recommendation spreadsheet, called the FRR, to maintain current information about the status of action plans. However, each time the FRR was updated, prior information was erased rather than maintained. Thus, no cumulative record of progress was maintained.

In addition to the immediate value of documentation—for example, to see the need for midcourse corrections—documenting progress can be valuable for both the continuity of CRD leadership—and this is especially important in an environment that includes rotating military personnel—and learning lessons about what works and what doesn't to inform future change efforts.

Our third objective was to review the extent to which action plans align with generally accepted project management practices. We focused on four action plans that seem central to CRD management improvement. For these four plans, we compared CRD's implementation with seven tried-and-true project management practices. These practices include identifying measurable performance

goals, specific tasks, persons accountable for completing tasks, interim milestones and checkpoints, needed resources, as well as consulting stakeholders and defining how to evaluate success.

We essentially rated each action plan in relation to the practices using a scale of ″fully implemented,″ ″partially implemented,″ and ″not implemented.″ Where there was no documentation available to make this assessment, we relied on testimony of CRD's staff.

We found that the action plan's implementation aligned more frequently with some project management practices than others. For example, all four action plans identified someone as accountable for executing tasks.

Our major concerns relate to identifying measurable performance goals and in defining how to evaluate success, and these are two interrelated practices. Although each of the four plans specified a performance goal, these goals are in the form of a product or output, not an outcome or desired future state.

For example, for the action plan focusing on creating a PII handbook—that is the personally identifiable information handbook—the handbook itself was the goal. The handbook, however, is an output, while the goal or outcome is much more likely to be the proper handling of personal information by all CRD staff. With a focus on the outcome, the effort might have included, for example, training on the new manual.

This focus on the goal or output rather than an outcome is linked to evaluating the success of the program, since it is the outcome that defines the degree of success. It is entirely possible, but unlikely the case, that the new PII handbook could not—could be producing—could not be producing the intended result.

Planning the evaluation of the desired outcome—that is, appropriate handling of personal information—could include, for example, gathering feedback from users of the manual to ensure that requirements are understood after it is distributed and that they are feasible to implement in multiple environments.

This ends my oral statement. And, of course, I will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Thank you very much, Ms. Ekstrand.

As I listened to you, I could not help but think about when I was in law school and they would teach you how to ask questions, and they said that so often you can list questions and not listen to answers. And it is better to listen to the answers, sometimes almost disregard your questions, and just follow, because that is how you can get the information you need.

In other words—and I say that because it sounds like what you are saying is analogous to that. Basically, there were certain things that were supposed to be done, so we got them done. Like, we are checking off—like, the list of questions, we are checking them off. But actually to the effectiveness and how do we make sure that they are accomplishing the things that need to be accomplished, that is where it seemed like there was some weakness.

Is that a fair statement?

Ms. EKSTRAND. I don't want to discount the level of activity of the Civil Rights Directorate. They were extremely active over the past year——

Mr. CUMMINGS. I got that. That is the piece where you are going down the questions.

Ms. EKSTRAND. But I think that perhaps some more thoughtfulness in terms of outcomes and more planning ahead might have helped as an insurance policy towards getting to where they wanted to wind up in the end.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Now, you also talked about documents in progress—is that what you said?

Ms. EKSTRAND. We talked about documentation of major decisions and major discussions as something that we felt was lacking in their processes over the last year.

The documentation of progress, you know, can be extremely helpful. You know, it can show you where the pitfalls are. It can show you where maybe you need to change course. Documentation over time can show you what kinds of efforts work in terms of making changes and what doesn't work.

Mr. CUMMINGS. So, in other words, you have to have—you are saying that you have to—you also said that when you have an organization like the Coast Guard, where you have personnel in and out, rotating, that that documentation becomes even more significant because you need to have that history so that you can gauge success.

Ms. EKSTRAND. Exactly. Exactly.

Mr. CUMMINGS. I see.

All right, let me go to you, Ms. Dickerson. Ms. Dickerson, first of all, congratulations on the 52 out of 53. Is that right?

Ms. DICKERSON. Yes, sir.

Mr. CUMMINGS. What did we miss? What is the one that we did miss? I don't want to zero in on that, but I am just curious.

Ms. DICKERSON. The equal opportunity manual is something that we have taken delivery on from the contractor and now it is in our internal finalization process. And I expect it would be sometime next month that it would be ready for distribution to the workforce.

Mr. CUMMINGS. And this document does what?

Ms. DICKERSON. Well, everyone is required to follow EEO policy specifically. And it is a good practice among agencies, especially those like Coast Guard, where you might use a different vernacular—for example, instead of saying ″management official,″ we can say ″commanding officer″—to make the regulations more understood by and permeate through the workforce so that they can access what is meant by EEOC regulation.

So it is a follow-on, a best practice, that comes from EEOC regulation, which is what every agency is required to follow.

Mr. CUMMINGS. So you are saying that that should be completed within the next month?

Ms. DICKERSON. Yes, sir.

Mr. CUMMINGS. All right. I am going to give you 6 weeks.

Ms. DICKERSON. Thank you.

Mr. CUMMINGS. And we will check back with you in 6 weeks. And I would like to have that document on my desk, and for the Committee Members, so we can review it.

Ms. DICKERSON. Absolutely. I have every confidence we will be able to do that.

Mr. CUMMINGS. All right.

Now, Ms. Dickerson, the GAO has essentially indicated that the Coast Guard was rushing to implement its action plans rather than documenting the processes by which it decided how to implement recommendations or putting in place the systems necessary to evaluate the outcomes produced by the implementation of the action plan.

Specifically, GAO states that the Coast Guard developed plans to create outputs, such as the production of a new manual on the handling of personally identifiable information, on the restructuring of the civil rights division, but did not develop the plans to measure what the new outputs were intended to achieve.

What is your reaction to these findings? And why did you focus on outputs rather than outcomes? I think you already said that you pretty much agree with the findings of the GAO, so I just wanted to know your reaction to that.

Ms. DICKERSON. Yes, I believe we could have spent more time. And she and her team have spent time with us, and I do understand that that could have been more optimal in circumstances in which we might have had meetings and taken notes and been able to put those in the file to just be able to access how a decision was made. And going forward, I accept that and we will apply that to our project planning.

I have no doubt, though, sir, that had we done that for 53 recommendations, and the small team we have, I would be sitting here telling you today that perhaps we had only completed perhaps a third of them. That does take time. And I did believe that a lot of the stakeholder input was embedded in the methodology of prior studies, that a lot of these recommendations had been validated, the outcomes had been specified. And it would have been a good action, I think, to go back and revalidate as we moved along. We focused, instead, with the resources that we had, we applied that to getting them done.

We also have only been a team for about 6 months now. We only modernized at the end of last summer. And so, now is the time that we logically should be looking to assess where we go with project planning. And I think they have offered us some very good tools for, going forward, how we can apply those sensibilities and those internal controls to future project planning.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Let me say this, Ms. Dickerson. First of all, do you deem me to be a reasonable person?

Ms. DICKERSON. Yes, sir.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Thank you. And we had agreed that these things would be done in a certain period of time, did we not?

Ms. DICKERSON. We did.

Mr. CUMMINGS. And just like you just told me about the manual, you gave me a certain time that you would be able to get it done, and I probably, just knowing me, I probably gave you an extra—I gave you more time than you even asked for. And so, when you say that, you know, you didn't have time or whatever, to be frank with you, that bothers me. Because I think I have been—you admitted I was reasonable, and I went on your timeline and gave you extra time. So I don't buy that.

But let me say this. And I think this is what Ms. Ekstrand is getting to, and this is what I am getting to. You were talking a mo-

ment about our watch, your watch, and I appreciate that. Those are words that I use quite often, by the way. But it is one thing to produce something; it is another thing to be effective with it. And we need the combination.

I would almost rather for you to do 20 things and they be effective than 50 things and they not be effective. Do you know why? Because, to me—and this happens a lot up here on Capitol Hill, by the way, so it is not just one agency—to me, it becomes a waste of time, and time is very, very significant. And so I am always trying to figure out, how do we become most effective and efficient in what we do so that, whatever we produce, it has an effect and it has the effect that we want?

And so, when I listened to Ms. Ekstrand and I read the GAO report, it seems like the essence of this report is basically saying we could have combined, even in the short time that we had, we could have combined this—made sure that we had these goals going along, as we went through our checklist, making sure we had the goals coinciding and having a measuring tool.

And I think the measuring tool is very, very important, because I think we want to know our progress. And you know what? It is also important from a morale standpoint. I want my staff to know that they have achieved something so that they can go out there and say, ″Okay, we can keep this going.″ And I also would want them to know that, if we were not doing something that was not being effective and efficient, that we had enough information to change course so that we could get on that effective and efficient path.

Does that make sense?

Ms. DICKERSON. It does, sir. Absolutely.

Mr. CUMMINGS. And so, I—let me just ask you a few more questions.

Ms. DICKERSON. Okay.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Now, do you now intend to develop measurable outcomes? It sounds like you are.

Ms. DICKERSON. Yes.

Mr. CUMMINGS. And how do you go about doing that?

Ms. DICKERSON. Well, for example, for the PII, there is a test embedded, but we can assure that people who undertake the training online actually submit to the test and a score is established, and make sure that they send that information to us to certify that they have passed the test and they are sufficient in handling personally identifiable information.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Now, when you take this, when you look at your 52 recommendations and the 53rd that you are about to have done within the next 6 weeks, I am sure there are certain things that really cry out for outcomes and measuring tools. Is that right, Ms. Ekstrand?

Ms. EKSTRAND. That is right.

Mr. CUMMINGS. And some of them may not be as significant. I mean, it may not be as significant to have them. Is that right?

Ms. EKSTRAND. Yes, exactly.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Okay. And I guess what I would like to see you do, if you haven't done it already, is to go through those that really need the very things that Ms. Ekstrand talked about—that is,

measuring tools and some kind of outcome goals or whatever—and provide those to us within a reasonable time, as to how you plan to carry that out.

Are you following me?

Ms. DICKERSON. Yes.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Now, how much time will you need for that? I want you to be reasonable, because I am going to have you back up in here, so I don't want you to——

Ms. DICKERSON. If I had the opportunity to talk to the people I am going to be working with on it, my team, I would like to be able to provide it for the record, if possible. But I could attempt to commit to something right now without that input.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Okay, no, that is fine. But I don't want it to be—I would like for you to get us an answer within, you know—before the close of business on Friday.

Ms. DICKERSON. Oh, yes, absolutely.

[The information follows:]

INSERT FOR THE RECORD
Page 29, Following Line 661

The below table contains the grouping of the 53 Booz Allen Hamilton (BAH) recommendations along with the desire outcomes for measurement purposes. In July 2011, the Coast Guard's Civil Rights Directorate (CRD) will complete an analysis of the outcomes from the action plans implemented to address these BAH recommendations.

EEOC ELEMENT CATEGORY	Rec #	Title	Desired Outcome
Agency Leadership			
	13	Training - Provide Strategic Plans Resources Mgt Team Lead with additional training in budget development & justifications.	Detailed budget requests, reclamas & Resource Proposals are submitted on time. Adequate resources are acquired to satisfactorily carry out CR duties & responsibilities.
	14	Ensure OCR Budget Personnel undergo training in statutory and regulatory obligations of the office.	Detailed budget requests, reclamas & Resource Proposals are submitted on time. Adequate resources are acquired to
	42	Determine whether current program functions are statutorily required or necessary to support OCR mission and to determine resource needs	All statutory requirements are met.
	46	Use OCR Strategic Plan to advocate for resource requirements by demonstrating how performance goals align with budget requests.	Professional management of resources. Adequate resources are acquired to effectively & efficiantly carry of the duties & responsibilities of the Directorate.
	47	Recruit and hire full-time experienced EEO Counselors and CRSPs and discontinue the use of collateral duty staff.	CRSPs can carry out the full spectrum of their duties & responsibilities with little or no assistance from HQ.
	48	Assess CG-00H-4 funding needs	Professional management of resources. Adequate resources are
Efficiency			
	25	Move Admin. Specialist from CG-00H-2 to CG-00H-4 - to assist with admin. Functions	Balanced workload.
	26	SOP - Develop SOP for CG-00H-3 to handle all aspects of budget requests for OCR	Professional management of resources. Adequate resources are acquired to effectively & efficiantly carry of the duties &
	27	Revise the EO Manual to include statutory references and citations so that a reader can cross-reference relevant statutory language with the guidance provided. In addition, add content that addresses the roles of Field and OCR personnel throughout the complaint process, pursuant to 29 C.F.R 1614.	CRSPs & commands have a single repository for all CR policies, & carry out CR functions with little or no additional help from HQ
	28	Institute a privacy & records management program - based on DHS policies and procedures	PII is secured with no violation.
	29	Redesign EO Review process to increase the value and effectiveness of this function.	All commands report full compliance with the six elements of a model EEO program in their annual EO Command Checklist.
	31	Develop SOP for handling PII and Confidential info.	PII is secured with no violation.

EEOC ELEMENT CATEGORY	Rec #	Title	Desired Outcome
	32	Develop records mgmt. system that describes, for each type of record, where it should be retained, the various classifications of records, the applicable policies, and how the complaint records should be maintained.	Recored are kept current & readily available.
	40	SOP - Develop Comprehensive SOPs to standardize OCRs operations. This would include SOPs for each team/division within OCR and the compilation of an accessible master volume.	Standard methods of executing the CR program.
	43	Hire or contract for FAD analysts	All FADs are delivered on time.
	44	Create a Separate AFC 56 Funds for Training Needs Assessment	CRSPs can carry out the full spectrum of their duties & responsibilities with little or no assistance from HQ.
	45	Identify "strategic initiatives" - that would be drivers of the OCR strategy as well as that of USCG. These initiatives should then be prioritized for funding and implementation in any given fiscal year based on their expected impact.	The CG is in full compliance with the six elements of a model EEO program per EEOC & reflected in the annual MD-715 report. All CRSPs can carry out the full spectrum of their assigned duties with little or no assistance from HQ.
	49	Use Official USCG Blog to refute misinformation & protect credibility of USCG workforce	Vetted, accurate information published for public review.
	50	Establish an Official USCG Blog to convey key message and to minimize confusion and misinformation	Vetted, accurate information published for public review.
	51	Disable access to negative unofficial blog sites at USCG work locations	Vetted, accurate information published for public review.
	52	Strengthen leadership effectiveness in group dynamics & find tools to address effectiveness	Cohesive leadership with consistent message from the top.
Integrate EEO into Mission			
	4	Workload Analysis - Maximize workflow efficiencies and workforce planning by basing staffing decisions and training requirements on valid and reliable data. This would include developing a Work Breakdown Structure (WBS) that delineates the discrete work elements of OCR operations.	CRSPs have a clear understanding of their duties & responsibilities, & is reflected in the annual DEOCS.
	5	Conduct training needs assessment of USCG civil rights organization to assess current training programs and knowledge gaps. This assessment should also consider regulatory requirements, business drivers, and the skills and abilities of CRSPs.	CRSPs have a clear understanding of their duties & responsibilities, & is reflected in the annual DEOCS.

EEOC ELEMENT CATEGORY	Rec #	Title	Desired Outcome
	7	Through coaching sessions, guide the Director, Deputy Director, and senior staff to pursue more collaborative methods of working with each other. This could be accomplished through the strategic planning process and other OCR initiatives such as the MD-715 Report.	Cohesive leadership with consistent message from the top.
	16	Restructure USCG Civil Rights Program - This restructuring can be accomplished by placing the Field CRSPs under the direct oversight of the Director of OCR with Area Equal Opportunity Managers reporting to the Director instead of directly to Field Commanders.	Director, Civil Rights Directorate, has full authority over all CRSPs. All CRSPs are fully qualified to carry out the full spectrum of their duties & responsibilities.
	17	Convert the Instructional Systems Specialist position currently residing in the Policy and Plans Division to an Operations Manager position reporting to the Deputy. This position would, among other duties, be responsible for operations mgmt. and training requirements oversight.	One person is responsible for all training needs of the entire Directorate, including field personnel. All CRSPs are fully trained & capable of performing the full spectrum of their duties & responsibilities.
	18	Transition training oversight responsibilities from the Policy and Plans Division to a newly created Operations Manager (reporting to the Deputy) who will manage all aspects of OCR training processes.	One person is responsible for all training needs of the entire Directorate, including field personnel. All CRSPs are fully trained & capable of performing the full spectrum of their duties & responsibilities.
	19	Create a Senior Advisor Position - This position will provide programmatic guidance to the Director	Director kept abreast of daily operations & concerns.
	23	Develop an integrated strategic plan to better enable the organization to execute and deliver on its mission. This strategic plan should incorporate input from key stakeholders, be well communicated to employees, and cascaded across OCR and throughout the Field to ensure consistency of focus across all areas of the USCG civil rights organization.	The CG is in full compliance with the six elements of a model EEO program per EEOC & reflected in the annual MD-715 report.
	30	Strategic Planning - Ensure that each division develops a strategic plan that feeds into the Director's overall strategic plan.	
	33	EO Manual Revision- Enter detailed Instruction for handling PII. Also, revise the EO Manual such that provides step-by-step process to determine whether the release of documents is appropriate.	PII is secured with no violation.
	34	Institute a mandatory annual training requirement for supervisors and managers through which participants are taught their responsibilities with respect to EEO and affirmative employment. Provide refresher training in a computer-based format that can be used in any location.	Managers & supervisors are familiar with EEO & affirmative employment.

EEOC ELEMENT CATEGORY	Rec #	Title	Desired Outcome
	37	Revise the USCG service-specific portion of the DEOMI EOA Program to include training by civilian EEOC certified trainers who would provide instruction in the areas of EEO Counseling and complaint processing. This training curriculum would include, among other topics, instruction in basic EEO Counseling and other related activities, such as writing reports of counseling, identifying issues, conducting inquiries , and pursuing resolution options pursuant to Title 29 C.F.R. 1614 and MD-110.	CRSPs can carry out the full spectrum of their duties & responsibilities with little or no assistance from HQ.
Pgm & Management Accountabi			
	1	EO Review - Design & implement metrics to measure process efficiency and for valuing benefits of EO Review process. Develop and implement a mechanism to track and report these metrics against performance targets.	All commands report full compliance with the six elements of a model EEO program in their annual EO Command Checklist.
	2	EO Manual Revision - To provide specificity regarding the purpose, format and structure of EO reviews	CRSPs & commands have a single repository for all CR policies, & carry out CR functions with little or no additional help from
	6	Use Facilitated workshops to help OCR senior staff members to understand their own and other stakeholders' underlying interests and concerns and thereafter to focus on those interests rather than on stated positions and demands.	All personnel are aligned with the strategic plan.
	8	Conduct a skills inventory of current staff to measure skills v. needs for org, and to identify skill sets required for job.	CRSPs have a clear understanding of their duties & responsibilities, & is reflected in the annual DEOCS.
	9	Conduct skills assessment to identify core competencies by assessing existing job descriptions and key skills required to support each programmatic function. Refine Job vacancy announcement to ensure that candidates have the required skills	New hires are fully qualified & possess leadership skills required to serve effectively & efficiently.
	10	Skills Assessment - Determine whether an adequately skilled civil rights workforce is available, trained, and prepared to achieve the OCR and USCG's civil rights objectives.	New hires are fully qualified & possess leadership skills required to serve effectively & efficiently.
	11	Develop a Training Course for EO Review team members on various data collection methods and the process of applying statistical techniques to analyze, describe, and evaluate trend data.	Commands conduct DEOCS annually with resulting environment that is free of discriminatory practices.

