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Equal Employment Opportunity Program at the U.S. Marshals Service. FPCD-78-24. March 6, 1978. 3 pp. + enclosure (1 pp.).

Report to Attorney General, Department of Justice; by H. L. Krieger, Director, Federal Personnel and Compensation Div.

Contact: Federal Personnel and Compensation Div.
Organization Concerned: United States Marshals Service.

As part of a review of the Department of Justice's affirmative action programs, questionnaires were sent to a sampling of employees at the U.S. Marshals Service to obtain information on attitudes, practices, and experiences concerning equal employment opportunity (EEO). An intradepartmental committee within the Department of Justice studying promotion and assignment practices at the U.S. Marshals Service concluded that the service needs a complete reevaluation and overhaul of its EEO program. The intradepartmental report dealt primarily with practices affecting the District of Columbia office, but it was believed that problems may exist throughout the service. The Attorney General should have the EEO Affirmative Action Program evaluated throughout the Marshals Service. The Marshals Service should insure that a system is developed to periodically evaluate the effectiveness of its EEO program. (HTW)



UNITED STATES GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20548

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MAR 6 1978

FEDERAL PERSONNEL AND
COMPENSATION DIVISION

The Honorable
The Attorney General

Dear Mr. Attorney General:

The Chairman of the Subcommittee on Civil and Constitutional Rights of the House Judiciary Committee requested us to study and evaluate the operation of the affirmative action program of the Department of Justice and each of its component organizations. We were asked to focus on the entire range of policies and practices impacting on the structure and implementation of the affirmative action program, including recruitment, selection, promotion, training, assignment of personnel, management, and the complaint process.

From this Subcommittee request, there will be eight reports. Seven will address the EEO affirmative action program at each of the Department of Justice's bureaus—Immigration and Naturalization Service; Drug Enforcement Administration; U.S. Marshals Service; Law Enforcement Assistance Administration; Federal Prison System; Federal Bureau of Investigations; and Offices, Boards, and Divisions. Following these seven reports, there will be an overall report capsulizing the EEO affirmative action program Justice-wide.

As a part of our Justice-wide review, we provided questionnaires to a random sample of Justice employees to obtain information on the attitudes, practices, and experiences concerning EEO. The questionnaire results will be presented in our consolidated report on the Department of Justice's EEO program to be issued later this year. The questionnaires will be analyzed to show results for each bureau, and Justice-wide.

This letter report summarizes our overall comments on the U.S. Marshals Service. After we began our work at the U.S. Marshals Service, we learned that an intradepartmental committee within Justice had studied in depth the operations of the D.C. Marshals Office, including promotion and assignment practices in the National Office relating to local operations in the District of Columbia. To avoid duplicating the work of the intradepartmental committee, we decided not to review the affirmative action program of the U.S. Marshals Service as requested. However, the U.S. Marshals Service was included in the random sampling of Justice employees mentioned above and should utilize the forthcoming analysis to improve its EEO program.

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The intradepartmental committee report dealt mostly with problems in the D.C. area. The major EEO problem identified in the report was:

"The Marshals Service needs a complete reevaluation and overhaul of its EEO program. There are sufficient deficiencies in every aspect of the program to warrant reformulating the program from scratch, using the experience of the last three years as the means of identifying needs****"

The final report recommendation called for the Marshal of the District of Columbia and the Director of the Marshals Service, at the end of 1977, to prepare a report on the progress being made in resolving the issues identified and correcting the deficiencies noted.

The intradepartmental report, while commendable, dealt primarily with promotions and assignment practices affecting only the District of Columbia Marshals Office. Since that study found major problems in those areas in D.C., we believe that they may exist throughout the Service. The Department of Justice, at this time, has no plans to extend the study to other areas.

RECOMMENDATION

We recommend that the Attorney General have the EEO Affirmative Action Program evaluated throughout the Marshals Service.

OTHER OBSERVATIONS

We have issued reports on various problems in the Federal Government's EEO program. These reports could be helpful to the Marshals Service in its efforts to improve its program. Copies of reports have been provided to the Director of the Marshals Service.

The intradepartmental committee discussed the untimely processing of EEO complaints on page 30 of its report. The committee stated that the Department of Justice as a whole does little better than the Marshals Service. In our government-wide review of the Federal EEO discrimination complaints system, we found that EEO complaints generally are not processed within the 180-calendar day time requirement. In our report entitled "System for Processing Individual Equal Employment Opportunity Discrimination Complaints: Improvements Needed" (E-178929, FPFD-76-77) dated April 8, 1977, we stated that the Civil Service Commission had never reviewed the 180-calendar day time frame for processing complaints to determine its relevancy. We recommended that the Commission develop evaluation criteria and assess the effectiveness and efficiency of agencies' complaint systems, considering qualitative and cost

aspects in addition to timeliness. In the meantime, however, we believe that the Marshals Service should review its complaint system to determine if every effort is being made to process complaints in a timely manner.

Also, the Marshals Service stated in its EEO plan for 1977 that there has been no formalized evaluation of its EEO program. As a part of reformulating its program we believe that the Marshals Service should insure that a system is developed to periodically evaluate the effectiveness of its EEO program. The method of evaluation should be of sufficient depth and detail to insure management that all program areas are reviewed at both the field and headquarters level.

Section 236 of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1970 requires the head of a Federal agency to submit a written statement on action taken on our recommendations to the House Committee on Government Operations and the Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs not later than 60 days after the date of the report and to the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations with the agency's first request for appropriations made more than 60 days after the date of the report.

Copies of this letter are being sent to the Chairman, Subcommittee on Civil and Constitutional Rights; the Chairman, U.S. Civil Service Commission; and the Director, U.S. Marshals Service. The Subcommittee plans to hold a series of hearings starting on March 22, 1978, on the EEO affirmative actions programs of each of the component organizations of the Justice Department. The Marshals Service is scheduled for the March 22 hearings.

The points mentioned in this letter were discussed with cognizant officials of the Department and Service. If our staff can be of further assistance, please let us know.

Sincerely yours,



H. L. Krieger
Director

Enclosure

SELECTED GAO REPORTS ISSUED ON
THE SUBJECT OF THE EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY
ACT OF 1972 AS IT RELATES TO FEDERAL
EMPLOYEES AND JOB APPLICANTS

1. National Aeronautics and Space Administration Equal Employment Opportunity Program Could be Improved, FPCD-75-107, April 16, 1975.
2. Upward Mobility Programs in the Federal Government Should be Made More Effective, FPCD-75-84, April 19, 1975.
3. System for Processing Individual Equal Employment Opportunity Discrimination Complaints: Improvements Needed, FPCD-76-77, April 8, 1977.
4. Problems in the Federal Employee Equal Employment Opportunity Program Need to be Resolved, FPCD-76-85, September 9, 1977.
5. Conflicting Congressional Policies: Veterans' Preference and Apportionment vs. Equal Employment Opportunity, FPCD-77-61, September 29, 1977.