

U.S. Department of
Transportation

January 21, 1998

Office of the Secretary
of Transportation

Subject: DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT GUIDANCE

1. PURPOSE: To create and maintain a Department of Transportation (DOT) environment where all employees have the opportunity to develop their potential and contribute fully to mission accomplishment; that supports and encourages the contributions of all employees; where discrimination and harassment have been eliminated; and that is reflective of America.
2. AUTHORITIES:
 - a. 5 USC 101, Executive Departments
 - b. 5 USC 301, Departmental Regulations
 - c. FAA Personnel Management System
3. SCOPE: This order applies to all operating administrations, Office of the Secretary, Office of the Inspector General, Transportation Administrative Service Center, Bureau of Transportation Statistics, and the Surface Transportation Board.
4. BACKGROUND: The United States is a Nation of people with different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds who have contributed to the richness and strength of our society. Like our society, the American work force is becoming more and more diverse. Effective diversity management is essential to attract and retain the best possible work force at DOT. Our employees are entitled to an environment where nurturing concern, opportunity to perform, and opportunity to continue learning, are all provided. Each of us, as leaders, must build an environment that ensures every DOT member is treated with dignity and respect.

As an agency, we are charged with facilitating our Nation's effectiveness in competing in the global marketplace while simultaneously providing the American people with a safe, environmentally sensitive and world-class transportation system second to none. We must understand the demographic dynamics of America and strive to create an environment that simultaneously works for all Americans irrespective of their differences or similarities.

This order acknowledges that Equal Employment Opportunity, Affirmative Action and Managing Diversity are separate and distinct initiatives that come together to create and maintain a positive work environment. This order is applicable to all departmental employees and

provides guidance on how we will manage ourselves and the behavior we will model with stakeholders, customers, partners, and constituent groups.

At the end of the day, our supervisors must have given testimony to their commitment to diversity by meeting the standard and raising it until DOT represents the American public in its work force as well as its work. We must understand, value, and manage diversity because it makes good “people” sense. People are our most valuable internal asset and everything the Department does is “for and about people.” Good “people” sense is good business sense.

5. DEFINITIONS:

- a. Diversity is the mix of differences and similarities at all levels of the organization.
- b. Diversity management is creating and maintaining a work environment which provides opportunity for employees to maximize their potential and fully contribute to accomplishing the organization’s mission. Further, that environment does not advantage or disadvantage any member of the work force and it ensures all team members treat each other with dignity and respect.

6. DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES:

- a. DOT Diversity Management objectives are the set of measurable goals that each DOT organization must share and reflect as the core of its diversity management plan. These objectives form the basis for the accountability mechanism incorporated into departmental performance agreements. They are derived from the departmental values listed in the DOT Strategic Plan. Each of them focuses on effective leadership throughout the Department and supports DOT’s visions as a highly competent, productive, and diverse work force at all organizational levels.
- b. Diversity Management Objectives:
 - 1) Create and maintain a highly competent, diverse work force that meets America’s transportation needs well into the 21st century.
 - 2) Create a work environment in which all employees have the opportunity to develop their potential and contribute fully to mission accomplishment.
 - 3) Use the talents and capabilities of all civilian and military employees, grantees, and contractors at all organizational levels where we have the authority to do so.
 - 4) Embrace the rich perspectives that all individuals bring to the workplace.
 - 5) Respect the dignity of all employees.

- 6) Capitalize on the best each employee has to offer by empowering them with the opportunities, tools, and support needed to develop and grow.
- 7) Market our diversity management message to our extended work force and, by model leadership in this area, demonstrate our commitment to stakeholders, partners, customers, and constituents.
- 8) Make the Department a recognized leader in the area of work force diversity management.

7. ACCOUNTABILITY:

- a. The Deputy Secretary will develop a set of core performance indicators and tools which will include core survey questions and will provide standardization across the Department. These indicators and tools will be used by all DOT organizations to facilitate measuring the effectiveness of initiatives aimed toward meeting our Diversity Management objectives.
- b. Each DOT organization, Administrator/Director, and the Deputy Secretary for OST, will develop an implementation plan for their staff. Accountability for diversity management will be included as a performance element in departmental and other DOT organizational Performance Agreements.
- c. Each employee has a responsibility to conduct himself or herself in such a manner as to foster and enhance the richness and health of this workplace. That responsibility must be reflected in a DOT workplace known for the cooperation, respect, dignity, trust, and creativity necessary to ensure mission accomplishment.

8. REQUIRED ACTIONS: In recognition of the diversity management work ongoing in a number of DOT organizations, such efforts that are consistent with this order should continue. Convinced that managing diversity requires continuous, consistent action and, most importantly, senior management's full support and commitment, each DOT organization will develop an implementation plan in accordance with this guidance. At a minimum, each plan should:

- a. Develop and carryout an awareness campaign to explain diversity management objectives to our total work force and beyond to stakeholders, customers, partners, and constituents.
- b. Assess the current state and identify desired state using, in part, the indicators and tools mentioned in 6a.
- c. Analyze reasons for gaps between current/desired state.
- d. Select and implement improvement interventions.
- e. Periodically repeat the diagnostic process to measure progress toward desired state.

- f. Adjust strategies according to measured progress and repeat the cycle.
- g. Include accountability performance element in organizational and departmental Performance Agreements.

This guidance provides some standardization across the Department and allows each organization to take full advantage of strong existing initiatives.

THE SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION:

Rodney E. Slater