EEOC ELEMENT CATEGORY	Rec #	Title	Desired Outcome
	12	Ensure that all CRSPs receive training on intake and complaint processing at both the Informal and Formal stages. This would include training designed to ensure that CRSPs understand their role of neutrality throughout the counseling process, pursuant to 29 C.F.R. 1614.	Resolve as many complaints as possible at the lowest level possible. Ensure all statutory timelines are met.
	15	Assess & take appropriate action regarding EO Review Team participants training needs.	CRSPs can carry out the full spectrum of their duties & responsibilities with little or no assistance from HQ.
	21	Leverage 0-6 Deputy Responsibility - Responsible for operational and non-statutory activities including, budgeting, resource mgmt., strategic planning, and oversight. Align the Strategic Plans and Resource Mgmt. Team and the Policy and Plans Division under the Deputy.	Professional management of resources. Adequate resources are acquired to effectively & efficiantly carry of the duties & responsibilities of the Directorate.
	22	Establish a Solid-line reporting relationship of field CRSPs. - have all CRSPs report to the Director	Director, Civil Rights Directorate, has full authority over all CRSPs. All CRSPs are fully qualified to carry out the full
	35	Develop a business case for EO Reviews. This analysis should consider the specific reasons for an established number of EO Reviews, the rationale for particular site selections, quantifiable measures of success, available dedicated resources, and any other strategic or regulatory drivers that would necessitate EO Reviews.	All commands report full compliance with the six elements of a model EEO program in their annual EO Command Checklist.
	36	EO Reviews - redesign position Requirements for individuals participating in EO Review process to reflect the specific skills and abilities required to conduct substantive analysis and high-level technical writing.	CRSPs can carry out the full spectrum of their duties & responsibilities with little or no assistance from HQ.
	38	Training Program - Professionalized EEO Counseling training program to include mandatory training required by EEOC, including the 8 hrs. Refresher and the required 32-hour training requirement for new federal EEO Counselors. In addition, require counselors to fulfill a bi-annual training requirement by taking an Interviewing Techniques, Conflict Resolution, or Facilitation course.	CRSPs can carry out the full spectrum of their duties & responsibilities with little or no assistance from HQ.
	41	Perform gap analysis to determine where the current staff meet core competencies and identify where competency gaps exist by comparing the core competencies required to support the OCR roles with the results of the skills inventory of the current staff.	CRSPs can carry out the full spectrum of their duties & responsibilities with little or no assistance from HQ.
	53	Ensure that individuals are held accountable for acts of insubordination	Cohesive leadership with consistent message from the top.

EEOC ELEMENT CATEGORY	Rec #	Title	Desired Outcome
Proactive Prevention			
	3	Training Requirements - Assess OCR's current training program and develop a training suite for CRSPs, supervisors, and managers that is tailored to the specific audience.	CRSPs can carry out the full spectrum of their duties & responsibilities with little or no assistance from HQ.
	20	Designate Privacy & Records Manager - Assign to CG-00H-1 GS -14 billet.	PII is secured with no violation.
	39	Equal Opportunity Manual - Revise the Equal Opportunity Manual such that it effectively serves as the guiding document for enterprise-wide civil rights operations.	CRSPs & commands have a single repository for all CR policies, & carry out CR functions with little or no additional help from HQ
Responsiveness/Compliance			
	24	Move CG-00H-3 Program Analyst billet to CG-00H-2 - to assist with EO Reviews	Balanced workload.

Mr. CUMMINGS. And then we will hold you to it. And then that will be a part of the next hearing with regard to this whole issue, okay?

Ms. DICKERSON. Yes.

Mr. CUMMINGS. I am going to come back, but I would like to yield now to Mr. LoBiondo.

Mr. LOBIONDO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

For Ms. Dickerson, how many complaints of inhospitable work conditions for military and civilian members do you receive on an annual basis? And how does the number and nature of complaints compare to those reported by other military services and the Federal agencies?

Ms. DICKERSON. The inhospitable work conditions are——

Mr. LOBIONDO. Complaints about work conditions.

Ms. DICKERSON. Oh——

Mr. LOBIONDO. Civil rights complaints.

Ms. DICKERSON. Civil rights complaints might not necessarily—I would have to look into exactly how many had to do with working conditions. I am sorry, I don't have that particular number right in front of me.

Mr. LOBIONDO. And then you will check and see how that matches up against other military services?

Ms. DICKERSON. Yes.

Mr. LOBIONDO. And you will get back to the Chairman and the Committee on that?

Ms. DICKERSON. Yes, I will.

Mr. LOBIONDO. Okay. That was the question I had. Thank you.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Ms. Dickerson, you indicated at our last hearing back in June 2009 that you had filled all six of the new positions assigned to OCR. I think you had one that you were still interviewing for, though, weren't you?

Ms. DICKERSON. That is right.

Mr. CUMMINGS. But they have been filled now?

Ms. DICKERSON. They have all been filled, yes.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Okay. And so, how many of the 45 full-time civil rights service providers are in place, and how many vacancies exist now?

Ms. DICKERSON. I believe we have nine vacancies right now. And, including our field personnel, though, we have 69 total positions now.

Mr. CUMMINGS. And so you have nine vacancies?

Ms. DICKERSON. Out of 69, yes, sir.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Okay. And when do you expect those to be filled? Or are you planning to fill them?

Ms. DICKERSON. There are some—some announcements are out right now, and within the next few weeks the others will be, as well.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Now, the GAO notes that the executive assistant with the Civil Rights Directorate will leave the position in June of this year and argues that without documentation of the decisions made in the design, implementation, and review of the action plans you undertook to implement the 53 recommendations, the knowledge that the official in the executive assistant's position had will leave with him.

What is your comment on this?

Ms. DICKERSON. Yeah, we will very much miss this officer, Commander Obuwaji. He has just served very well and was very much a focus point of us moving to modernization and implementing the 53 actions.

And as with the lieutenant who left our office, we will ask Commander Obuwaji to retroactively attempt to give us as much knowledge—he will turn his files over, of course, the ones that are there. But if there are other things that he can recall for the record, we want to ensure that he leaves us as full and complete a record as possible.

And that happens often with military transfers. There is a process of turning over files and records. And because of what has been noted to us, we definitely will ensure that we go even the extra mile to make sure that he transfers as much knowledge as possible.

Mr. CUMMINGS. And you see—and I think that is just the—I mean, it really shows what Ms. Ekstrand was just saying. I mean, that is just a perfect example of why all this documentation is so important to have in addition to the other things, the goals and the measuring tools and so on.

Do you believe that military officers now in the CRD, do they see it as a desirable assignment that will make them promotable? If so, how do you know this, and why do you think this?

Ms. DICKERSON. I believe so, by and large. I mean, certainly everyone would have their own assessment and opinion, but it certainly does seem to be, I believe, both the military officers and the enlisted personnel. And we strive, especially since we modernized—and the people in the field, many of them are enlisted personnel who are equal opportunity specialists, and they report up to us through headquarters. We have gotten a lot of data points from them about how we can make the situation work and the assignment desirable.

Yes, it is a—for example, in the field, these personnel, the military personnel who work for us, they work directly with the inner circle of the command, advising them on issues. We have to make sure that they have a private place where they can conduct counselings. They travel and they deliver training to our workforce. It takes, you know, a very mature individual who really has, you know, the opportunity to relate to people to carry out that assignment, and they carry it out very well. I am very proud of the people that we have within our directorate.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Let me—you know, you were part of this civil rights—this summit the Coast Guard did.

Ms. DICKERSON. Yes, sir, the diversity summit, which was——

Mr. CUMMINGS. Recent.

Ms. DICKERSON. Yes.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Within the last week or 2.

Ms. DICKERSON. Uh-huh.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Did you find that to be helpful?

Ms. DICKERSON. I did. I have attended a lot of diversity, EEO, all types of summits and training during my long career in this field, and I thought the speakers were excellent, the discussions were excellent. I just thought it was really top-notch.

And while you didn't ask me the question, I did receive tools. There were books and follow-up CDs and videos made available to attendees that they will take back to their workplaces and implement ideas and best practices.

I really thought it was very, not only inspirational and motivational, it also was—it just was just an excellent practice. And I hope that they can do it again.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Let me ask you this. One of the things that I am assuming that you would want to do is put yourself out of a job.

Ms. DICKERSON. Yes.

Mr. CUMMINGS. In other words, so that we don't need an office to be doing these kinds of things. And I was trying to figure out what—I mean, what kinds of things are you all doing to try to convince people that diversity is not our problem but our promise, so that people begin to think differently? I was just wondering.

Ms. DICKERSON. Yes, well——

Mr. CUMMINGS. Because sometimes we are so—I am going back again to Ms. Ekstrand. She didn't say this piece, but sometimes I think we can be so busy checking off a list that we don't look at the bigger picture and how do we create a climate where you can almost eliminate things off the list because people are already doing it.

Ms. DICKERSON. Yes.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Go ahead.

Ms. DICKERSON. Well, I would just clarify first that, for the EEO, our mission really is to eradicate discrimination in the Federal Government. And as we do that, as people come to understand that Coast Guard is a place where you will be treated fairly and, if you do have a problem or a challenge, there will be a process that can take in your complaint, it will be dealt with fairly—and so, that is what we attempt to do.

As long as the Federal Government draws from all pockets of America, the Federal Government workplace is going to be representative of all of the different perspectives and thoughts embodied in the American public. And so, you know, at times we have the opportunity to direct people's attention differently.

And I think that is what the diversity summit did. There were speakers who I know were able to give people examples of the discrimination that they had faced and why people should rethink how that occurs. Because sometimes people who enjoy freedoms and enjoy respect, they forget that everybody else in the country doesn't enjoy that same freedom and that respect.

And I remember, especially, a person of small stature was one of the speakers, and she talked about even the process of going to the grocery store and how her respect and dignity could be removed in terms of how people related to her as a person who was of small stature.

And I think that things like that—I am sure that summits like that help to open people's eyes in a different way. We can show them a lot of flow charts about how to intake processes and what the mediation steps are. But until people start to examine their own consciousness—and we are not going to get everybody with the flow charts, but we are going to get some of them because some people are motivated that way. Other people are motivated by ex-

amining their own actions and actions of themselves and their families. And I think it causes people to redirect their thinking and wonder where all of those thoughts came from.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Before I go to the Chairman of our Full Committee, I want to be ask you something, Ms. Ekstrand, because I am trying to put a timetable together here.

Your findings would seem to suggest that, even though the Civil Rights Directorate has checked off 52 of the 53 recommendations, they are not really done implementing the 53 recommendations.

How long would it reasonably take for the Civil Rights Directorate to develop measurable outcomes for the 53 recommendations? And how much time would need to elapse for meaningful measurements of performance to be completed?

Because I am hoping that my Ranking Member will join me in asking the GAO to come back with an assessment of the effectiveness of the changes in the civil rights program. And you could give them a year, maybe they could come back.

In other words, I am trying to figure out—I want them to be able to do what Ms. Dickerson says she is going to do pursuant to your recommendations, but I also want to make sure that it coincides with you—I want to make sure that you will have enough time, GAO will have enough time, to assess what they have done and look at the effectiveness and efficiency of those goals, using those measuring tools that you are suggesting.

So what would you say?

Ms. EKSTRAND. Chairman Cummings, just a few minutes ago, you talked about basically triaging the 53 recommendations in relation to importance. They also need to be triaged in relation to how quickly you can anticipate seeing a change because of them.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Right.

Ms. EKSTRAND. You know, it is very difficult to give a timeline because it is going to be highly variant. I should think that there would be some evidence of progress in some areas in a year. I would think that some things may take longer, some things far shorter.

For example, in relation to the PII handbook, it is in the field now. Ms. Dickerson indicated that there is some testing that gets done in relation to staff understanding how it is used. You know, there could be other checks, such as, you know, spot checks of people's desks to make sure that there is not personal information sitting out in the open. There could be other types of training in relation to personal information handling that could be—could have a follow-up to make sure that training is understood and that the importance of the security of this kind of information is tested.

But for other things, it may take substantially longer and more time and effort.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Well, what we are going to do—I am going to ask also, of course, our Chairman, Mr. Oberstar, to join us in the request—I think what we will do is we will—Ms. Dickerson, the document that you are going to give me on Friday by the close of business, I want you to kind of prioritize these, the various recommendations, and let us know—you know, you can set some goals. I will give you another week for that, because this is going to take a little longer, I think. And give us some kind of game plan.

And you are right, you are right, Ms. Ekstrand, certain things are going to require certain amounts of time or whatever. Can you kind of lump them in categories for us? And I am sure you all can consult with each other, can you not? Is that all right? No? Yes?

Ms. EKSTRAND. We can, to some extent.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Yes, okay. And then I want you to then—we will come back—we will give you a year, and we will come back in a year, God willing, and take a look at all of this, okay?

Ms. DICKERSON. Yes.

Mr. CUMMINGS. And we will be making a formal request, Ms. Ekstrand, with regard to the assessments, the measuring tools, and the outcomes and the things that you recommended, to see where we are in a year, all right?

Ms. EKSTRAND. Yes.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Oberstar, Chairman of the Full Committee?

Mr. OBERSTAR. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, for your persistence on this matter, and that of Mr. LoBiondo, the partnership that you have established with him. And Mr. Mica, at the Full Committee level, is very supportive of this initiative. You have done a yeoman's service. You have had several hearings of this issue.

And I see progress on the Academy side. The 10 percent increase in minorities, according to the Coast Guard admissions data report for the class of 2014, indicates that there is significant progress being made in bringing minorities and opening the Academy to a wider participation from the public.

And declaration date is still a week away, so there is still opportunity for others to either be accepted or accept their offered appointments, and then the Coast Guard can go to its wait-list and draw upon those who are another tier of candidates.

So I think that is a very significant part. That is where we started 2 years ago, Mr. Chairman, in working on this matter.

The last series of questions, Mr. Cummings asked about documentation and the transparency and the accountability issues. Ms. Ekstrand, in your review of Coast Guard activities, do you see a change in spirit in the Coast Guard? Is there a culture of compliance with minority participation, greater access, greater involvement of minorities in all levels, command levels, all the way through the work?

Ms. EKSTRAND. I wish I could answer that question, but I don't have the range of knowledge to answer it. I do think that Ms. Dickerson's office has been very proactive in trying to institute change.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Ms. Dickerson, you are right there in the eye of the storm on this issue—not that it is a storm, but you are right on the front line. Do you see a change in attitude in the top command in the Coast Guard?

Ms. DICKERSON. Oh, yes. I do. You know, as a minority and a woman in the Coast Guard, I am very motivated to make it, for personal reasons, a place where everyone can really succeed to their fullest, and I do. Especially, Admiral Allen, in the past year, has directed all of the senior executives, and we designed and initiated a special seminar for everyone who is in leadership at Coast Guard, and we have now conducted three sessions. It is a signifi-

cant devotion of time of very senior people, and we spend 2 days, three times last year, getting together on these very issues and talking about where the Coast Guard is going and making sure everyone understood their part and their role in it. And that has nothing to do but permeate throughout the organization.

And I think that it is perceptible. I think when people not only can see that things are planned, but they actually see that things are happening. That, as well, affects morale, and in the diversity divisions, diversity summit was one demonstration of that.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Chairman, I think that is the most satisfying mark of progress, to have that kind of report, that is a great tribute to the effort you initiated that we have partnered with and engaged in over the last 2 and a half, 3 years, and I think that is, if that continues to grow and manifest itself, we will see an energized Coast Guard that reflects America in a more complete and satisfying and productive way than it has done in the past. It is the oldest of our service organizations.

The very first work—I will correct myself. The third act of the First Congress came from the Committee on Rivers and Harbors, on which I served as clerk when I started here in, not in 1789 but in 1963, although sometimes it sounds like I have been around here that long. But the first act of that First Congress from the Committee on Rivers and Harbors was to establish a lighthouse at Hampton Roads. The second act of the First Congress from the Committee on Rivers and Harbors was to establish a lighthouse at Cape Henry on the entrance to Chesapeake Bay. And the third act was to establish the Revenue Cutter Service to exact duties from inbound cargoes to pay the debt of the Revolutionary War. The Revenue Cutter Service became the Coast Guard.

Our Committee has been invested with the Coast Guard from its inception in law in this country. We want to see the Coast Guard continue to perform the extraordinary service that it does, year in and year out, saving lives and protecting our coasts and making our waters safer.

But we also want the Coast Guard to reflect America in a more complete way than it has done in the past. And I think the skepticism with which these efforts Mr. Cummings has led and which I have partnered and supported vigorously, the skepticism at the beginning and the defensiveness of the Coast Guard has given way, in my experience, to a broad acceptance and a welcoming and a willingness to do the things that you have just described, have those diversity summits and have this counseling. We want to be sure that the transparency continues, that the accountability continues, and we will do the accountability side here in this Committee with Mr. Cummings leading the way.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Coble.

Mr. COBLE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I apologize for my belated arrival. I had two other hearings, and I missed most of the first panel's testimony. But appreciate you all being with us.

And I have no questions, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Thank you very much.

Ms. Dickerson, let me say this, that, first of all, we, I don't want you to get the impression that we are not—we do not applaud what has been accomplished. And I think the GAO report has fairly given credit for that.

But again, I think the goal must be, how do we make sure that we are effective and efficient? Period. Period.

People are putting a lot of time and effort into dealing with the recommendations, a lot of the government resources being used. But you know, the most important thing is that there are a lot of people who are depending upon these things being successful. And you just, with a lot of compassion, talked about your—that you have personal reasons to see that this is successful.

Well, I am just trying to make sure that, as you say, when your watch is over, that you will be able to look back and know that, not only were things checked off a list, but they had the impact that you wanted them to have and that your agency wanted them to have.

I think that this is a golden moment for your division. And the reason why I say that is because I have talked to Admiral Papp, our new commandant, and he is just as committed to making sure that we carry out these goals, just as you are, and so we have got to take this moment and use it.

But, again, you know, I just don't want a report. As my mother used to say, she doesn't like a lot of motion, commotion, emotion, and no results. We have a lot of that up here. We need results, and that is what we are talking about, because those results, like you said, you can talk about statistics, but those statistics are people. And it is bigger than even the employees, the civil servants or even the military people in the Coast Guard. It is bigger than that. It is about their families, and it is about generations yet unborn. And so I thank you very much.

Thank you, Ms. Ekstrand. You were outstanding. And we are very glad that we have this ability to have the recommendations from GAO. And by the way, the report was quite thorough, and thank you so much.

So the key is that hopefully we can take that report and, as Ms. Dickerson has already said, extract from it the things that are, take those recommendations and use them to accomplish the things I just talked about.

Thank you very much.

We will move on to the second panel.

TESTIMONY OF REAR ADMIRAL RONALD T. HEWITT, ASSISTANT COMMANDANT FOR HUMAN RESOURCES, UNITED STATES COAST GUARD; AND REAR ADMIRAL J. SCOTT BURHOE, SUPERINTENDENT, UNITED STATES COAST GUARD ACADEMY

Mr. CUMMINGS. We will have Rear Admiral Ronald Hewitt, who is the Assistant Commandant for Humans Resources with the United States Coast Guard; and Rear Admiral J. Scott Burhoe, who the is Superintendent of the United States Coast Guard Academy.

I understand you both have statements.

Rear Admiral Hewitt, we will hear from you first. Thank you for being with us.

Admiral HEWITT. Good morning, Mr. Chairman, distinguished Members of the Committee. I am Rear Admiral Ronald Hewitt, Assistant Commandant for Human Resources, United States Coast Guard. It is my pleasure to be testifying on the Coast Guard's diversity efforts. I ask that my written testimony be entered into the record.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Without objection.

