

PROGRESS REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE CAREER ADVANCEMENT SUBCOMMITTEE

Submitted to the Advisory Committee on Diversity
for Communications in the Digital Age

June 14, 2004

Recommendation

We have submitted, for the review of the Advisory Committee, a draft report entitled “Workplace Diversity: A Global Necessity and an Ongoing Commitment” (“Best Practices Report”). Shortly after we have received input from the full Committee at today’s meeting, we will issue a final report. Assuming that the Subcommittee approves the report in its final form, we will recommend that the report be posted on the Advisory Committee’s web-page, and that the Advisory Committee ask the Commission to take steps to notify regulatees of the existence of the Best Practices Report and encourage regulatees to review it carefully. We also recommend that the Commission help promote this report and participate in industry conferences promoting the ‘best of the best practices,’ once the Subcommittee has had the opportunity to review and approve the ‘best of the best.’

Development of the Best Practices Report and the Subcommittee’s Recommendation

As noted in our January 26, 2004 Report to the Advisory Committee, our initial focus has been the compilation of a report on the activities of companies in promoting equal opportunity within the workplace. Specifically, we sought to identify workplace diversity “best practices” that would be worthy of widespread acceptance throughout the broadcast, telecommunications (wireless and wireline), cable, satellite, Internet and broadband industries.

In December 2003, we requested information from a broad range of industry trade associations and foundations. We received six responses, which are summarized in our January 26 Report. These responses focused on:

- (1) Employment diversity;
- (2) Diverse contracting initiatives;
- (3) Evaluation procedures and incentives;
- (4) The role of the CEO in promoting diversity; and
- (5) The role of the Diversity Committee in promoting diversity.

In February 2004, to learn in greater detail the practices used by companies on the ground, we asked 33 companies to provide us with narrative and documentary information on each of the above-cited topics. The companies were chosen based on

their reputations as equal opportunity employers with well conceived diversity programs. Twenty responses were received. In order to facilitate candid information, we agreed to keep the responses confidential and not to identify any respondent by name in our report.

We asked the companies to address each of the issues identified by the Federal Glass Ceiling Commission, chaired by Hon. Elizabeth Dole, in its 1995 Report:

- Recruitment
- Post-hiring job placement
- Mentoring
- Management training
- Work assignments, including rotation into revenue producing work
- Opportunities to serve on visible company or industry task forces, committees and projects
- Performance evaluation, rating and testing standards untainted by prejudice
- Compensation and benefits
- Access to informal networks of communication
- Favorable, harassment-free, or family-friendly working conditions
- Layoff and termination criteria

The Subcommittee commissioned Fatima Fofana, Esq., an attorney in private practice specializing in media and telecom diversity issues, to review the companies' responses and draft the Best Practices Report under the guidance of the Subcommittee. A draft is provided today, and the full report will be provided shortly upon receipt of comments from members of the full Committee. We commend it to the Advisory Committee and ask that it be provided to the Commission for its review and edification.

Chapter 9 of the Best Practices Report, "The Role of the FCC's Diversity Committee," contains respondents' suggestions on the subject of our own work. Two companies suggested that a recurring report or benchmark on diversity best practices would be useful. We note that broadcast, cable and other Multichannel Video Program Distributors ("MVPD") must file EEO program data identifying steps they have taken to broaden their outreach efforts as a means to prevent discrimination. While these steps primarily involve recruitment rather than career advancement, they do provide a starting point for an annual review of industry best practices. Consequently, in the coming months, we will explore whether and how the Commission should undertake a Best Practices Benchmarking Study.

In considering its next steps, the Subcommittee has reviewed the 2003 report by the Radio Television News Directors Association (RTNDA). RTNDA's report provides this longitudinal data on minority employment in key broadcasting positions:

<u>Job Category</u>	<u>% Minority</u> <u>1994</u>	<u>% Minority</u> <u>2001</u>	<u>% Minority</u> <u>2002</u>	<u>% Minority</u> <u>2003</u>
Total TV News Workforce	17.1%	24.6%	20.6%	18.1%
Total Radio News Workforce	14.7%	10.7%	8.0%	6.5%
TV News Directors	7.9%	8.0%	9.2%	6.6%
Radio News Directors	8.6%	4.4%	5.1%	5.0%
TV General Managers	n/a	8.7%	5.2%	3.6%
Radio General Managers	n/a	5.7%	3.8%	2.5%

Bob Papper, "Women & Minorities: One Step Forward and Two Steps Back, The Communicator (RTNDA, July/August, 2003).

It appears from these statistics that just in the two years between 2001 and 2003, minority employment has declined as follows:

- Total TV News Workforce – down 26%
- Total Radio News Workforce: down 39%
- TV General Managers – down 59%
- Radio General Managers – down 56%.

According to an MMTC 2001 study, 52% of minorities employed in broadcasting work for minority owned stations. Thus, the actual number of minorities employed in non-minority owned stations is far lower than the RTNDA statistics indicate. MMTC also reports that the 2003 statistics given above are about the same as those of twenty years ago.

In light of these statistics, coupled with the shrinking number of broadcast jobs and only slow growth in cable jobs overall, it appears that recruitment-based initiatives alone are no longer an adequate strategy by which the Commission can promote equal opportunity and diversity. A meaningful EEO regulatory strategy must also focus on career development and retention.

We may consider drafting a regulatory proposal along these lines, and will then consider whether, and how, the Commission might need to gather statistical and anecdotal information in order to develop such an initiative. Consequently, we will consider whether it might be desirable for the Commission to conduct field hearings on employees' and employers' experiences with career advancement initiatives, and on the methods useful in fostering career advancement.

Going forward, the Subcommittee will seek resource assistance (fiscal, additional staffing, etc.), from the Commission, including data on its internal workplace diversity efforts and statistical tools for the purpose of understanding what has worked for the Commission.

Respectfully submitted,

Jenny Alonzo
Chair, Career Advancement Subcommittee