Admiral HEWITT. Mr. Chairman, my message today is the Coast Guard remains firmly committed to building and sustaining an organizational climate in which people of diverse backgrounds, culture, race, ethnicity and religion are fully included, valued and treated with respect and dignity. Our service continues to recognize that improving total work force diversity is not only a moral obligation but also a mission effectiveness and readiness issue. We continue to take bold and decisive action to promote a greater awareness of and full and equal access to the entire spectrum of Coast Guard opportunities for our entire work force.

I will now highlight some of our most recent accomplishments. First and foremost, we released the Coast Guard's Diversity Strategic Plan in September of 2009 that sets clear and concise direction for Coast Guard leadership. A copy has been provided to you. To achieve the goals in the Diversity Strategic Plan, we are using a deliberate and focused campaign plan known as OPTASK DIVERSITY, which provides an operational framework to achieve our diversity vision by aligning and linking our goals with tactical field-level actions and measurable performance objectives.

To ensure that our members understand the tenets of the diversity, we held a diversity leadership summit last week that brought in members from around the Coast Guard for training.

Mr. Chairman, I thank you and other others for taking time out of your very busy schedules to participate. The information provided at the diversity summit will continue to be heard throughout the service from participants who have returned to their duty stations and are actively passing on what they have learned. And we also are using videos of the summit to promote the importance of diversity to current and potential Coast Guard employees to reinforce our strong commitment to build and sustain a community of inclusion.

Additionally, we assigned a captain to serve as the liaison with the National Association for Equal Opportunity and Higher Education, NAFEO, and the Historically Black Colleges and University, HBCUs, who is responsible for partnering with leadership of NAFEO and the presidents of the HBCUs to help strengthen the relationships between the Coast Guard and these institutions.

Since bringing on our liaison, the Coast Guard for the first time made the HBCUconnect.com top 50 employers, ranking in at number 16 of 50 recognized employers for 2009.

Our continuum of effort and investment is producing results as we press forward in our enlisted and officer recruiting programs. To date, in fiscal year 2010, our active duty enlisted recruits are 36.2 percent minority and 21.6 percent women. Fiscal year 2010 was our first recruiting year after changing the college student pre-

commissioning initiative eligibility criteria to focus on minority-serving institutions. As a result of this refocused officer recruiting strategy, 67 percent of the applicants are minorities, a 25 percent increase compared to last year.

Mr. Chairman, total work force diversity remains critically important to the United States Coast Guard. Diversity is a mission effectiveness and readiness imperative for us. We will continue to be proactive and forward leaning to achieve our diversity vision, which is to be recognized as the employer of choice in the Federal Government for recruiting, retaining and sustaining a ready, diverse and highly skilled total work force. With your continued support, we will achieve that vision.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I look forward to your questions.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Rear Admiral Burhoe. Thank you very much.

Admiral BURHOE. Good morning Chairman Cummings, Chairman Oberstar, distinguished Members of the Subcommittee. My name is Rear Admiral John Scott Burhoe. It is a privilege to testify today regarding diversity at the Coast Guard Academy. I have been superintendent since January of 2007. I request that my written testimony be entered into the record.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Without objection.

Admiral BURHOE. A diverse officer corps is essential to perform the Coast Guard's missions, and it is necessary that the path to leadership be visibly open to talented and qualified individuals of every race and ethnicity. A diverse student population adds educational benefits and is associated with enhanced critical thinking skills. The Coast Guard Academy is committed to a strategy that diversifies the corps cadets, faculty, staff and curriculum.

Additional funding received, coupled with a full staff, allowed us to hire additional reserve support, increase targeted advertising, hire a professional company to improve online applications, and fund minority application visits. All this additional funding and staffing was directed at increasing the number of under-represented minority applicants.

Completed applications for minority applicants rose 84 percent, from 254 to almost 500. This increase led us to offer 96 appointments so far to minority applicants for the entering class of 2014, which is almost twice the number offered at the same time last year. While it is still too early in the admissions process to predict with absolute accuracy, if acceptance rates hold true to historical averages, we should have between 20 and 24 percent of the class be underrepresented minority cadets.

In addition, we anticipate admitting at least 50 under-represented minority students into college prep. If all are successful, this will represent 17 percent of the class of 2015.

Our efforts must be expanded upon. We must resource them in a way that allows them to sustain and grow and a way that allows us to invest earlier in the admissions process.

While we grew the under-represented minority inquiry and applicant pool, we did not anticipate the total number of applicants to increase so dramatically. Our total completed applications rose 32 percent this year, from almost 1,700 to 2,200. This is more applications than we have received in the last 20 years, while the staff

size remained constant. This increase created delays in processing all of the applications.

While we raised the conversion rates significantly for minority applicants, these conversion rates still lag majority applicants. This increase in under-represented minority applications is a result of aggressive outreach and follow up with candidates and their families. It also reflects increased awareness of a climate of inclusion at the Coast Guard Academy, a climate that is welcoming and focused on retention.

Over the last 2 to 3 years the Coast Guard has invested in the academy in ways that make us more attractive. We have added a new mechanical engineering classroom, a new student union, upgraded our physical fitness facilities, added a brand new barracks wing, and created an institute for leadership. This helps us compete for talent in an extremely competitive environment. The talent does exist, but we must work harder and make all of America aware of the opportunities available.

Mr. Chairman, you have said that children are the living message that we send to a future we will never see. And you have spoken about how we must use our current positions to make things better during the relatively short time we have left in these positions.

I share your commitment and your sense of urgency about diversifying the Coast Guard Academy. I also recognize that commitment is meaningless without actions and clear signs of improvement. We have taken action. We have shown improvements this year, and I am optimistic about the future.

Diversifying the Academy has been the greatest challenge of my Coast Guard career, and I am determined to succeed at it.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I look forward to answering any questions you or the Committee may have.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Thank you both very much.

Rear Admiral Burhoe, let me just ask you a few questions. First of all, I was very pleased to hear you say that the talent is out there. It seems like every time we have one of these hearings, we have the certain writers and folks writing op-eds saying that if you concentrate on diversity, then there is a—that you lessen the quality of the Academy. And that upsets me to no end.

And the question is not whether the folks are out there. They are out there. The question is, as you alluded, you have got to make sure you get to them and make an offer to them which they would want to accept. Am I right?

Admiral BURHOE. Yes, sir.

Mr. CUMMINGS. You indicate in your testimony that over the past year at the Academy—and I am going to quote you in your written statement. It says, Our admissions system became less formulaic. The new holistic approach focuses on an applicant's capacity to contribute.

Can you describe the specific changes you have made in the admissions process that make the process less formulaic and more holistic?

Have you altered the weight placed on SAT scores or grade-point average or extra curricular activities in admissions decisions? And if so, how?

Admiral BURHOE. Yes, sir. When I say that it has changed from a more formulaic system to really a—what we look at now is capacity to contribute. We mention, when we put our career candidate evaluation boards together, we mention SATs one time, and what we mention is that people should look at a math score of around 600 for success in engineering. And that is the only mention of SATs in the guidance that we provide to those who review those applications.

But really the Coast Guard Academy, over the last 6 or 8 years, has changed from what used to be a very formulaic math score times two plus verbal times class standing. And what we did also is to add a series of questions in the application that really get to who the person is. Our top interest is in leadership and character; next is in academic potential and their ability to perform academically; and then really looking at their ability to be leaders in the Coast Guard.

Mr. CUMMINGS. How many minorities are on the wait list for appointment to the Academy?

Admiral BURHOE. Right now, I haven't added them up, but I can tell you by minority group if that is okay with you, Mr. Chairman: 17 Asians, 14 African Americans, 12 Hispanic and 4 Native Americans, and 398 white.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Can you tell us what the SAT scores of the minorities are on the wait list for a future appointment?

Admiral BURHOE. I cannot, Mr. Chairman. But I can certainly provide that for the record.

Mr. CUMMINGS. According to data provided to the Subcommittee, dated April 19, the Coast Guard Academy has extended offers to 96 minority students, and 41 minorities students had accepted the offers. What is the Academy doing to try to ensure that the remaining 55 minority individuals accept offers for admissions made to them?

Admiral BURHOE. What we are doing, sir, is to follow up with them. And we have staff members communicating to them. I have communicated with two myself, and we are reaching out to them by staff. We have a reservist who goes out and visits them at their homes, and this is the sort of outreach that I mentioned that is so important to us.

Mr. CUMMINGS. The Coast Guard invited 50 African Americans to the Academy earlier this year and helped them to complete applications. How many of these individuals were subsequently offered appointments to the Academy?

Admiral BURHOE. Sir, I looked at that last night. I didn't write that number down. As I recall, it was only about as many as eight of those, but I don't recall that. I can certainly provide that for the record later. It was fewer than one might have expected based on inviting that many young people up. The purpose of that was to have them complete their applications.

Mr. CUMMINGS. I am going to just, just one other thing, and then I will turn, just two things, and then we will hear from our Chairman.

I had made a recommendation, as a member of the Naval Academy Board of Visitors, I had asked you all to take a look at their program to work with them because they had an extraordinary—

their numbers were just extraordinary with regard to minority recruitments. And I was just wondering, have you worked with them? Was it helpful? Have they been cooperative? So that when I go back to my board meeting in about 2 weeks, I can tell them whatever you tell me.

Admiral BURHOE. Yes, sir. In fact, we invited Dean Latta to come speak with our Board of Visitors here in Washington. He went through what he refers to as the funnel of admissions. And I spoke with him last week at the Conference of Service Academy Superintendents, as well as added this to the agenda item for the Conference of Service Academy Superintendents, all of us speaking with Admiral Fowler about their success in this area.

Mr. CUMMINGS. What I am hoping for, Admirals, I am hoping that the Coast Guard will become a model with regard to diversity. I think so often we get just enough done to say we accomplished a goal. I want us to be the model so that other people will be emulating the Coast Guard. And I think if that is our goal, if that is our goal, not only will we have done the Coast Guard a great service, but we would have done the military operations of this country a great service. And so I want to thank you all for what you have done. And I will turn it now over to our Chairman of the Full Committee, Mr. Oberstar.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I will be brief.

You have covered it all very well and so has this strategic—diversity strategic plan and the diversity strategy map. I was just looking at this and I said, my goodness, you give the Coast Guard a directive, give them a good push in the right direction, and they come up with a campaign. This is just like you were going off to battle. This is terrific.

But it has taken a while to get there, hasn't it, Mr. Chairman?

But now you are there.

And the partnerships, I was very impressed with the range of outreach to Thurgood Marshall College Fund Conference, Black Engineer of the Year Award, East Coast Asian American Student Conference, Women of Color, League of United Latin American Citizens Conference.

I understand also that, Commandant Burhoe, that you had the African American student cadets at the Academy call, Admiral Hewitt, to call prospective applicants for the Academy and encourage them to pursue. Did you do that? And what were the results from that effort?

Admiral BURHOE. Yes, sir. Well, really just to get them interested in applying, as well as I know that I wrote a personal letter to every under-represented minority who is currently in the enlisted work force to encourage them to apply to the Coast Guard Academy as well.

Mr. OBERSTAR. That is terrific.

Mr. Chairman, that is just exactly what we want to do, an active outreach program, not just setting up your lemonade stand on the side of the road and say, come on, pitch in and buy some of us. No, you are really out there recruiting and encouraging and giving the potential applicants reason to pursue their interests in the Coast Guard.

I also understand that after the Coast Guard did a review of the college aptitude test, they found 10,000 African American high school students with a score of 1,200 plus. That is sterling. That is tremendous. There is a recruiting critical mass out there to work on.

You also say in your submitted statement that you have established a liaison officer program for flag officers, members of the Senior Executive Service, to adopt a school of higher learning, including developing and maintaining relationships with minority-serving institutions. That is a terrific idea.

And you do mention tribal colleges and universities. I would invite you to encourage Coast Guard Station Duluth to reach out to Fond Du Lac Community College right there next door to Duluth, and to the other tribal colleges in our, in my district. And of the eight members of the Minnesota Chippewa tribe, six are in my district. And they are eager for new opportunities and new learning experience.

And there is, among the Anishinabe, Ojibwa, Chippewa people, a long history of the waterborn service. They built the best canoes. They harvested the wild rice with them. They fished. They hunted with the canoe. It is still part of that tradition. But to have a career in the Coast Guard, and we have a station right there in Duluth as a model for them, would be a great opportunity.

And Mr. Chairman, I don't know, and Mr. Coble, I don't know if you have had the same experience I have, but I have done very significant outreach with myself and with my district office staff to recruit students to apply for the academies, including Coast Guard, of course, Merchant Marine and others. Five years ago, we had more presenters than applicants, than students; I won't say applicants, than students. We had at least 30 people from the Air Force, West Point, the Naval Academy, Coast Guard, Merchant Marine; we had over 30 presenters and 15 students.

Now, I think some of that is the reaction against the Iraq war. I saw a dip in academy applications at the time of the Vietnam war, and then it just soared up. We would have 150, 200 applicants for essentially four positions. And now I would say the last year, I had 9, 9 total applicants.

And we have encouraged the academies to do outreach in our districts. Of course, West Point and Air Force would come looking for hockey players. They were really excited when they got a good goalie or a good winger or a center, you know. Boy, they will offer them the moon.

But there is much more. This is a $100,000 education and a lifetime career, and I want kids to understand that.

You know, in my congressional district, in the iron-ore mining country, Duluth and north, during World War II, we had the highest rate of enlistment in the whole Nation. We also had the highest rate of gold star mothers, because you had so many kids in the line of fire. And that patriotism hasn't abated at all.

What is missing is to see the uniformed service as a career opportunity. And compared to the other academies, I think the opportunities for the Coast Guard are the best. You have your own TV channel, the Weather Channel. And when I go and talk with high school groups and all, I tell them, turn on the Weather Channel,

see what the Coast Guard is doing, because they are out there saving lives. It is a great opportunity for you.

And I think that the outreach initiatives that you are undertaking are unprecedented. I have never seen that before; 43 years of service in the Congress, 12 years as staff and others as a Member, I have just not seen that kind of effort.

I commend you for this sweeping outreach effort. We will continue to follow up with you and to assure that there is follow through.

And the retention, that is the final point I want to inquire about. And that is, what happens, you have three captains in the Coast Guard and above who are African American, but few stay beyond the 20-year retirement option? Admiral Hewitt, why is that? Do you have a handle on this? Are you inquiring into it?

Admiral HEWITT. Yes, sir. We have a study going we just commissioned to look into that, what is the retention rates? We are fortunate at the Lieutenant Commander, Lieutenant, Commander, level the actual retention for minorities is actually higher than whites right now. But the problem is, we don't have the numbers. So the big thing is the recruiting, and we are working with the Academy to get the intake where it should be.

But at the same time, we are spending a lot of time on what do we do for the retention, and which the summit was actually a kick off for that, because one of the key things is we have got to make sure that we could have a leadership ability to lead a diverse organization. And so we are trying to change that culture within the Coast Guard so we can better respond to a diverse organization to keep people longer and so that there isn't differences between races or ethnicities on their tenure in the Coast Guard.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Thank you for undertaking that.

And when you have completed and you have evaluated your report, it would be good to have a consultation with Mr. Cummings and the Republican Members of the Committee and myself. We would be very interested in your report.

In closing, I would just say, I think we are one hold in the U.S. Senate away from moving to a conference, getting the Coast Guard bill through the Senate and moving to conference after goodness knows how many years it has been since we have had an authorization from the Coast Guard. But just one hold away, and then Senator Rockefeller has indicated to me that they will be able to move their bill. We will have a very brief House/Senate conference, and then much of the structural change and reform that are in this bill will begin to take place.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Thank you very much.

Mr. Coble.

Mr. COBLE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Oberstar and gentlemen, good to have you all with us.

Admiral Burhoe, let me put a two-part question to you. How does the open application process or the current process impact the size and quality of the applicant pool for the Academy, A? And B, how does the Coast Guard Academy minority enrollment compare with other service academies?

Admiral BURHOE. As far as the open application, I don't know whether I completely understand. Are you speaking of that as they apply, we review the application as it comes in, sir?

Mr. COBLE. That would be part of it, yeah.

Admiral BURHOE. Yes. I think that the open application, that the current way that we receive applications is working well, except in one area. And that is, as you look at the areas, the number of people who have applied at each times, we received half of our white applications by January 15, but only about a quarter of our underrepresented minority applications, which says to me as though we need to be more aggressive in our early outreach to—and some of that will be through advertising on Clear Channel, where we have some advertisements on BET, a number of advertisements so that more people will know about us to know to apply. So I think, but, in general, I like the open application.

Mr. COBLE. And how does it compare with the other services?

Admiral BURHOE. I would say that, as our total corps, I know more about the Naval Academy than I have looked at the other services, and I know that we are not as diverse as the Naval Academy. We are more diverse than the Merchant Marine Academy, and I am pretty confident to say that the Air Force and the Army are more diverse than us as well.

Mr. COBLE. Admiral, have you all examined what changes would be required to transition to a nomination-based system as is proposed in the House-passed bill?

Admiral BURHOE. We have done really very little work other than conversation about that. So I would say the short answer to that question, Congressman, would be, we have not done significant work on that.

Mr. COBLE. Thank you Admiral.

Admiral Hewitt, let me insert your oars into these waters, if I may. What steps have been taken so that future superintendents and Coast Guard Academy administrators can continue the work of improving both access to the Academy and the retention of minorities?

Admiral HEWITT. Sir, I am not quite sure I follow the——

Mr. COBLE. Pull that mike a little closer to you Admiral. Do you want me to repeat my question?

Admiral HEWITT. Yes, sir.

Mr. COBLE. I said what steps have been taken so that future superintendents and Coast Guard Academy administrations can continue the work of improving both access to the Academy and retention of minorities?

Admiral HEWITT. Well, from the start, the commandant has at this time in our fitness reports required us to actually provide what are we doing in diversity. So this is the first time it has ever been visible in actually from the reporting, which if you want to achieve outcomes, you have got to actually make it part of your reporting process. And so with that, all the officers are heavily engaged with understanding diversity and rolling it out within theirs.

Part of the strategic plan and OPTASK DIVERSITY is that the three star commands, LANT area, PAC area, our Chief of Staff and our Deputy Commandant for Operations, each have to do an action plan for diversity and they roll it out to all the units underneath

them, and they are rolling it up. And so, with that, they are all engaged with the outreach from the recruiting side, going out to areas in their areas of responsibility, and then for also sustaining the diversity within and making sure we have a superior work environment so that every member is able to achieve the best they can be.

Mr. COBLE. Thank you, Admiral.

Finally, let me put my final question, and I may be amplifying my ignorance by asking this question, but gentlemen, to what extent, if any, are females classified as minorities in your database?

Admiral HEWITT. Sir, they are not. We have gender, and then there is race and ethnicity. So we track gender as one category, race and ethnicity.

Mr. COBLE. I got you. Thank you both for being with us, gentlemen.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Thank you very much.

Ms. Richardson.

Ms. RICHARDSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Well, that wasn't so hard, was it?

Congratulations. Not nearly, I want to concur with Chairman Cummings and also Chairman Oberstar, clearly, you can't dispute that there has been some progress, so congratulations. Of course, it is only the beginning, and we want to stress that. And I think you understand that.

But given quite the I would almost say flogging that you received before, you are well deserved of a smile at least from me, so congratulations.

A couple of questions. Number one, Ms. Ekstrand laid out in her GAO report some recommendations for both of you. Do you concur with these recommendations and are committed to addressing them?

Admiral HEWITT. Yes, ma'am.

Ms. RICHARDSON. Okay. So that will save me of having to go into detail about that.

I want to commend your staff. I had some folks that did come see me immediately after the previous hearing that we had wanting to follow up on some of the comments that I made and some suggestions of what we could do, so I think it is important to acknowledge that, and that you are aware of it.

I do notice in your testimony, Rear Admiral Hewitt, that you mention the HBCUs, which I am strongly supportive of. But if you recall in my conversation, what I also stressed was that there were other colleges and high schools and so on that have various organizations that have groups that you could still reach out and I think get a large population of folks; meaning, I went to UCLA and USC, not University of South Carolina but University of Southern California, and so I was a member of both of the BSAs and various groups. So what have you done to approach those other colleges and universities and high schools and so on of their specific gender or ethnic groups to increase the outreach?

Admiral HEWITT. Yes, ma'am. The HBCU liaison was just added this last year. We have had, for several years, a HACU or a Hispanic Associations of Colleges and Universities liaison, a captain that is down in San Antonio. And then we are also partnering with

NSBE, in terms of—which is the National Society for Black Engineers, and HENAAC, which is now Great Minds in STEM, to look at ways—in fact, we are doing a pilot up in Cleveland right now that is called STEM up or VIVA Technology, which is working with children to get them encouraged to move out into science, technology, engineering and math majors. And we are looking at taking that on the road.

Ms. RICHARDSON. Let me be more specific of what I am saying. I did read the other groups that you are outreaching with. My question is, if I were to go to UCLA today or USC today, and if I were to go to the Black Student Association, would I see any information about your diversity program with the Coast Guard?

Admiral HEWITT. No, ma'am.

Ms. RICHARDSON. Okay. So my recommendation to you, and it is actually what I said last time, and I realize you have to start someplace, and the HBCUs was a good concentrated effort of where to start. But what I would also encourage you to understand is not every member, not all women, or not all Hispanics, or not all African Americans, or not all Asians, though, are going to these selective groups.

And so for example, I was not an engineering major. I was not a math major, although I actually had interest in attending West Point. So I would just encourage you to think out of the box, and hopefully, the next time that you come, you can give us specific examples of other colleges, universities and so on, besides the math, engineering and so on, that you are reaching out to, because there is a whole lot more students that are there that will extremely increase your numbers.

Admiral HEWITT. Yes, ma'am. Thank you. And we will definitely look at expanding our outreach efforts.

Ms. RICHARDSON. Okay.

And then my next question is for Rear Admiral Burhoe. It is my understanding that, according to information provided to this Subcommittee, in 1975, the Coast Guard Academy introduced its Minority Introduction To Education program, MITE, which gave 16 high school students the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the Academy. By 2002, 82 students were participating in MITE. At about that time, the Academy introduced the Academy Introduction Mission, AIM program, which was not targeted to any specific group of students other than those interested in the Academy. AIM grew into a 2-week academy introductory course and, in 2003, ran concurrently with MITE. In 2004, the two programs merged into a 3-week course and the throughput of about 500 students. How many minority students participated in AIM in 2009 and 2010, and how many of those actually ended up attending the Academy?

And then the B question, because I am down to—actually, I am just now over my time. Why did you discontinue the MITE program, given that it appeared to be a successful tool to expose minority students to the CGA? And would you consider reinstating it?

Admiral BURHOE. Yes, ma'am. We merged MITE into AIM, some because of the return on investment of the numbers of students who had to gone to AIM and the return on them coming to the Coast Guard Academy.

The other thing that we did is to take AIM and add an engineering component, so that really AIM not only is an introduction to the Academy and the living and the marching and the military rigor, but is also, has a one full day broke down into two half days component that introduces them to engineering. So I do think that we do the same functions that we did with AIM, through MITE, excuse me, now, with AIM.

I don't have the numbers of the under-represented minorities who had attended AIM, but I would tell you that it is and was too low. This year, we will significantly raise the percentage of under-represented minority students who attend AIM, seeing that as a unique opportunity to showcase the Academy and the programs that we have to offer.

I would be happy to go back. I am sure that we can come up with what those numbers were over the last 2 years and provide that for the record for you. I do not have that with me.

Ms. RICHARDSON. Mr. Chairman, could I wrap up with a final statement about this question?

Mr. CUMMINGS. Very brief.

Ms. RICHARDSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

What I would say, though, Admiral, is I don't know if you really got what my question was. MITE, as I understand it, is a specific program for minority introduction to engineering, as opposed to AIM is not. And so although you might be getting a bigger bang for your buck with AIM, the problem is, and the whole purpose of us being here, is the fact of increasing your under-represented populations. So I don't think you are going to achieve that is what I am saying by simply doing the AIM program. So when you—if you could come back to this Committee with what are those numbers, and then also consider, by the time you come back again, of establishing, re-establishing that program. Thank you very much.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Thank you very much.

Admiral Burhoe, what is the swearing-in date for the freshman class, the new people coming?

Admiral BURHOE. It is the 28th of June.

Mr. CUMMINGS. The 28th of June.

Admiral BURHOE. Yes, sir.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Would you provide us—we know we have preliminary numbers, but on that day, would you provide us or, you know, immediately thereafter, with the final numbers for the incoming class? In other words, percentage of minorities?

Admiral BURHOE. Yes, sir. Absolutely.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Okay. Fine. Let me go to something else, too, and this is just a suggestion. You know, you had the valedictorian, an African American woman, Ms. Carol Davis, back 2 years ago. And I don't know how you all use her to help you recruit, but I am going to tell you something. It has been 40 years ago plus, but I remember when I was trying to figure out how, you know, like, for example, the high school I went to, I went to the high school I went to because there was a fellow named Kurt Schmoke who was ahead of me. And he was brilliant, African American who was going places. You know, and so I wanted to go to the same high school he went to, which I did. He later became mayor of Baltimore.

And what I am saying is that when you have an example like that and if she is willing to help you, you need to have her help you, because I think a lot of students, particularly in light of the fact that we had the noose incident there, they need some level of feeling that, when they have got choices, to feel that they are going to be comfortable and that they can be successful. People don't want to waste their time going somewhere where they are going to feel uncomfortable or a place where they don't think that they are going to be successful. These are like major league decisions. And so I would appreciate it if you would take that—I mean, does she work with you at all? I am just curious.

Admiral BURHOE. We recently interviewed her for a new video that we have that features the United States Coast Guard Academy, and so she will end up in that video. I don't know whether or not we have used her in the schools in New York, but I would certainly hope that we are using her to send her out. I would tell you that incumbent upon her career is to establish and get all of her qualifications before she helps us, but we will certainly do that. And the year before, our valedictorian was a Hispanic gentleman named Marc Mares, who is in San Diego.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Same thing with him.

Admiral BURHOE. Yes, sir, I agree.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Because, again, keep in mind what I said. People want to feel a level of comfort, particularly in an environment where there has been some problems, and they want to believe that they can be successful, period.

Admiral Hewitt, in the previous hearing, Vice Admiral Pearson testified that the 0-6 billet had been programmed as a HBCU liaison. Is that a permanent billet or one that will disappear? And what type of activities did the HBCU liaison and the HBCU ambassadors participate in 2009 and now in 2010, and what were the outcomes of their initiatives? Are you familiar?

Admiral HEWITT. Yes, sir. Yes, sir. Captain Steve Baynes is filling that position right now. It is a—I can get back to you on the actual status of that billet, on the permanency of that, but I believe it is. But I have to get back to you on that one, sir, for the record.

And in terms of what he has been able to establish, we have established 22 minority outreach efforts either through our flag officers or Senior Executive Service who are working with minority-serving institutions and established, for instance, I am the partner with Norfolk State University. I was just down there this weekend evaluating their senior projects and viewing that.

And we also have a partnership with our Command and Control Center, which is in Portsmouth, and they are doing two interns this year. So there is a lot of effort going on.

And the main thing, though, is just how many campuses didn't know the Coast Guard exists. So getting it out there. And as I mentioned, we have established the CSPI program or the 2-year scholarship program.

Mr. CUMMINGS. I understand that has been very successful.

Admiral HEWITT. Yes, sir. As I mentioned, 67 percent now are minorities, which is a 25 percent increase from last year. So we are making a huge amount of progress with that; not only from actual results in terms of our civilian and officer recruiting efforts, but

also just in terms of outreach and people understanding that the Coast Guard is there as a possible job opportunity.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Thank you.

And Admiral Hewitt, the goal of the—and this will be my last item. The goal of the diversity and strategic plan is to hold leaders at all levels accountable to sustaining a workplace climate of equity, building an organization that leverages the Coast Guard's diverse work force, and fostering an environment where every individual has the opportunity to prosper and effectively advance their careers. Is that right? That is you all's language.

Admiral HEWITT. Yes, sir.

Mr. CUMMINGS. The first objective is to develop methods to ensure leader accountability for implementing diversity initiatives and programs at all Coast Guard commands. The second objective is to ensure diversity initiatives are in all Coast Guard supervisor performance evaluation systems. Is that right?

Further, the plan says that all echelons of the Coast Guard commands, including the Deputy Commandants, Academy, district and individual units, will be held accountable for developing initiatives that incorporate the Coast Guard's diversity management policies into their business and management process. How will you ensure that leaders are held accountable for sustaining a workplace climate of equity? Is this evaluated in an officer's evaluation report or in other fitness reports?

Similarly, how are you ensuring that diversity initiatives are in all Coast Guard supervisor performance evaluation systems? And what exactly does that mean? You got all that? Well, let me say this, as you get your thoughts together, staff has, very few people they have nothing but good things to say about. But you have been one that we have been told have been absolutely incredibly great and committed. And we really want to thank you for that commitment.

And the reason why I am asking this question is I am trying to figure out, one of my mentors used to say, when you take on a position, take it on so that, and you want to change things in positive way, but do it in a way so that they last after you are gone, hopefully, after you are dancing with the angels, that is what he used to say.

And so how do you we—and I think this is what Mr. Coble was getting to—how do we incorporate as best we can under our watch, in the words of Ms. Dickerson, changes so that they don't just disappear when Cummings is gone off the scene and Burhoe and Hewitt are gone off the scene and you know, we are rocking in some rocking chairs? How do we make sure that, you know, as best we can, that these things stay in place? You follow me? Because it is not enough that we have them for a moment. I don't want a temporary visa. I want, you know, something more permanent. So I am just curious. And then incorporate it into what I just asked you.

Admiral HEWITT. Yes, sir. As I mentioned, 1 September, we release the strategic plan, the Diversity Strategic Plan. But to ensure that it doesn't just become shelfware, which is what you alluded to, how do we ensure we roll it out into a military culture, we wrapped it into a, the way we do all our military missions, whether it is Katrina or whatever response, the one right now in the Gulf that

we are responding to, and that is why we framed it in terms of OPTASK DIVERSITY.

And the Commandant released, on 22 December, an all Coast, or a message that goes out as a directive to all our organizations that established the requirement for each of the big four which we refer to, which is the LANT area, PAC area, our Deputy Commandant for operations, and our Chief of Staff and all the organizations underneath them, have to provide an action plan, a diversity action plan, and that had to be submitted to us by the 15th of January of this year. And they have to provide us quarterly reports, the first report due on the 15th of this month, where in fact we have just received it and we are collating it now, which is identifying what actions they have actually done and what metrics they are using that go to the five goals that are in the strategic plan. And we are doing, every quarter they have to, they have to do a SITREP and report on their progress. And then as part of—I mentioned the Commandant has directed every flag officer and SES to have in their evaluations what they have they done to achieve diversity and achieving those goals and directives. And so it is permutating down.

And in fact, the summit which you were at last week, sir, was that. We brought in people from all the districts that represent the Coast Guard and ensure that they understand what diversity is. And just to give you a few takeaways from that, we had 79 percent of the conference found that to be very effective; 94 percent said the Coast Guard would benefit from that; and the big change was 79 percent are now comfortable with speaking about diversity, which is a huge increase from what it was before; and the other piece that was the whole purpose of the diversity summit was now 67 percent, people understand that there is biases in the unconscious because everybody brings in their own behavior system, and to understand those. And so we have our champions out in the field. They are moving this forward. And we are rolling it out with quarterly updates that we can report to you, sir.

Mr. CUMMINGS. You know, going back to what Ms. Ekstrand said, and she talked about measuring tools. It sounds like that is what you have. It sounds like you are aiming—you have certain outcomes you want, and you are figuring out how you get to those outcomes, and you are trying to be effective and efficient. Is that a fair statement.

Admiral HEWITT. Yes, sir.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Great.

All right. I am going to close out the hearing, but I want to take a moment to thank Lieutenant Commander Christy Rutherford, who has been with us for about—a year? Three years. It seems like a year. She has been absolutely, incredibly wonderful.

And we just want to thank you very much for—first of all, we want to thank the Coast Guard for lending her to our Committee and our Subcommittee. And she has helped us in so many, many ways. First of all, she has consistently shown us the standard that the Coast Guard has, and that is excellent. And every day she has kept us sensitive to various issues with regard to the Coast Guard and helped us understand the climate in the Coast Guard much better and what you all do.

And we really hate to lose her, but we also realize that this is just a part of her journey. And we are so glad that she—our Subcommittee had an opportunity for our lives, all of our lives to eclipse. It didn't have to happen, but it did.

And so to you, Lieutenant Commander, I want to thank you so much. May God bless you. May He bless your journey, and may you be very successful in all that you do. And we hope that by participating with our Subcommittee that you just gained at least a small portion of—as compared to what we have gained from you. If you got a small portion from us, then that would be absolutely wonderful.

With that, I want to thank you all for your testimony. It sounds like we are well on our way. I must tell you that my only concerns go to my last question. I think that we are moving in the right direction, but we need to sustain it, and we have to keep a sense of urgency.

And one of the things that I found very interesting, Admiral Burhoe, is that the last person who held the job of admissions officer at the Academy was there for, what, 8 to 10 years. Is that normal? Because it seems like you ought to do a better rotating job than that—I mean, not better, but it happens more often, I thought.

Admiral BURHOE. It is normal, yes, sir. She was, I think, the fifth admissions director. And so, they have normally been there for that long a period of time.

Mr. CUMMINGS. And why is that?

Admiral BURHOE. It is because college admissions is so difficult and because college admissions is a hard process to understand and master. And we have found that, once somebody gets there and has an understanding of it, that it takes really a year or 2. Our current admissions director is likely to be there only 3 years unless we do something like a retired recall for him. And so we picked the very best candidate regardless of the time left, and we will see whether or not it needed to be longer.

Mr. CUMMINGS. The reason why I ask that is that, if I have a situation where, -say, for example, a person has a certain mindset, an admissions person. And I understand an admissions person at the Coast Guard Academy has a lot to say on who gets admitted and who doesn't. And let's say that person has a bias or, say, that they don't consider the things that we are talking about to be very important. And if they are going to be in there for 8 to 10 years—and I am not saying anybody has done this; I am not saying anybody is going to do this—I am just saying that a lot of damage could be done.

And so I was just wondering—that is why I asked what the rotation situation is. You know, I was just curious. Did you want to say something else?

Admiral BURHOE. If you don't mind, just one thing.

I believe that it is an institutional commitment, that the responsibility for admissions is all about the entire academy. It is faculty staff; it is all of us. It is not just an admissions division responsibility, but that we all share and have a responsibility in that.

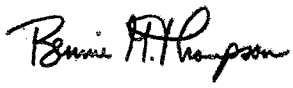
Mr. CUMMINGS. Yeah, I would hope so.

Mr. Coble, did you have anything else?

Mr. COBLE. Nothing further, Mr. Chairman.
Mr. CUMMINGS. Thank you very much.
This hearing is adjourned.
[Whereupon, at 12:07 p.m., the Subcommittee was adjourned.]

BENNIE G. THOMPSON, MISSISSIPPI
CHAIRMAN

PETER T. KING, NEW YORK
RANKING MEMBER



One Hundred Eleventh Congress
U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20515

Statement of the Honorable Bennie G. Thompson
Chairman of the Committee on Homeland Security
Before the
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation
Hearing Entitled
"Status of Coast Guard Civil Rights Programs and Diversity Initiatives"
2167 Rayburn House Office Building
April 27, 2010

- First, I would like to thank Chairman Cummings for holding today's hearing.
- As Chairman of the Committee on Homeland Security, I share the Chairman's concern about diversity and civil rights issues in the Coast Guard.
- A component of the Department of Homeland Security, the U.S. Coast Guard is a capable and skilled force of over 42,000 men and women on active duty; 7,000 reservists; 7,500 full-time civilian employees; and 29,000 auxiliarists.
- In its "top to bottom" review and evaluation of the United States Coast Guard's Office of Civil Rights, Booz Allen Hamilton reached dismal conclusions about the state of staffing, organization, and implementation of the program used to monitor and assure civil rights and equal employment opportunity.
- The contractor gave 58 recommendations to improving the Office of Civil Rights. These recommendations included changing the organizational structure to streamline complaint reporting; implementing training guidelines and deadlines for all employees; and revising the Equal Employment Manual. Each of these small reforms will go a long way to assure that employees have access to the tools they need to adequately address grievances.
- In December 2009, Committee on Homeland Security staff met with Director of the Office of Civil Rights to assess the Coast Guard's progress.
- Staff was provided a two-page email announcement and an organizational chart illustrating a change in office structure as the solution to over 50 of the recommendations made in the Booz Allen Hamilton report.

- According to information delivered to Committee Staff from the Office of Civil Rights, the three regional offices are headed by Civil Rights Managers—each of whom supervises about seven employees.

- These three regional offices; however, do not serve proportionate populations. Region 1 serves a population of 14,000 men and women; Region 2 serves 32,300 men and women; and Region 3 serves 13,500 men and women.

- Regional offices that aren't proportionate in number will not decrease the equal opportunity backlog, nor provide adequate training and service to the men and women that stand ready to serve this country at the drop of a dime.

- Further, the Coast Guard has not provided the Committee with a revised EEO manual, dates of staff training, nor revisions to this training.

- I look forward to receiving this material.

- But, in addition to looking forward, we all must move forward. For the Coast Guard to move forward, its Office of Civil Rights must develop a comprehensive, strategic approach to Equal Employment Opportunity. The solution must be more than just mere change in office structure.

- At a minimum, the solution must include an increase of efficiency of the Office of Civil Rights. It must have include an adequate work plan for the Office of Civil Rights employees; have a method to decrease EEO backlog; EEO training schedules; and a plan to deploy these solutions throughout Coast Guard.

- But this approach can only work if it is accompanied by rigorous oversight and support of the incoming Commandant Vice Admiral Robert J. Papp.

- As Coast Guard Chief of Staff, Vice Admiral Papp knows the issues involving the Office of Civil Rights as he was included in the correspondence between the Coast Guard Office of Civil Rights and the Department of Homeland Security's Office of Civil Rights and Civil Liberties.

- I look forward to Vice Admiral Papp's leadership and oversight of the Office of Civil Rights.

- The brave members of the Coast Guard stand ready to interdict drug traffickers, stop human smugglers, and rescue people in distress. They are the bedrock of our safety in times of peril after a natural disaster. Now, the Coast Guard must be ready to execute and deliver a civil rights program that can serve as a model throughout the Department of Homeland Security.

- Again, I thank Chairman Cummings for holding this hearing and I look forward to continuing to work with him on this very important issue.

U. S. Department of Homeland Security

United States Coast Guard

Commandant
United States Coast Guard

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MS. TERRI DICKERSON
DIRECTOR, COAST GUARD OFFICE OF CIVIL RIGHTS

ON THE COAST GUARD'S CIVIL RIGHTS PROGRAM

BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON COAST GUARD AND MARINE TRANSPORTATION

APRIL 27, 2010

Good morning Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of the Committee, I am Terri Dickerson, the Director of the Coast Guard's Civil Rights Directorate (CRD). It is my pleasure to appear before you today to discuss the Coast Guard Civil Rights Program.

On April 2, 2009, I offered testimony on many aspects of the Program and efforts to improve our ability to meet the Coast Guard's needs in a modern military operating environment. That testimony included discussion of the functional review that I commissioned to inform my strategic action plans for civilian Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and military Equal Opportunity (EO) service delivery in a modernized Coast Guard.

I returned to testify on June 19, 2009, and offered further testimony on personnel and financial resources, my efforts to restructure the Civil Rights Program, specific measures taken for the protection of personally identifiable information, workplace climate, training, and metrics.

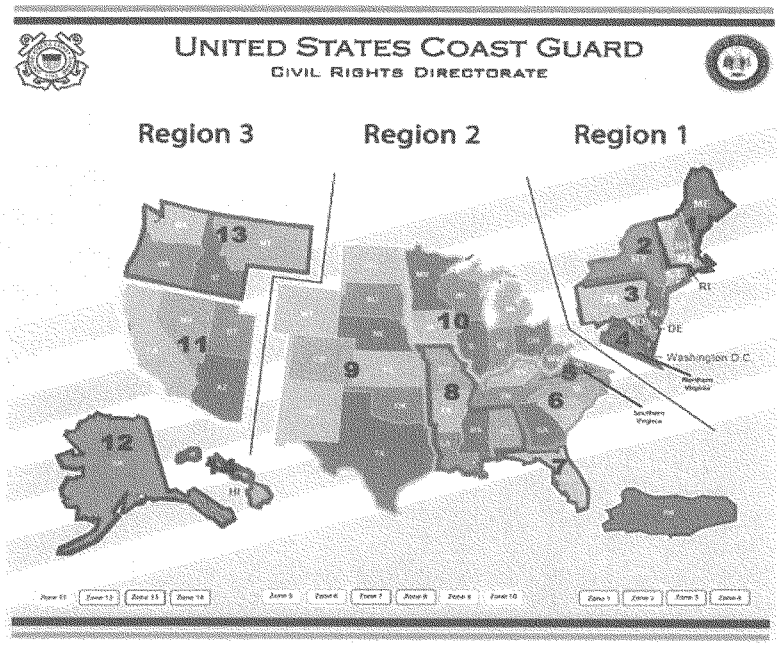
The Coast Guard has been transparent in its move toward a modern-day civil rights program, and I welcome the opportunity to keep you informed of our intentions and progress, just as I have endeavored to ensure that the Coast Guard workforce remains aware. In February 2009, we posted the programmatic review report online for the benefit of employees and the public and as we have implemented an organizational realignment Service-wide. I have also traveled throughout the Coast Guard to talk to all levels of the workforce, as well as with the unions, to ensure clarity during implementation.

Civil Rights Program Realignment

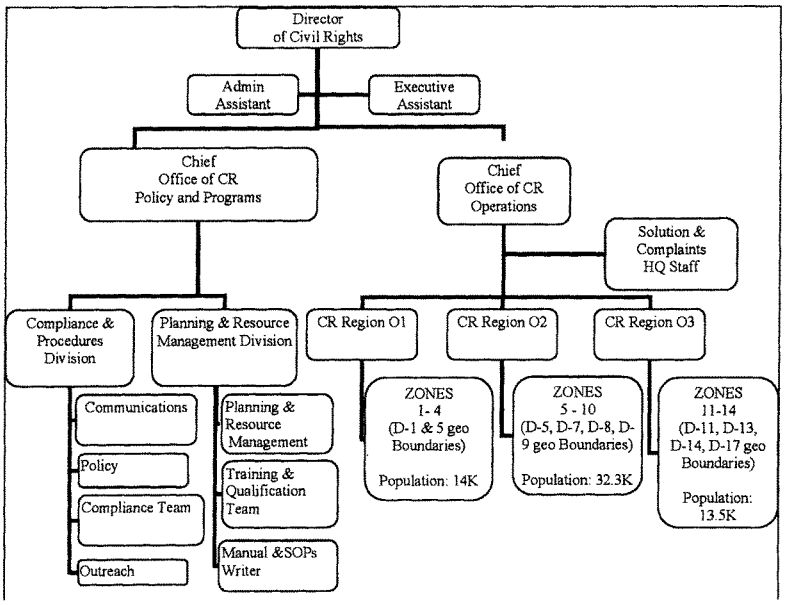
In May 2009, the Commandant approved my plan for a strategic realignment of the organizational structure of the Civil Rights Program, both within the Civil Rights Directorate at Coast Guard headquarters and in the field. The modernized structure of this realignment is consistent with the recommendations of prior studies and includes inputs received from the Coast Guard's Strategic Transformation Team and Leadership Council.

In July 2009, we began to deliver EEO/EO/Civil Rights services through a centrally managed national structure, implemented by full-time specialists from three regions (further divided into 14 subordinate locations) and led by GS-14 supervisors in Norfolk, VA, Washington, D.C., and Alameda, CA. Full-time Civil Rights Service Providers (CRSPs) advise personnel on EEO rights and responsibilities; the

approximate coverage ratio is one CRSP per every 1,000 employees. All personnel bearing the EO/EEO/Civil Rights prefix in their titles now report to the Civil Rights Directorate at Coast Guard headquarters. As a result, their credentials, proficiency, and training cycles are centrally managed to ensure consistency and regulatory compliance. This also affords me direct supervision of the Service-wide delivery of EEO/EO services and the ability to focus on strategic issues and Service-wide alignment.



In the Civil Rights Directorate at Coast Guard headquarters, a military O-6 is the Chief of Civil Rights Policy and Programs, while a GS-15 civilian is the Chief of Civil Rights Operations. The following graphic depicts our new organizational structure, including both the Civil Rights Directorate at headquarters and the three regions in the field:



All Coast Guard employees are now able to contact any full-time CRSP directly for information or to use the complaint process. There are now standard procedures that allow Service members with urgent civil rights needs to quickly reach a CRSP, even if they are aboard cutters at sea or deployed to remote locations. The improvements in training and expertise, as well as enhanced access to CRSPs, allowed transfer of all active civil rights cases from Collateral Duty Civil Rights Officers (CDCROs) to the full-time CRSPs in September 2009; as of October 2009, CSRPs took over all aspects of the CDCRO function, which was subsequently discontinued.

Recognizing that the unique nature of military service presents challenges to ensuring access to CRSPs by deployed members, the main access point for EEO matters for those personnel remains the unit's Executive Officer (XO). The XO serves as the conduit through which personnel may contact EEO under urgent situations. Unit XOs possess a level of experience and established maturity in the Coast Guard and have been vetted for leadership positions. In those cases when an employee on a cutter at sea or in a remote location has a complaint against the person on which the employee must rely to facilitate discussion with a CRSP, the employee can wait until the next available opportunity to call a CRSP using a toll-free number and the generally allotted time frame for that employee to file the complaint is held in abeyance. Previously, deployed members received services from a collateral duty CSRP that was often times a member of their chain of command. Now, using the toll-free number, employees can access EEO/EO services from a full-time CSRP who is outside of the person's chain of command, ensuring that the issue is addressed by an impartial third party.

Communicating Change to the Coast Guard Workforce

Senior leadership support is critical to effectively implement changes to the Civil Rights Program; to this end, I have briefed Coast Guard senior leadership and the Atlantic and Pacific Area Commanders, asking for and receiving their concurrence and field support. I notified union personnel of the plan to provide assurance that there would be little to no impact on civilian employees, and I communicated the plan to staff and field CRSPs to solicit feedback, refine our intentions, and build field-level support. I personally traveled to both of the Area Commands and to all nine Coast Guard Districts to discuss the changes. This top-down direction and support from senior leadership has proven to be an integral component of the Civil Rights Realignment.

Functional Review

In September 2008, in order to receive an independent assessment, I contracted with Booz Allen Hamilton (BAH) for a functional review of the Coast Guard Civil Rights Program. Upon conclusion in February 2009, the Functional Review Report was reviewed by the Department of Homeland Security Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties, which endorsed the findings and recommendations. The Review addressed major areas across measures and skills, organizational structure, business processes, resource programming, and climate. After thorough review, I directed implementation of all 53 of the BAH recommendations. To date, through diligent staff effort and teamwork, 52 of these recommendations have been implemented. The last, a revised Equal Opportunity Manual, will be completed by May 30, 2010, and will be forwarded to this Committee. It is important to note that we are, at all times, guided by EEO laws and regulation; when complete, the new manual will apply Coast Guard context and terminology to facilitate employees and supervisors in the application of Equal Opportunity doctrine Service-wide.

Manpower Requirements Analysis

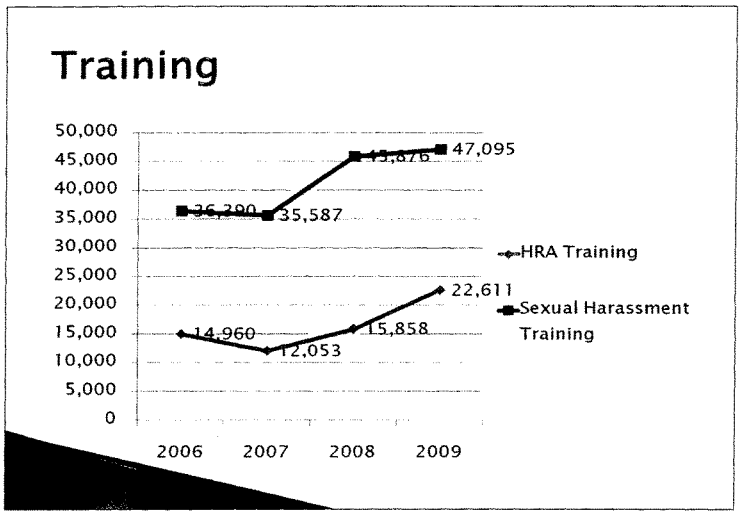
Changes to the CRD's field staffing levels requires considerable analysis of workload, personnel, and training requirements. To that end, I initiated a Manpower Requirements Analysis, the results of which I am using to validate our realignment and to baseline personnel and training requirements to appropriately staff all EEO/EO functions throughout the field. The results of this analysis will be used in future resource planning and programming efforts as we strive to further enhance the Coast Guard's EEO/EO program.

Training Improvements

Over the past year, the Civil Rights Directorate has promulgated and distributed a comprehensive Civil Rights Command Checklist as a job aid to ensure EEO/EO is being practiced in a prescribed manner. The checklist has been distributed to all units and is available at: http://www.uscg.mil/DIRECTIVES/CI/5000-5999/CI_5350_8.PDF. Each unit commander is required to complete the Checklist and return it to their Civil Rights Service Provider, who then assists individual commands in achieving and maintaining compliance. Commands also utilize the Defense Equal Opportunity Climate Survey annually; recent reports indicate that completion is at an all-time high. In all of FY 2009, 12,506 surveys were completed by Coast Guard employees; as of the end of the first quarter of FY 2010, 11,693 surveys had already been completed.

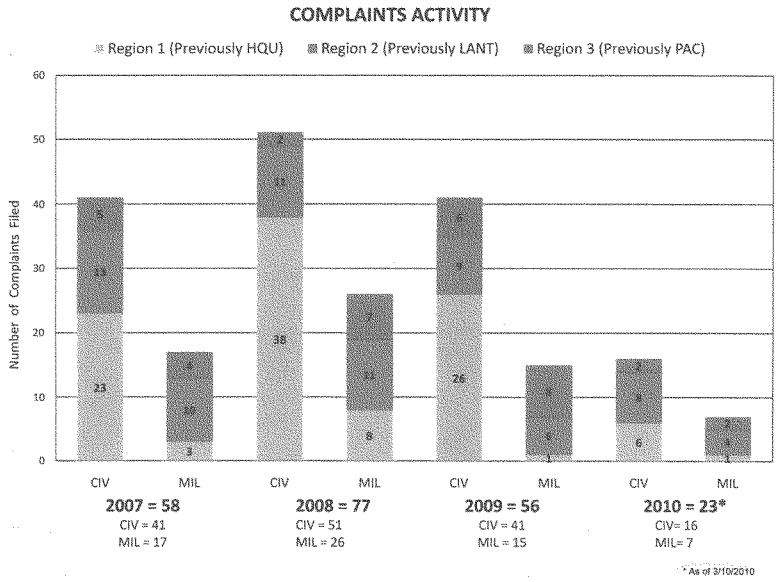
Following promulgation of the new EO Manual, a communications and training package will be produced and distributed to all units and will include easy pocket reference guides and job aids.

We recently marked one full year of our Senior Executive Leadership Equal Opportunity Seminar, first piloted in March 2009. After resounding success and positive feedback from the attendees, we offered two additional sessions in September 2009 and February 2010. We will continue to hold the sessions on a regular basis and strongly encourage attendance by Flag Officers, senior civilians in the Senior Executive Service, and Command Master Chiefs (the senior enlisted workforce advocates at major commands throughout Coast Guard).



Complaints Activity and Complaint Rate vs. the Federal Average

After initial stages of Coast Guard modernization Service-wide, we noted an increase in complaints (see Complaints Activity chart, FY 2008, below). With modernization came more visible EEO efforts, to which we largely attribute this increase in complaints, as the EEOC released an increased number of final actions on complaints (both those that had arisen, and those that had been pending since several years earlier) as well as increased civil rights awareness training (see training chart, below). After 2008, Coast Guard experienced a reduction in complaints activity, as seen in the Complaints Activity chart below. This trend continues in 2010 with the Coast Guard remaining below the federal average for complaints activity.



While we have made progress in stabilizing and correcting many aspects of our program, we aim for continuous improvement. We will be working diligently to assess the effects of our restructuring on the Civil Rights Directorate, and on our EEO service delivery to our customers.

Conclusion

The Coast Guard Civil Rights Program has acted vigorously to initiate needed change, especially during the past year. With the full commitment of Coast Guard senior leadership under Admiral Allen, my staff and I have been able to create this much called-for change. With the constructive oversight of this Committee and in particular the strong leadership and direction from the Chairman, I believe we are well on track for a model Equal Opportunity/Civil Rights program among federal agencies and the other branches of the Armed Forces.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I look forward to your questions.

United States Government Accountability Office

GAO

Testimony

Before the Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, House of Representatives

For Release on Delivery
Expected at 10:00 a.m. EDT
Tuesday, April 27, 2010

COAST GUARD

Civil Rights Directorate's Action Plans to Improve Its Operations Could Be Strengthened by Implementing Several Aspects of Project Planning and Implementation Practices

Statement of Laurie Ekstrand, Director
Strategic Issues

GAO-10-571T

April 27, 2010

GAO
Accountability Integrity Reliability

Highlights

Highlights of GAO-10-571T, a testimony before the Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, House of Representatives

Why GAO Did This Study

Allegations of management weaknesses, unsecured personal information, and employee dissatisfaction have been made against U.S. Coast Guard's Civil Rights Directorate (CRD). To address these allegations, the Director of CRD commissioned an external review of civil rights operations. In February 2009, the review made 53 recommendations to improve the civil rights operations. CRD developed action plans to address these recommendations. As requested, GAO reviewed (1) how Coast Guard's action plans align with EEOC's elements of a model equal employment opportunity program, (2) how Coast Guard developed and reviewed its action plans, and (3) the extent to which Coast Guard's action plans align with generally accepted project management practices. To conduct this work GAO reviewed documentation from CRD, EEOC, internal control standards, and literature on project management. We also interviewed CRD officials.

What GAO Recommends

GAO recommends that the Department of Homeland Security direct the Commandant of the Coast Guard to take the following actions: (1) going forward, ensure internal controls are in place to maintain the documentation necessary to facilitate oversight, (2) establish measurable performance goals for the action plans, and (3) define an evaluation plan for each action plan. DHS concurred with all GAO recommendations.

View GAO-10-571T or key components. For more information, contact Laurie Ekstrand at (202) 512-6806 or ekstrandl@gao.gov.

COAST GUARD

Civil Rights Directorate's Action Plans to Improve its Operations Could Be Strengthened by Implementing Several Aspects of Project Planning and Implementation Practices

What GAO Found

Of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's (EEOC) six equal employment opportunity program model elements, CRD's action plans focus mainly on the first—agency leadership. Of the 29 action plans developed and implemented by CRD to address the 53 recommendations in the recent external review, almost half center on the leadership element. For example, one action plan involved scheduling training for headquarters and field staff.

CRD took several steps to develop and review action plans to address recommendations from the external review, such as developing a functional review team, assigning project officers, meeting with the Commandant and agency leadership, and consulting the agency financial officer. However, CRD did not consistently document key decisions related to the development and review of the action plans as recommended in federal internal control standards. As a result, CRD lacks transparency and accountability to stakeholders. Lack of documentation also impedes the ability to track progress, make mid-course corrections, and illustrate to stakeholders that it is effectively solving these issues. According to CRD officials, their priority was to complete the action plans in a timely manner rather than ensure that development and review processes were documented.

GAO reviewed four of CRD's action plans in relation to generally accepted project management practices to determine the extent to which recommended practices were followed. The recommended practices are: (1) identifying measurable performance goals, (2) defining specific tasks, (3)identifying the person(s) accountable, (4) identifying interim milestones and checkpoints, (5) identifying the needed resources, (6)consulting stakeholders, and (7) defining how to evaluate success. The selected action plans showed some elements of the project management practices, such as identifying accountable individuals, but fell short in relation to other elements. Specifically, performance goals were identified in the form of a product, such as development of a manual, rather than in relation to a desired outcome, such as demonstrating an increase in the number of staff who know how to properly safeguard personal information. All four action plans we reviewed lacked plans for evaluating their success. CDR officials stated that they were more focused on completing the plans rather than evaluating them, but early evaluation can identify and guide mid-course corrections to ensure positive change.

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee:

I am pleased to be here today to discuss the approach the Civil Rights Directorate (CRD) of the U.S. Coast Guard has taken to improve the operations of its civil rights program. According to CRD, their mission is to foster and maintain a model workplace which supports mission execution. To accomplish this mission, CRD manages the Coast Guard Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) program for civilian employees and the Equal Opportunity (EO) program for its military members. In advancement of these programs, CRD provides services such as an intake, mediation, and review process for military and civilian complaints for all Coast Guard personnel.

Under a prior Director, two separate external reviews of the civil rights operations made recommendations for improvement related to the CRD's organizational structure, complaint processes, and program effectiveness. More recently, allegations of management weaknesses, unsecured personal information, and employee dissatisfaction have been made against CRD. The current CRD Director commissioned a third external review and evaluation in September 2008 to improve the operations of the civil rights program. In February 2009, Booz Allen Hamilton (BAH) completed this review and made 53 recommendations, which were similar to those of the previous reports.[1] The Director of CRD subsequently developed action plans to address these recommendations.

As requested, my testimony today will describe (1) how Coast Guard's action plans align with the elements of a model equal employment opportunity program, (2) how Coast Guard developed and reviewed its action plans, and (3) the extent to which Coast Guard's action plans align with generally accepted project management practices.

To address all of the objectives, we reviewed the 2009 BAH report and recommendations and selected CRD action plans and supporting documentation to address the recommendations. In addition, to identify how Coast Guard's action plans focus on the elements of a model EEO program, we reviewed the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's (EEOC) Management Directive-715 (MD-715), which established the

[1]Booz Allen Hamilton, *U.S. Coast Guard Office of Civil Rights Program Review*, 2009. See appendix I for a list of the 53 recommendations to CRD.

elements.[2] In the absence of an EO framework of model elements, and given that CRD stated they apply the EEO model elements to all Coast Guard personnel, including military, we have used the EEO model elements framework to organize the actions plans.

To describe how the Coast Guard developed and established a project management process for its action plans, we obtained documentation from CRD officials on their organizational structure and review processes and interviewed CRD officials to supplement the documentation. To determine the extent to which Coast Guard's action plans are aligned with generally accepted project management practices, we reviewed prior GAO reports[3] and the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) of 1993,[4] and also conducted an external literature review to identify elements of successful project planning and implementation. Subsequently, we identified and adapted seven practices that are associated with generally accepted project management practices.[5] We analyzed the extent to which selected action plans contained seven practices associated with generally accepted project management practices. We also reviewed our prior work on the Coast Guard's modernization program[6] for context regarding the Civil Rights Directorate's restructuring action plan. We conducted semi-structured interviews with Coast Guard officials responsible for the design, implementation, and approval of action plans to address the recommendations.

[2]MD-715 provides policy guidance and standards for establishing and maintaining effective affirmative programs of equal employment opportunity under § 717 of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, and effective affirmative action programs under section 501 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. See, 42 U.S.C. § 2000e-16 and 29 U.S.C. § 791. We did not evaluate the extent to which CRD's action plans met the criteria for EEOC model elements.

[3]GAO, *Motor Carrier Safety: The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration Has Developed a Reasonable Framework for Managing and Testing Its Comprehensive Safety Analysis 2010 Initiative*, GAO-08-242R (Washington, D.C.: Dec. 20, 2007); and GAO, *Standards for Internal Control in the Federal Government*, GAO/AIMD-00-21.3.1 (Washington, D.C.: November 1999). Internal control standards provide the overall framework for establishing and maintaining internal controls in the federal government.

[4]Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA), Pub. L. No. 103-62, 107 Stat. 285 (Aug. 3, 1993).

[5]Project Management Institute, *A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK), First Edition (1996)*. We adapted the original language from PMBOK for the purposes of the GAO testimony.

[6]GAO, Coast Guard: *Observations on the Genesis and Progress of the Service's Modernization Program*, GAO-09-530R (Washington, D.C.: Jun. 24, 2009).

As part of our assessment, we selected and reviewed four action plans that are related to key issues identified in the external review. For example, the first three action plans relate to improving the consistency of EO/EEO service delivery throughout Coast Guard—a major issue identified in the third party review.[7] The selected plans encompass actions on 13 of the 53 recommendations and address major concerns with CRD's operations. We selected the following action plans:

- Completing a New Personally Identifiable Information (PII) Handbook;
- Restructuring Civil Rights Operations;
- Revising the EO Manual; and
- Training to Address Office Climate.

We conducted this performance audit from November 2009 through April 2010, in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

In brief, nearly half of the action plans align with strengthening the demonstrated commitment from leadership. Leadership commitment is an essential element of a model EEO program. While action plans and leadership commitment are critical, only effective implementation of solutions will resolve the CRD's long-standing issues. According to CRD officials, their priority was to address the recommendations and complete the planning and implementation of action plans in a timely manner. Although CRD established a planning and process management control group and focused on implementing and completing the action plans quickly, in many cases the CRD action plans lack documentation important to internal controls, and these plans could be improved by defining measurable outcome goals and plans for evaluation of action plan results. Without internal controls, such as timely and reliable documentation, CRD weakens transparency to stakeholders and loses a historical record of its implementation approach. Based on our review of the selected action plans, we recommend that, going forward, CRD: (1) ensure internal controls are in place to maintain the documentation necessary to facilitate oversight and course corrections as plans are

[7]There are other action plans related to key issues identified in the external review that are not included in our review.

designed and implemented, (2) establish measurable performance goals for the action plans to support the management decision as to the completion status of the action plans, and (3) define an evaluation plan for each action plan to assess the degree to which the plan yielded the intended outcomes.

Background

The Coast Guard is one of the five armed forces of the United States and the only military organization within the Department of Homeland Security. Coast Guard is charged with carrying out 11 statutory missions with approximately 50,000 personnel: 42,000 active duty military and 8,000 civilians.[8]

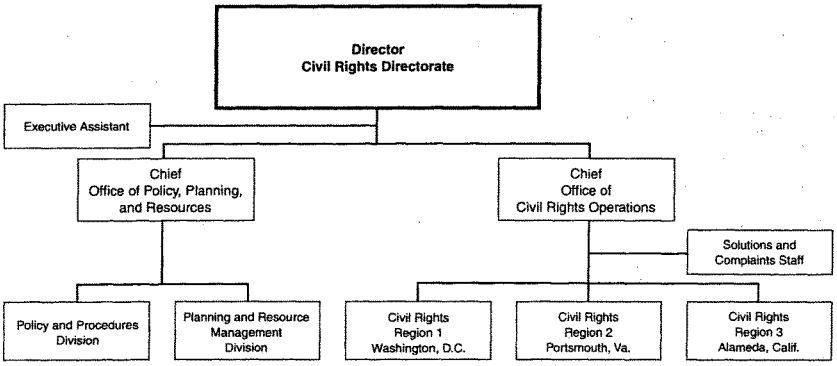
CRD's mission is to foster and maintain a model EO/EEO workplace that supports mission execution. CRD's principal functions are to facilitate the Coast Guard's (1) EEO program for its civilian employees and (2) EO program for its military members. Under the EEO program, CRD is responsible for ensuring Coast Guard compliance with the federal statutes prohibiting employment discrimination as well as EEOC's regulations and directives, including MD-715, which explains the basic elements necessary to create and maintain a model EEO program. Under the EO program, while military members are not covered by the antidiscrimination statutes and EEOC regulations and directives, Coast Guard policy provides that military equal opportunity policies are generally based upon principles set forth in civilian EEO policy, including affording military members with discrimination complaint procedures that mirror the EEO process to the extent possible.

CRD is led by a Director who reports to the Commandant of the Coast Guard and is responsible for all EEO/EO activities within the Coast Guard. The Chief of the Office of Policy, Planning, and Resources reports directly to the Director of the CRD and serves as the acting Director in the Director's absence. The Office of Policy, Planning, and Resources also acquires, allocates, and oversees resources for CRD in compliance with the Chief Financial Office's policies. The Chief of the Office of Civil Rights Operations reports to the Director of CRD and oversees and manages all

[8]Coast Guard's 11 missions are: (1) Ports, waterways, and coastal security, (2) Drug interdiction, (3) Aids to navigation, (4) Search and rescue, (5) Living marine resources, (6) Marine safety, (7) Defense readiness, (8) Migrant interdiction, (9) Marine environmental protection, (10) Ice operations, and (11) Other law enforcement. See, § 888 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (Pub. L. No. 107-296, 116 Stat. 2135, 2249 (2002)).

full-time 45 Coast Guard civil rights service providers through three Civil Rights Regional offices.

Figure 1: Organizational Chart of the Civil Rights Directorate



Source: GAO presentation of Coast Guard information as of September 30, 2009.

As stated previously, EEOC's MD-715 provides guidance to federal agencies to identify the basic elements necessary to create and maintain a model EEO program. EEOC instructions state that an agency should review its EEO and personnel programs, policies, and performance standards against six elements to identify where their EEO program can become more effective. The six essential elements EEOC describes for a model EEO program are:

- Demonstrated commitment from agency leadership,
- Integration of EEO into the agency's strategic mission,
- Management and program accountability,
- Proactive prevention of unlawful discrimination,
- Efficiency, and
- Responsiveness and legal compliance.[9]

[9]See appendix II for a summary of the six model elements.

Agency Leadership Is the Primary EEOC Model Program Element Addressed by Coast Guard Action Plans

Over one-third of the 2009 recommendations dealt with agency leadership issues, as did the recommendations of the prior reviews. CRD developed 29 action plans to address the recent 53 recommendations, with 13 focusing on leadership. Table 1 shows a summary of the distribution of these action plans across EEOC's six model elements.[10]

Table 1: Distribution of CRD Action Plans across EEOC's Model Elements

EEOC's model elements	Number of action plans aligned with model element*
Demonstrated Commitment from Agency Leadership	13
Integration of EEO into Agency's Strategic Mission	5
Management and Program Accountability	2
Proactive Prevention of Unlawful Discrimination	0
Efficiency	4
Responsiveness and Legal Compliance	1

Source: GAO analysis based on EEOC's model elements and action plan alignment.

*Four of the 29 action plans did not align with any of EEOC's model elements.

The priority given by CRD to address agency leadership is based on the most recent recommendations they received and is also consistent with the focus of earlier third-party recommendations provided to the Coast Guard on EO/EEO issues.[11] According to EEOC, the leadership element of a model program includes allocating sufficient resources to the EEO program, such as personnel with training and experience, staff with relevant knowledge and skills, adequate data collection and analysis systems, and training programs for all employees. Issuing an effective EEO program policy statement and ensuring that all employees are informed of EEO programs are also part of the demonstrated commitment element. Examples of the action plans that focus on demonstrated commitment from agency leadership include:

[10]The EEOC categories of model elements are not mutually exclusive and can be subject to interpretation.

[11]None of the action plans focus on proactive prevention of unlawful discrimination because no recommendations were made concerning this element. This does not imply that there should be plans focusing on proactive prevention or that the Coast Guard Civil Rights Directorate does not need to improve proactive prevention.

- Develop a comprehensive training program for Civil Rights Service Providers;
- Schedule Office of Civil Rights headquarters and field-level senior staff for the Center for Creative Leadership North America Leadership workshops; and
- Task regional managers with identifying skills and managing the training needs of their staffs.

Although CRD Established Processes to Develop and Review Selected Action Plans, Documentation of Key Decisions and Outcomes Needs Improvement

CRD took several steps to develop and review action plans to address recommendations from the most recent external review, such as developing a functional review team, assigning project officers, meeting with the Commandant and agency leadership, and consulting the agency financial officer. CRD officials stated that they organized with a sense of urgency to address the recommendations and complete their planning and implementation of action plans. The key players in the planning and implementation of action plans were:

- **Functional Review Team:** According to CRD staff, a team of senior CRD staff, called the "Tiger Team," was created to serve as the functional review team. This team aimed to effectively and efficiently address the recommendations with limited resources. Members of the Tiger Team included the Director of CRD, the executive assistant, the Chief of the Office of Policy and Planning, and Chief of the Office of Civil Rights Operations. The Tiger Team guided the development of the action plans and also reviewed and approved the implementation of the action plans. The Tiger Team formulated strategies to implement action plans, assigned project officers, set deadlines for project officers to complete action plans, and reviewed documentation submitted by project officers to support their position that an action plan was complete.

- **Project Officers:** Project officers, appointed by the Tiger Team, were responsible for providing weekly updates to the Tiger Team and for overseeing the execution of the action plans. CRD told us that the project officers were chosen based on their job responsibilities and knowledge of the subject matter. The project officers reported to the Tiger Team through an appointed lead project officer.

- **Commandant:** CRD staff told us that the Director and executive assistant met regularly with the Commandant to provide updates and receive feedback on the action plans. According to CRD staff, during these meetings the Commandant provided guidance on the action plans and helped formulate the decision on time frames to complete the action plans.

- **Agency Leadership:** Coast Guard leadership, including the Commandant, was involved mainly with the action plan to restructure civil rights operations. The Commandant charged the Leadership Council, an advisory body of the Coast Guard's senior leadership,[12] with evaluating CRD's organizational structure, human resource practices, and needs related to their EEO program, diversity, and climate, among other related responsibilities. CRD briefed the Leadership Council twice and the council provided guidance and feedback to CRD on aspects of the restructuring action plan.

- **Coast Guard's Restructuring Team:** The Commandant's Intent Action Order Reorganization Review Team is an intra-agency body that reviews organizational restructuring proposals for compliance with rules of engagement and conformity to overall Coast Guard organizational rules and policies. The review team's approval was necessary for CRD to restructure its operations; CRD completed a checklist that was required to gain the review team's approval.

- **Coast Guard Directorates:** CRD staff also met with senior officials in other directorates for feedback on action plans that related to their respective offices. For example, the Director and executive assistant met with Planning, Resources, and Procurement Directorate staff to review all the action plans for financial implications and to receive status updates from CRD on the execution of the action plans. The Planning, Resources, and Procurement Directorate staff advised the Commandant on the budget implications of the proposed action plans and recommended budget-related decisions. Although the Chief Financial Officer did not have approval responsibilities, he received periodic status updates from CRD on the execution of the action plans. CRD officials also stated that the Engineering and Logistics Directorate and the Command, Control, Communications, Computers and Information Technology Directorate reviewed the restructuring action plan.

[12]The Leadership Council consists of the Commandant, Vice Commandant, Commanders (Atlantic and Pacific Areas), the Chief of Staff, and the Master Chief Petty Officer of Coast Guard.

CRD Did Not Consistently Document Key Decisions Related to the Development and Review of the Action Plans

When developing and reviewing the action plans, CRD did not maintain documentation as recommended in federal internal control standards.[13] As a result, CRD lacks transparency and accountability to stakeholders. Lack of documentation also impedes the ability to track progress, make midcourse corrections, and illustrate to stakeholders that it is effectively solving these issues. According to the internal control standards, accurate and timely documentation of actions and events is necessary for the management of an organization and for making effective decisions.

CRD was not able to provide documentation for recording minutes and decisions made at internal meetings, meetings with the Commandant, briefings to the Leadership Council, or meetings related to the action plans. They primarily tracked the action plans and the status of their completion through the functional review recommendation sheet. In addition, they used memos and e-mails to document some decisions and as a way to delegate responsibility.

- **The Functional Review Recommendation (FRR) Spreadsheet:** The FRR spreadsheet was the primary tool that CRD used to update the Commandant and CRD leadership on action plan development and implementation. The Tiger Team designed the FRR spreadsheet using the Commandant's guidance on important elements to track. For each recommendation, this spreadsheet included the responsible project officer, actions taken, the priority of the action plan, deadlines, days until deadlines, and completion status. After receiving status notes from the project officers through the CRD executive assistant, the lead project officer would update the FRR sheet by deleting previous entries in the "Action Taken" columns. As a result, CRD only has documentation of the most recent actions taken and in the future will not be able to assess the effectiveness of their approach to the action plans.[14] Decisions or directions from the Commandant as a result of these status reviews were not recorded.

- **Memos:** CRD used memos to document some decisions, such as the rationale behind restructuring the directorate, the assignment of a modernization officer to oversee the logistics of CRD's modernization, the Commandant's approval of resources for training, staffing, and other

[13]GAO/AIMD-00-21.3.1.

[14]See appendix III for an excerpt from the Functional Review Recommendation Implementation Spreadsheet.

program support, and the assignment of a PII privacy officer to ensure that safeguards are in place for proper handling of complaint records.

- **E-mails:** CRD used e-mails to document when meetings were held and who was invited to meetings. CRD provided e-mails as the sole documentation of certain actions related to the planning and implementation of the action plans, such as the designation of tasks to staff, outreach to stakeholders, and submission of action plan status updates.

CRD officials stated that their priority was to complete the action plans in a timely manner rather than assure that development and review processes were documented. However, without timely and reliable documentation of decisions and actions, CRD cannot communicate or provide a historical track of its approach to the action plans. Ultimately, this lack of documentation may weaken CRD's transparency. When an organization is undergoing change, as is the case with CRD and Coast Guard, transparency becomes even more important as it can increase the staff's confidence in the changes.

According to CRD officials, the CRD executive assistant—an integral part of the action plan implementation process—serves at CRD on a rotating basis and will leave the position in June of 2010. Without documentation of the decisions made in the design, implementation, and review of the action plans, the knowledge the official has may leave with him.

Documentation of decisions may also allow CRD to demonstrate to Coast Guard leadership and other stakeholders its progress in addressing long-standing issues identified in the two previous external reviews of CRD. Both the reviews of CRD highlighted issues related to the office's organizational structure, complaint process, and effectiveness, among other issues. Clear documentation is necessary so that the directorate can track progress, make midcourse corrections, and illustrate to stakeholders that it is effectively solving long-standing issues.

The following are examples of the types of records that CRD could have maintained:

- Documentation of the action plan development process and its products, such as minutes from the internal CRD meetings. Minutes from these meetings could have included concerns that were raised, decisions that were made, follow-up issues, and individuals in attendance. Decisions from the Commandant, Leadership Council, and other directorates should also have been documented.

- Documentation of the review process, such as the individuals tasked with reviewing the action plans, dates when completed action plans were approved or denied, and criteria for approving the completion of the action plans.

- Historical record of the weekly status updates of the action plans on the FRR spreadsheet, without which CRD officials may not be able to determine if they are on track to meet their goals or course-correct if necessary. They also cannot use this historical record to fine-tune action planning in the future.

Selected Action Plans Implemented Some Project Planning Practices, but Did Not Fully Implement Other Practices

According to the Project Management Institute, a project plan is used to guide the execution and the internal controls for a project. The plan documents planning assumptions, project decisions, approved scope, cost, and schedules.[15] Among other benefits, this facilitates communication among stakeholders. The following seven practices are adapted from generally accepted project management practices:

1. Identifying measurable performance goals;
2. Defining specific tasks to complete the action plan;
3. Identifying the person(s) accountable for completing the tasks to complete the action plan;
4. Identifying interim milestones/checkpoints to gauge the completion of the action plan;
5. Identifying the needed resources to complete the action plan;
6. Consulting stakeholders; and
7. Defining how to evaluate the success of completing the action plan.[16]

We reviewed the following four action plans that are related to key issues identified in the external review. These action plans encompass 13 of the 53 recommendations that were made to CRD.

- **Complete a New PII Handbook.** This action plan was intended to create a PII handbook. To do so, CRD needed to complete a number of complex tasks including developing Standard Operating Procedures for personal and confidential information, developing a records management system

[15]Project Management Institute, *A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge*, First Edition (1996).

[16]See appendix IV for a summary of the generally accepted project management practices.

for EEO/EO-related records, instituting a privacy and records management program, and assigning a privacy officer in Coast Guard headquarters.

- **Train Senior Staff to Address Office Climate.** This action plan was intended to improve the interpersonal dynamics of CRD's senior staff. Elements of the action plan included using workshops to help senior staff understand their own and others' underlying interests and concerns, guiding the Director, Deputy Director, and senior staff to pursue more collaborative methods of working with each other, and strengthening leadership effectiveness in group dynamics.

- **Restructure Civil Rights Operations.** This action plan was intended to centralize the management of the EEO/EO services. Formerly, the civil rights service providers who receive EEO/EO complaints were geographically dispersed and reported to their command leader within the geography in which they were located. In the centralized structure, full-time civil rights service providers report to three civil rights regional managers, each responsible for a multistate region. As the regional managers report to CRD rather than Field Commanders, they are in the direct line of command of CRD headquarters.

- **Revise the EO Manual.** This action plan was intended to address the recommendation to revise the manual and add content that addresses the roles of field and headquarters personnel throughout the complaint process and the appropriate statutory references and citations. CRD contracted this undertaking to a third party to complete while providing the oversight intended to achieve a standardized administration of complaints throughout the commands.

Action Plans Only Partially Identified Measurable Performance Goals and Did Not Define How to Evaluate the Success of Completing a Plan

We analyzed the four selected action plans to determine the extent to which generally accepted project management practices have been integrated in their development and implementation process. Table 2 shows the results of our assessment of the extent to which each action plan implemented the practices. For purposes of our analysis, fully means all of the conditions of the project management practices were met, partially means the criteria did not meet all of the conditions of the project management practice, and did not implement means CRD did not provide evidence to meet any of the conditions of the project management practice or the evidence provided was inadequate.

Table 2: GAO Assessment of CRD's Action Plan Alignment with Generally Accepted Project Management Practices

Action taken to address recommendation	Identified measurable performance goals	Defined specific tasks to complete the action plan	Identified the person(s) accountable for executing the tasks to complete the action plan	Identified interim milestones/ checkpoints to gauge the completion of the action plan	Identified the needed resources to complete the action plan	Consulted stakeholders	Defined how to evaluate the success of completing the action plan
Create PII Handbook	Partially	Fully	Fully	Partially	Did not implement	Fully	Did not implement
Training to Address Office Climate	Partially	Did not implement	Fully	Partially	Partially	Did not implement	Did not implement
Restructuring Civil Rights Operations	Partially	Fully	Fully	Partially	Fully	Fully	Did not implement
Revising the EO Manual	Partially	Fully	Fully	Fully	Fully	Partially	Did not implement

Source: GAO analysis of CRD action plans.

Identifying Measurable Performance Goals. All the selected action plans describe an output goal, such as revising the EO manual or attending training, but do not identify measurable objectives or identify the intended results of completing the action plans. In order to fully meet the criteria, CRD needed to define an outcome goal for each of the selected action plans that had measurable objectives against which actual achievements can be compared. For example, conducting training to address office climate is an output goal, but also establishing an outcome goal, such as improving the results of CRD's organizational assessment survey—a measure of personnel attitudes across Coast Guard—would more fully measure the success of the action plan in achieving its intent.

Defined Specific Tasks to Complete the Action Plan. Three of the four action plans defined specific tasks to complete the action plan; however, the action plan related to attending training to address CRD's office climate did not. CRD's senior officials attended six 45-minute training sessions over the course of two months. CRD officials stated that since this action plan was undertaken, a training manager has been appointed to plan longer-term training for CRD.

Identified the Person(s) Accountable for Completing the Action Plan. All four selected action plans fully implemented the project planning

practice of identifying a person or persons accountable for completing the action plan. CRD designated a project officer, or person accountable for the completion of the action plan, at the beginning of the action plan implementation process. Each project officer was responsible for updating the lead project officer on the week's progress, as part of the process CRD had established.

Identified Interim Milestones and Checkpoints to Gauge the Completion of the Action Plan. The contract to revise the EO manual was the only action plan that fully implemented checkpoints and milestones to gauge the completion of the manual. The remaining three action plans, creating the PII handbook, restructuring civil rights operations, and training to address office climate, used their weekly status reporting system to judge process. Establishing milestones for the action plans before or during the planning process would have allowed CRD not only to judge weekly progress, but also to benchmark where weekly progress stood against where they intended. Further, CRD did not keep a record of the weekly status reports or checkpoints; instead, they replaced the prior week's status with the newest status, thus reducing their ability to track the action plans' long-term progress.

Identified the Needed Resources to Complete the Action Plan. The action plan to create a PII handbook was the only plan that did not identify the needed resources to complete the specific action plan. Although CRD officials stated that all of the action plans were reviewed by Coast Guard directorates responsible for Budget, Information Technology, and Infrastructure to determine needed resources, CRD was unable to provide documentation of any of the directorate reviews. Training to address office climate partially implemented this practice. CRD provided documentation of the financial cost of training; however, the documentation did not discuss any other training resources, such as staff time and equipment or training materials. The other two selected action plans, restructuring civil rights operations and revising the EO manual, fully implemented the practice of identifying all of the needed resources to complete action plans. CRD used approved funding and staffing requests to document the identification of resources needed for both of these action plans.

Consulted Stakeholders. For two of the selected action plans, creating the PII handbook and restructuring civil rights operations, CRD provided

documentation demonstrating that they consulted the stakeholders they deemed relevant—civil rights service providers and unions respectively.[17] One of the action plans, related to training to address office climate, did not have any documentation of stakeholder consultation. According to CRD officials, the action plan to revise the EO manual will consult all directorates once it is complete. We assessed this action plan as partially implemented because the end users of the manual were not consulted while the manual was being drafted.

Evaluated the Success of Completing the Action Plan. None of the selected action plans that we reviewed identified how CRD would evaluate the success of completing the action plan. CRD officials stated that they were primarily focused on completing the action plans to address the recommendations to improve the EO/EEO program, and if they had more time, they would have planned to evaluate the action plans. This planning practice—planning to evaluate success—is linked to the earlier planning practice of identifying performance goals. Outcome measures as performance goals, as opposed to output measures, would provide the basis for evaluating the success of the action plans in achieving the intended improvements in CRD. While it is too early to evaluate the effectiveness of the action plans, strategizing about how they would be evaluated is a key step in identifying any necessary midcourse corrections and ensuring that change will go in the right direction.

Conclusions and Observations

Nearly half of the CRD action plans address issues focused on agency leadership. Coast Guard has received recommendations for addressing these issues in previous years but the issues continue to be identified by external reviews as needing improvement. Although the current CRD action plans are intended to address these longstanding issues, effective implementation of the action plans is key to achieving measurable outcomes and making progress to resolve long-standing issues.

CRD established an internal organization and process to address all the recommendations for improvement. When developing and implementing action plans, it is important to incorporate a systematic approach to documenting decisions, outcomes, and actions. Without reliable documentation, CRD cannot demonstrate the clear purpose, planning,

[17]We did not speak with the civil rights service providers and unions to obtain their views on CRD's consultation.

actions, and outcomes of its efforts. In addition, documentation provides an opportunity for transparency and facilitates the transfer of knowledge when employees leave the office to serve in other roles, which is especially important in military organizations.

Generally accepted project planning practices include identifying measurable objectives and the intended results of completing action plans. Although all of the selected action plans identified output goals, the plans consistently lacked evidence of planning in relation to outcomes. Without measurable performance goals, CRD cannot know if an action plan achieves its intended goals. Additionally, the application of generally accepted project management practices facilitates the evaluation of success and completion of the action plan. By not systematically evaluating success, CRD risks using time and resources ineffectively. More importantly, it also could be more difficult for CRD to know when it has arrived at its overall intended goal—achieving a productive and effective EEO/EO program that will work to ensure a workplace free from discrimination.

Recommendations for Executive Action

We recommend that the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security direct the Commandant of the Coast Guard to take the following three actions:

- Going forward, ensure internal controls are in place to maintain the documentation necessary to facilitate oversight and course corrections as plans are designed and implemented.
- Establish measurable performance goals for the action plans to support the management decision as to the completion status of the action plans.
- Define an evaluation plan for each action plan to assess the degree to which the plan yielded the intended outcomes.

Agency Comments

We provided a draft of this testimony to the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security for review and comment. In written comments, which are reprinted in appendix V, the Director of DHS's Departmental GAO/OIG Liaison Office concurred with our recommendations. Coast Guard also provided technical comments, which we incorporated as appropriate.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my prepared statement. I would be pleased to respond to any questions that you or other Members of the Subcommittee might have.

Contact and Staff Acknowledgments

For further information about this testimony, please contact Laurie E. Ekstrand on (202) 512-6806 or by email esktrandl@gao.gov. Contact points for our Offices of Congressional Relations and Public Affairs may be found on the last page of this statement. Individuals making key contributions to this testimony included William J. Doherty, Assistant Director, Amber G. Edwards, analyst-in-charge, Karin Fangman, Robert Gebhart, Juliann Gorse, David Maurer, Tamara F. Stenzel, and Gregory Wilmoth.

Appendix I: Third-Party Recommendations to the Coast Guard's Civil Rights Directorate

Recommendation number	Recommendation
1	Equal Opportunity Review—Design and implement metrics to measure process efficiency and for valuing benefits of Equal Opportunity Review process. Develop and implement a mechanism to track and report these metrics against performance targets.
2	Equal Opportunity Manual Revision—To provide specificity regarding the purpose, format, and structure of Equal Opportunity reviews.
3	Training Requirements—Assess Office of Civil Right's current training program and develop a training suite for Civil Rights Service Providers, supervisors, and managers that is tailored to the specific audience.
4	Workload Analysis—Maximize workflow efficiencies and workforce planning by basing staffing decisions and training requirements on valid and reliable data. This would include developing a Work Breakdown Structure (WBS) that delineates the discrete work elements of Office of Civil Rights operations.
5	Conduct a training needs assessment of the U.S. Coast Guard civil rights organization to assess current training programs and knowledge gaps. This assessment should also consider regulatory requirements, business drivers, and the skills and abilities of Civil Rights Service Providers.
6	Use facilitated workshops to help Office of Civil Rights senior staff members to understand their own and other stakeholders' underlying interests and concerns and thereafter to focus on those interests rather than on stated positions and demands.
7	Through coaching sessions, guide the Director, Deputy Director, and senior staff to pursue more collaborative methods of working with each other. This could be accomplished through the strategic planning process and other Office of Civil Rights initiatives such as the Management Directive-715 Report.
8	Conduct a skills inventory of current staff to measure skills versus organizational need, and to identify skill sets required for the job.
9	Conduct a skills assessment to identify core competencies by assessing existing job descriptions and key skills required to support each programmatic function. Refine job vacancy announcements to ensure that candidates have the required skills.
10	Skills Assessment—Determine whether an adequately skilled civil rights workforce is available, trained, and prepared to achieve the Office of Civil Rights and U.S. Coast Guard's civil rights objectives.
11	Develop a Training Course for Equal Opportunity Review team members on various data collection methods and the process of applying statistical techniques to analyze, describe, and evaluate trend data.
12	Ensure that all Civil Rights Service Providers receive training on intake and complaint processing at both the informal and Formal stages. This would include training designed to ensure that Civil Rights Service Providers understand their role of neutrality throughout the counseling process.
13	Training—Provide Strategic Plans and Resources Management Team Lead with additional training in budget development and justifications.
14	Ensure Office of Civil Rights Budget Personnel undergo training in statutory and regulatory obligations of the office.
15	Assess and take appropriate action regarding Equal Opportunity Review Team participants training needs.
16	Restructure U.S. Coast Guard Civil Rights Operations—This restructuring can be accomplished by placing the Field Civil Rights Service Providers under the direct oversight of the Director of Office of Civil Rights with Area Equal Opportunity Managers reporting to the Director instead of directly to Field Commanders.
17	Convert the Instructional Systems Specialist position currently residing in the Policy and Plans Division to an Operations Manager position reporting to the Deputy. This position would, among other duties, be responsible for operations management and training requirements oversight.

Recommendation number	Recommendation
18	Transition training oversight responsibilities from the Policy and Plans Division to a newly created Operations Manager (reporting to the Deputy) who will manage all aspects of OCR training processes.
19	Create a Senior Advisor Position—This position will provide programmatic guidance to the Director.
20	Designate Privacy and Records Manager—Assign to CG-00H one GS-14 billet.
21	Leverage 0-6 Deputy Responsibility—Responsible for operational and nonstatutory activities including budgeting, resource management, strategic planning, and oversight. Align the Strategic Plans and Resource Management Team and the Policy and Plans Division under the Deputy.
22	Establish a solid-line reporting relationship of field Civil Right Service Providers—have all Civil Rights Service Providers report to the Director.
23	Develop an integrated strategic plan to better enable the organization to execute and deliver on its mission. This strategic plan should incorporate input from key stakeholders, be well communicated to employees, and cascaded across Office of Civil Rights and throughout the Field to ensure consistency of focus across all areas of the U.S. Coast Guard civil rights organization.
24	Move CG-00H-3 Program Analyst billet to CG-00H-2—to assist with Equal Opportunity Reviews.
25	Move Administrative Specialist from CG-00H-2 to CG-00H-4—to assist with administrative functions.
26	Standard Operating Procedures—Develop Standard Operating Procedures for CG-00H-3 to handle all aspects of budget requests for Office of Civil Rights.
27	Revise the Equal Opportunity Manual to include statutory references and citations so that a reader can cross-reference relevant statutory language with the guidance provided. In addition, add content that addresses the roles of Field and Office of Civil Rights personnel throughout the complaint process.
28	Institute a privacy and records management program—based on Department of Homeland Security policies and procedures.
29	Redesign the Equal Opportunity Review process to increase the value and effectiveness of this function.
30	Strategic Planning—Ensure that each division develops a strategic plan that feeds into the Director's overall strategic plan.
31	Develop Standard Operating Procedures for handling Personally Identifiable Information and Confidential information.
32	Develop a records management system that describes, for each type of record, where it should be retained, the various classifications of records, the applicable policies, and how the complaint records should be maintained.
33	Equal Opportunity Manual Revision—Enter detailed Instruction for handling Personally Identifiable Information. Also, revise the Equal Opportunity Manual such that it provides a step-by-step process to determine whether the release of documents is appropriate.
34	Institute a mandatory annual training requirement for supervisors and managers through which participants are taught their responsibilities with respect to Equal Employment Opportunity and affirmative employment. Provide refresher training in a computer-based format that can be used in any location.
35	Develop a business case for Equal Opportunity Reviews. This analysis should consider the specific reasons for an established number of Equal Opportunity Reviews, the rationale for particular site selections, quantifiable measures of success, available dedicated resources, and any other strategic or regulatory drivers that would necessitate Equal Opportunity Reviews.
36	Equal Opportunity Reviews—redesign position requirements for individuals participating in the Equal Opportunity Review process to reflect the specific skills and abilities required to conduct substantive analysis and high-level technical writing.

Recommendation number	Recommendation
37	Revise the U.S. Coast Guard service-specific portion of the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute Equal Opportunity Advisors Program to include training by civilian Equal Employment Opportunity Commission certified trainers who would provide instruction in the areas of Equal Employment Opportunity Counseling and complaint processing. This training curriculum would include, among other topics, instruction in basic Equal Employment Opportunity Counseling and other related activities, such as writing reports of counseling, identifying issues, conducting inquiries, and pursuing resolution options.
38	Training Program—Professionalized Equal Employment Opportunity Counseling training program to include mandatory training required by Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, including the eight-hour Refresher and the 32-hour training requirement for new federal Equal Employment Opportunity Counselors. In addition, require counselors to fulfill a bi-annual training requirement by taking an Interviewing Techniques, Conflict Resolution, or Facilitation course.
39	Equal Opportunity Manual—Revise the Equal Opportunity Manual such that it effectively serves as the guiding document for enterprise-wide civil rights operations.
40	Standard Operating Procedures—Develop Comprehensive Standard Operating Procedures to standardize Office of Civil Rights operations. This would include Standard Operating Procedures for each team/division within the Office of Civil Rights and the compilation of an accessible master volume.
41	Perform gap analysis to determine where the current staff meet core competencies and identify where competency gaps exist by comparing the core competencies required to support the Office of Civil Rights roles with the results of the skills inventory of the current staff.
42	Determine whether current program functions are statutorily required or necessary to support the Office of Civil Rights mission and to determine resource needs.
43	Hire or contract for final agency decision (FAD) analysts.
44	Create a Separate spend plan for Training Needs Assessment.
45	Identify "strategic initiatives"—that would be drivers of the Office of Civil Rights strategy as well as that of U.S. Coast Guard. These initiatives should then be prioritized for funding and implementation in any given fiscal year based on their expected impact.
46	Use Office of Civil Rights Strategic Plan to advocate for resource requirements by demonstrating how performance goals align with budget requests.
47	Recruit and hire full-time experienced Equal Employment Opportunity Counselors and Civil Rights Service Providers and discontinue the use of collateral duty staff.
48	Assess CG-00H-4 funding needs.
49	Use the Official U.S. Coast Guard Blog to refute misinformation and protect the credibility of the U.S. Coast Guard workforce.
50	Establish an Official U.S. Coast Guard Blog to convey key message and to minimize confusion and misinformation
51	Disable access to negative unofficial blog sites at U.S. Coast Guard work locations.
52	Strengthen leadership effectiveness in group dynamics and find tools to address effectiveness.
53	Ensure that individuals are held accountable for acts of insubordination.

Source: GAO presentation of Booz Allen Hamilton recommendations to CRD.

Appendix II: Summary of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Model Elements

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission model elements	Summary
Demonstrated commitment from agency leadership	Commitment to equal opportunity should be embraced by agency leadership and communicated through the ranks from the top down. Among other things, an agency shall provide sufficient staffing and resources to operate the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) program in an effective manner. For example, staff and resources should also be sufficient to enable accurate collection and analysis of data and other employment factors, including applicant information, to enable the efficient identification of barriers. This will necessarily require staff beyond the EEO office, particularly information management/services.
Integration of EEO into the agency's strategic mission	This model element provides that the agency's EEO program should be organized and structured in such a manner as to maintain a work place that is free from discrimination in any of its management policies, practices or procedures and supports the agency's strategic mission. Agency leadership should fully utilize EEO staff as a consultant prior to making decisions which effect workplace opportunities. The EEO Director should be a regular participant in senior staff meetings and regularly consulted on workplace issues and not solely delegated to responding to discrimination complaints.
Management and program accountability	This model element provides that agencies should hire, develop, and retain supervisors and managers who have effective managerial, communication, and interpersonal skills in order to supervise most effectively in a workplace with diverse employees and avoid disputes arising from ineffective communications. Also, the agency should meaningfully evaluate managers and supervisors on efforts to ensure equality of opportunity for all employees.
Proactive prevention of unlawful discrimination	This model element provides that as part of its ongoing obligation to prevent discrimination on the bases of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, reprisal and disability, and to eliminate barriers that impede free and open competition in the workplace, an agency must conduct a self-assessment on at least an annual basis to monitor progress, identify areas where barriers may operate to exclude certain groups, and develop strategic plans to eliminate identified barriers.
Efficiency	This model element provides that an agency must evaluate its EEO complaint resolution process to ensure it is efficient, fair, and impartial. It also provides that an agency's complaint process must provide for neutral adjudication; consequently, the agency's EEO office must be kept separate from the legal defense arm of the agency (i.e., the Office of General Counsel) or other agency offices having conflicting or competing interests.
Responsiveness and legal compliance	This model element provides that the head of the agency or agency head designee shall certify to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) that the agency is in full compliance with the EEO laws and EEOC regulations, policy guidance, and other written instructions. It also provides that all agencies shall report their EEO program efforts and accomplishments to the EEOC and respond to EEOC directives and orders, including final orders contained in administrative decisions, in accordance with instructions, time frames, and deadlines.

Source: GAO summary of EEOC's Model Elements.

Appendix III: Excerpt from Coast Guard Civil Rights Directorate Functional Review Recommendation Sheet

Recommendation number	BAH recommendation	Project officer	Most recent action taken	Primary due date	Days before due	Status
16	Restructure U.S. Coast Guard Civil Rights Program – This restructuring can be accomplished by placing the Field Civil Rights Service Providers under the direct oversight of the Director of Office of Civil Rights with Area Equal Opportunity Managers reporting to the Director instead of directly to Field Commanders.	Project officer 1	Restructuring plan has been developed to align with the Coast Guard's proposed Modernization Plan. This plan will include efforts to streamline the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) reporting restructures	4/30/2009	-271	Work in Progress
	Present modernization to Strategic Transformation Team	Project officer 2				Complete
	Present to Commanding Officers	Project officer 1	3/16: Video teleconference scheduled with Commandant and Area Commanders on 3/19		-312	Work in Progress
	Present to Leadership Council	Project officer 1				Complete
	Obtain approval and implement	Project officer 3			-307	Work in Progress

Source: GAO presentation of CRD information.

Appendix IV: Summary of Generally Accepted Project Management Practices

Project planning practice	Summary
Identifying measurable performance goals	This practice defines the project's goals, describing how they will be achieved and defines measures of performance. The Government Performance Results Act of 1993 (GPRA) defines performance goals and measures with the intention of improving the effectiveness, accountability, and service delivery of federal programs[a] This framework informs federal practice and describes measures as either output or outcome measures. Outcomes describe the intended result of carrying out the activity while outputs describe the level of activity that will be provided over time including the characteristics established as standards for the activity, such as timeliness.
Defining specific tasks to complete the action plan	This practice identifies and documents the specific activities that must be performed in order to complete the project. This aids project completion by facilitating such activities as identifying the resource requirements, developing an appropriate time table for completion, and necessary stakeholder involvement in the project.
Identifying the person(s) accountable for completing the tasks to complete the action plan	This practice identifies and documents who is assigned and responsible for the completion of project tasks. This aids project completion by facilitating internal controls and reporting processes.
Identifying interim milestones/checkpoints to gauge the completion of the action plan	This practice identifies and documents interim milestones and checkpoints to gauge the completion of the project. A milestone is a significant event in the project that marks the completion of a deliverable or phase. A checkpoint is a point at which the status check is performed. This aids project completion by identifying not only the distance the team has traveled toward completing the project, but the direction traveled.
Identifying the needed resources to complete the action plan	This practice identifies and documents the determination of what resources (people, equipment, materials, and money) are needed to complete an action plan. This aids project completion by assuring that resource availability can be assured or alternate plans established to reach the goal of the action plan.
Consulted stakeholders	This practice identifies stakeholders—individuals and organizations that are involved in or may be affected by project activities—and ensures that they are included in developing and executing the project plan allowing them contribute appropriately. This aids project completion by ensuring that employees understand and are committed to the goals.
Defined how to evaluate the success of completing the action plan	This practice establishes and documents quantifiable criteria that must be met for the project to be considered successful. Prior GAO work[b] on designing evaluations discusses the importance of evaluating actions because it is a safeguard against using time and resources ineffectively. Evaluating the success of completing the action plan also increases the likelihood that a person, a team, or an agency will know when an action is complete and one has arrived at the intended goal, which should be attaining the results the action plans were intended to accomplish.

Source: GAO analysis.

[a]Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA), Pub. L. No. 103-62, 107 Stat. 285 (Aug. 3, 1993).

[b]GAO, Designing Evaluations, GAO/PEMD-10.1.4, (Washington, D.C.: May 1991).

Appendix V: Comments from the Department of Homeland Security

U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20528

Homeland Security

April 21, 2010

Ms. Laurie Ekstrand
Director, Strategic Issues
Government Accountability Office
Washington, D. C. 20548

Dear Ms. Ekstrand:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft report GAO-10-571T "Coast Guard: Civil Rights Directorate's Action Plan to Improve Its Operations Could Be Strengthened By Implementing Several Aspects of Project Planning and Implementation Practices."

The Department of Homeland Security and the Coast Guard concurs with the draft report's recommendations and will work to incorporate sound project management principles in future corrective plans. We agree that improved metrics will better enable the program to measure success. The Coast Guard looks forward to continuing to refine its project management efforts to ensure that they meet the requirements of sound project planning and implementation.

The following is our response to the recommendations.

Recommendation #1: Ensure internal controls are in place to maintain the documentation necessary to facilitate oversight and course-correction as plans are designed and implemented.

Response: Concur. To institutionalize the practice, the Coast Guard will imbed internal control functions into staff responsibilities.

Recommendation #2: Establish measurable performance goals for the action plans to support the management decision as to the completion status of the action plans.

Response: Concur. The Coast Guard will develop desired outcomes and measurable success factors, and incorporate them into projects of this magnitude.

Recommendation #3: Define an evaluation plan for each action plan to assess the degree to which the plan yielded the intended outcomes.

Response: Concur. Consistent with recommendation #2, the Directorate will develop a template to incorporate the practice in business processes.

Response: Concur. Consistent with recommendation #2, the Directorate will develop a template to incorporate the practice in business processes.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments to the draft report.

Sincerely,

Jerald E. Levine
Director
Departmental GAO/OIG Liaison Office

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TESTIMONY OF
REAR ADMIRAL RONALD T. HEWITT
ASSISTANT COMMANDANT FOR HUMAN RESOURCES
AND
REAR ADMIRAL J. SCOTT BURHOE
SUPERINTENDENT, U.S. COAST GUARD ACADEMY

ON "DIVERSITY IN THE COAST GUARD"

BEFORE THE HOUSE TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE SUBCOMMITTEE ON COAST GUARD AND MARITIME TRANSPORTATION

APRIL 27, 2010

Good morning Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of the Subcommittee. I am Rear Admiral Ronald Hewitt, Assistant Commandant for Human Resources, U. S. Coast Guard. Today, I will update you on recent efforts to improve the diversity of the total Coast Guard workforce. I am joined by Rear Admiral J. Scott Burhoe, Superintendent, U.S. Coast Guard Academy, who will address Coast Guard Academy-specific issues.

The Coast Guard remains firmly committed to building and sustaining an organizational climate in which people of diverse backgrounds, cultures, races, ethnicities, and religions are fully included, valued, and treated with respect. Total workforce diversity is not only a moral obligation in keeping with Coast Guard Core Values, but also a practical imperative that improves mission readiness and effectiveness. Diversity is, and will remain, a top-priority of our Service. We continue to take bold and decisive action to promote the awareness of, and full and equal access to, the entire spectrum of Coast Guard professional opportunities across our total workforce (officer, enlisted, civilian, reserve, and auxiliary volunteers).

Our vision for strategic diversity remains simple: the Coast Guard will be recognized as the "Employer of Choice" in the federal government for recruiting, retaining, and sustaining a ready, diverse, and highly-skilled total workforce, and we will foster an environment in which every individual has the opportunity to prosper and contribute to the success of Coast Guard missions.

In September 2009, we published our Diversity Strategic Plan, which guides Coast Guard leaders in making optimal diversity-related business decisions. Our business plan has the following five strategic diversity goals:

1. Assure a diverse workforce through all-hands participation with leadership accountability;

2. Fully utilize communication and focus groups to improve the workforce cultural climate;

3. Expand outreach to achieve access opportunity to underrepresented populations;

4. Ensure equitable hiring and career opportunities for all employees; and

5. Optimize training and education to underscore the value of workforce diversity.

The Commandant's promulgation of this plan and his strategic approach to diversity management has created a clear track to lead and effectively manage organizational change. The Coast Guard Diversity Strategic Plan, in conjunction with the complementary Coast Guard Academy Strategic Plan 2013, supports our alignment with Department of Homeland Security (DHS) human resource goals and objectives.

We are implementing our Diversity Strategic Plan through a focused campaign called OPTASK DIVERSITY that links Service-level strategic goals with tactical field-level actions and measurable performance objectives. OPTASK DIVERSITY directs our three-star commanders to develop and implement diversity action plans, provide quarterly updates and submit a consolidated attainment report at the conclusion of fiscal year (FY) 2010.

We are very proud of our strategic approach to diversity management and have been recognized as a leading organization in this field by both government and industry. Over the past year, the Coast Guard provided consulting services to other branches of the Armed Forces and to other agencies in the Department of Homeland Security. The World Bank Office of Diversity showcased the Coast Guard in its February 2010 "Diversity and Inclusion" newsletter, highlighting our notable accomplishments of the past year, which include publishing our Diversity Strategic Plan and hosting our Diversity Leadership Summit. The World Bank concluded that our "Guardian Ethos" is akin to a contract between the Service's members and the American people.

Partnerships

In FY 2010, the Commandant redirected an additional $2 million to fund enhanced diversity initiatives. These additional resources have enabled the Service to enhance outreach to Native Alaskans, send more minority officers to participate in national-level affinity group conferences, and direct command cadre participation at affinity group conferences that are critical to career development and advancement. We have also increased outreach activities at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) and assigned a Coast Guard Captain to serve full-time as a liaison to the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education (NAFEO)/HBCU. This senior officer is responsible for partnering with the leadership of NAFEO and the Presidents of HBCUs to strengthen relationships between the Coast Guard and these minority-serving institutions. This is intended to improve the effectiveness of our outreach programs aimed at increasing the diversity of the Coast Guard active duty, reserve, and civilian workforce. In just one year since creating our HBCU liaison, the Coast Guard made the HBCU Connect.com Top 50 for the first time, where we ranked 16th of the 50 recognized employers. Additionally, the Coast Guard Liaison partners with other organizations that have strong ties to the HBCU community, including the National Society of Black Engineers, the RIPPLE Institute, Inc., and the White House Initiative on HBCUs. This liaison officer also serves as a coordination and focal point for flag officers and members of the Senior Executive Service in direct support of their 'adopt a school of higher learning' efforts to further develop and maintain relationships with minority-serving institutions, Hispanic Serving Institutions, and Tribal Colleges and Universities.

Strategic Action

Just last week, we held a three-day Diversity Leadership Summit directly aligned to the Coast Guard Diversity Strategic Plan and the 2010 Diversity Action Plan. The Summit was designed to optimize training and education to underscore the value of workforce diversity. The Summit brought together over 200 Coast Guard representatives from across the Service to participate in educational and multicultural sessions, receive hands-on diversity training, network with national and international leaders in diversity management, and share best practices and resource information with several diversity exhibitors. We appreciated both the Subcommittee and Chairman Oberstar's support and participation in the Diversity Leadership Summit.

As we communicate our diversity strategy throughout the whole Service, we also continue to study issues and look for potential policy gaps that are not necessarily Service-wide or systemic. The Commandant's Diversity Advisory Council and Leadership Advisory Council, comprised of representatives competitively selected from every facet of our workforce, continue to meet semi-annually with Admiral Allen to provide a forum for reviews of current diversity policies, procedures, practices, coordination, and execution. Their feedback is a key component of the assessment of our diversity management protocol to ensure field-level issues are afforded the requisite review by senior leadership with follow-on corrective action as needed.

The Coast Guard continues to recognize the need to reach out to as many people from diverse backgrounds and cultures as possible to ensure that every American has the opportunity to consider joining or being employed by the Coast Guard. By year's end, we will have participated in more than 50 major events targeting a spectrum of affinity groups ranging from veterans' organizations, to persons with disabilities, to organizations with specific gender or national origin connections. Examples of those events include the Thurgood Marshall College Fund Conference; the Black Engineer of the Year Award Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Conference; the East Coast Asian American Student Union Conference; the Women of Color in Technology Conference; League of United Latin American Citizens Conference; Careers and the Disabled Conference; Women's Leadership Symposium; and the Annual Society of American Indian Government Employees Conference. At this year's Hispanic Engineer National Achievement Awards Conference, the Coast Guard honoree was one of our College Student Pre-Commissioning Initiative (CSPI) Officer Trainees. These outreach efforts have, and will continue to increase the exposure of the Coast Guard to thousands of prospective Academy Cadets, officers, enlisted members, and civilian employees.

We also continue to interact with younger students in order to assist them in their pursuit of educational excellence and create greater awareness of future career opportunities within the Coast Guard. We remain very proud of our efforts to support and expand Partnership in Education activities in schools around the country. We are very happy and eager to continue our support to the Maritime Industries Academy (MIA) in Baltimore, MD, the MAST Academy in Miami, FL, and are entering into a Memorandum of Agreement with the Camden County, NC, school system to establish a Coast Guard Junior Leadership program. During the past few months, we had the opportunity to provide direct support to MIA by hosting students on tours of America's Tall Ship EAGLE, assisting with drill competitions, and facilitating a field trip to the Black Engineer of the Year award luncheon.

REPRESENTATIONAL UPDATE

We continue to press forward in our enlisted and officer recruiting programs, and our effort and investment are producing results. From January 2003 through September 2009, we increased the actual number of minority officers by 32.5 percent and increased the actual number of minority enlisted members by 55.6 percent. This reflects a representational growth of 2.5 percent and 7.4 percent, respectively. To date for FY 2010, our active duty enlisted recruits are 36.2 percent minority and 21.6 percent women. Enlisted Reserve accessions are 25.8 percent minority, and 13.6 percent women. FY 2010 was our first recruiting year after changing the CSPI school eligibility criteria to focus on Minority Serving Institutions, and, as a result, 67 percent of the applicants for CSPI are minorities and 64 percent are pursuing a STEM degree—a 25 and 5 percent increase, respectively, compared to FY 2009.

In the civilian workforce, during the same six-year period, we have increased the number of minorities by 40 percent, a representational growth of 2.8 percent. We continue to work on methodologies to expand access to all opportunities in our civilian workforce. We are participating in the Minority Serving Institutions Internship Program (MSIIP), a program committed to increasing diversity for the civilian workforce by providing fully paid internship opportunities. We will be utilizing 22 MSIIP interns this year. As part of our efforts to recruit for the next generation of civilian employees, the Coast Guard Director of Intelligence and Criminal Investigation has designated several entry-level positions and sponsored a recruiting event at New Jersey City University, a Hispanic Serving Institution. At that event, the joint management and recruiting team made contact with over 100 students and gathered resumes for the newly designated entry-level positions.

In order to assist management with hiring best practices, we issued guidance to senior managers that identified important principles in the hiring process, including a reinforcement of Merit System Principles and Prohibited Personnel Processes(Section 2301, Title 5, United States Code, which), as well as advice on interviewing and conducting reference checks. To further assist managers, a hiring guide will be issued in the near future that reinforces and emphasizes sound strategies to follow in the civilian hiring process.

We have conducted two surveys to update Ethnicity and Race Indicator (ERI) and persons with targeted disabilities (PWTD) information. The ERI survey caused some shifts in the ERI data categories, with significant movement in the number of employees identifying as Hispanic and an increase in the number of employees identifying as PWTD. The employees' responses to the survey are a positive indicator of organizational climate.

We continue to partner with the Coast Guard Civil Rights Directorate to complete our annual diversity report under Management Directive (MD)-715 initiatives. Recurring meetings about tools and initiatives to better support diversity are held within my Human Resources Directorate as well as with my colleagues' staff in Civil Rights. As part of our MD-715 initiatives, preliminary review of applicant information reveals applicant pools are diverse and selection rates mirror the diversity of the pools. We believe the diversity growth in the applicant pools is in large part due to the continued outreach and relationship-building efforts to affinity organizations.

This past year, the civilian recruiting team has attended 40 outreach events, with 21 additional events scheduled for the remainder of the year. These events highlight organizations with affiliations to African-Americans, Hispanics, Asians, American Indians, Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders, veterans, people with disabilities, and women.

DIVERSITY AT THE COAST GUARD ACADEMY

Good morning Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of the Subcommittee. I am Rear Admiral J. Scott Burhoe, Superintendent, U.S. Coast Guard Academy. Today, I will update you on recent efforts to improve the diversity at the Coast Guard Academy.

All of the Coast Guard's officers are commissioned in New London, CT, either after graduating from the Coast Guard's regionally accredited four year college or attending one of our officer candidate indoctrination programs. A diverse officer corps is essential to the cohesiveness necessary to achieve the Coast Guard's missions related to maritime security, safety, and stewardship.

I agree with Justice Sandra Day O'Connor who wrote that, "[i]n order to cultivate a set of leaders with legitimacy in the eyes of the citizenry, it is necessary that the path to leadership be visibly open to talented and qualified individuals of every race and ethnicity. All members of our heterogeneous society must have confidence in the openness and integrity of the educational institutions that provide this training."

It is also clear from the research on institutions of higher learning that a diverse student population adds educational benefits including promoting cross-cultural understanding, breaking down stereotypes, and promoting livelier and more enlightened classroom discussion. A diverse learning experience is associated with enhanced critical thinking skills, more involvement in community service, and a greater likelihood for retention and graduation.

The Coast Guard and the Coast Guard Academy are committed to a long-term strategy that diversifies the Corps of Cadets, faculty, staff, and curriculum. This is the only way we will develop an officer corps capable of thriving in an increasingly dynamic multicultural world.

In the Academy's Strategic Plan, we have outlined a variety of action items needed to achieve that end including: further diversifying the Corps of Cadets, faculty, staff, and curriculum; engaging in multi-year diversity dialogues; establishing relationships with organizations that share common diversity goals; creating and implementing an effective climate management plan; and creating an effective diversity affairs infrastructure.

The first women graduated from the Coast Guard Academy in 1980; over the last 30 years, we have increased the representation of women at the Academy to approximately 30 percent. This increase in the number of women at the Academy has increased the quality of education, training, and development in the same way it will be enhanced and improved by increasing the number of underrepresented minority cadets. Further, our success in attracting qualified women demonstrates that we can and will succeed in attracting underrepresented minorities.

Diversifying the Corps of Cadets, faculty, and staff has been a high priority from the beginning of my tenure, and we have improved our resources and organization to more effectively increase diversity.

While we had previously maintained fair and equal admissions and hiring processes, we are now going further and aggressively reaching out to young underrepresented minorities who are afforded

many top-notch educational alternatives and opportunities, all of which compete with the Coast Guard Academy for talent.

This outreach and follow-up with candidates and their families must be backed up by a welcoming climate focused on retaining the talent we attract, and must be supported by state-of-the art facilities.

The Coast Guard has invested in the Academy over the last few years in a way that makes us more appealing. For example, we've created an Institute for Leadership, added a brand new barracks wing, a new mechanical engineering classroom, and upgraded our physical fitness facilities.

The Coast Guard Academy has invested people, time, and money toward more robust outreach to underrepresented minorities, and it is reflected in our progress this year in completed applications for enrollment. Our admissions system became less formulaic; the new holistic approach focuses on an applicant's capacity to contribute. Our admissions essays allow applicants to discuss leadership, character, and their ability to contribute to a diverse environment.

Dr. Shirley Ann Jackson, President of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, speaks often of a "quiet crisis" in the United States — "[t]he crisis stems from the gap between the nation's growing need for scientists, engineers, and other technically skilled workers, and its production of them." We ignore this gap at our peril.

She says that "closing [this gap]...will require a national commitment to develop more of the talent of all our citizens, especially the under-represented majority - the women [and] minorities..."

The Coast Guard Academy strives to have 70 percent of its graduates be STEM majors. Our Coast Guard depends on this STEM expertise, which is largely only available from our Service Academy.

While this STEM focus makes admission to the Academy even more selective, I am confident from my discussions with other educators, including Dr. Freeman Hrabowski from the University of Maryland Baltimore County, which has had success with both diversity and STEM programs, that the talent exists, we just need to make more of America aware of the opportunities available at the Coast Guard Academy. We are working very hard to be more visible, and accessible, in particular to the underrepresented minority community.

This increased accessibility to underrepresented minorities, and the continued efforts to retain these cadets once they enter the Academy, is essential to our future success as an institution of higher learning, and the long term mission performance of the Coast Guard we proudly serve. It is essential that a federally funded college like the Coast Guard Academy be accessible and attractive to all of America.

SUMMARY

Total Workforce diversity remains critically important to the Coast Guard—diversity is very much a mission readiness issue. The Coast Guard needs the best human capital that our great nation has to offer in order to operate and maintain our complex platforms and related critical support. We will continue to be proactive and forward-leaning in our recruitment and retention efforts, and we will measure our progress as we strive to achieve our diversity vision for the total Coast Guard workforce.

In summation, our accomplishments since we last appeared before this Subcommittee include:

1. Completed a Diversity Strategic Plan.

2. Implemented the OPTASK DIVERSITY campaign.

3. Re-directed resources in furtherance of improving diversity management.

Results of those activities and investments include:

1. A 79 percent increase in minority inquiries to the Coast Guard Academy this year as compared to 2009. A 147 percent increase in African-American inquiries with an 82 percent increase in applications initiated.

2. Minority retention, both officer and enlisted, is at an all-time high at over 90 percent, and slightly exceeds majority retention rates, which is indicative of a healthy organizational climate.

3. To date for FY 2010, active duty enlisted recruits are 36.2 percent minority and 21.6 percent women.

4. Sixty-seven percent of the applicants for CSPI are minority and 64 percent are pursuing a STEM degree, a 25 and 5 percent increase, respectively, as compared to FY 2009.

The Coast Guard will continue to do all that we can to make certain that every American is fully aware of the opportunities the Coast Guard has to offer and has full and equal access to those opportunities if he or she wishes to pursue them.

The Coast Guard is taking both tactical and strategic action. The OPTASK DIVERSITY campaign is already being recognized as innovative and imaginative, and we are confident it will yield further results. We will remain aggressive in our efforts to identify, report, engage, and overcome diversity barriers and obstacles.

We appreciate your interest in helping the Coast Guard and Coast Guard Academy become more diverse and share your commitment. This has been one of the greatest—and most rewarding—challenges of my Coast Guard career, and I am determined to diversify the Corps of Cadets and the faculty at the Coast Guard Academy.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I look forward to your questions.

○