

**The U.S. Department of Transportation**

***Plan to Increase Employment of People with Disabilities***

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**INTRODUCTION**

On July 26, 2010, President Obama issued Executive Order 13548, which directs Executive departments and agencies to improve their efforts to employ Federal workers with disabilities and targeted disabilities through increased recruitment, hiring, and retention of these individuals. The Executive Order adopts the goal set forth in Executive Order 13163 of hiring 100,000 people with disabilities into the Federal Government over 5 years, including individuals with targeted disabilities.  People with targeted disabilities have the lowest participation rate in Federal service. Pursuant to the Executive Order, the United States Department of Transportation (DOT) submits its agency specific plan for implementing the goals of the Executive Order and promoting employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities.  As demonstrated by the Plan, the Secretary of Transportation is committed to expanding access to employment by having the DOT lead by example in hiring people with disabilities, and he is also committed to creating a Department that is inclusive – one that values the individual contributions of all of our employees.  For DOT, this means becoming a model employer of a diverse workforce that includes people with disabilities, especially those with targeted disabilities. A diverse and productive workforce is DOT’s best guarantee for ensuring safe transportation systems for all Americans and in supporting economic competiveness, livable communities, and environmental justice and sustainability in the United States.

The Department has a longstanding commitment of hiring people with targeted disabilities. Each year, since 2006, the Secretary of Transportation has issued a memorandum stating DOT’s hiring goal of 3 percent of all new hires should be people with targeted disabilities. Although DOT has increased the hiring of people with targeted disabilities made increases over the last 3 years, our goal is to continue to monitor hiring rates until DOT reaches an on-board rate of 3 percent in our overall workforce. We recognize we have a lot of work to do to achieve that goal, but we are dedicated to reaching our goal through the use of the varied strategies outlined in our Plan.

**Designated Senior-Level Agency Officials**

The Deputy Assistant Secretary for Administration, Brodi Fontenot, has been designated as the senior-level agency official who will be accountable for enhancing employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities and individuals with targeted disabilities within the DOT and its operating administrations (OAs) and secretarial offices, and for meeting the goals of Executive Order 13548. Mr. Fontenot is a member of DOT’s Senior Executive Service (SES).

A memorandum from the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Deputy Director Christine Griffin to the Chief Human Capital Officer Council, dated January 10, 2011, stated that all agencies, regardless of size, submit only one recruitment plan. However, sub-agencies with 15,000 or more employees should also name a senior-level official from their SES staff to be accountable for implementing Executive Order 13548. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is an operating administration (OA) within DOT that has an approximate workforce of 48,500. Therefore, FAA has named Angela Porter, Executive Director of FAA Human Resource Management Programs and Policies, as its senior-level agency official.

The Deputy Assistant Secretary for Administration and the Executive Director of FAA Human Resource Management Programs and Policies will be briefed quarterly on progress in reaching the Departmental goals as outlined in the Plan, beginning in July 2011. They will work closely with Departmental personnel, including the Administrative Management Council, to ensure the Department’s hiring goals are met. In addition, the Secretary will be briefed semi-annually on the progress and activities achieved as outlined in our Plan.

**Hiring Goals**

The Departmental Office of Human Resource Management (DOHRM) and Civil Rights (DOCR) will be working closely together to monitor progress and report to DOT’s designated Senior-level officials and the Secretary of Transportation. The DOT hiring goals listed below will be incorporated into the Secretary’s 2011 disability hiring goal memorandum. In addition, the goals in this Plan will be highlighted and tracked, and shared at Human Resource Council and Civil Rights meetings on a quarterly basis.

Tracking mechanisms will be developed in which OAs will report quarterly on their progress and reported to the designated senior-level agency officials listed above. These tracking mechanisms will be discussed later in this Plan.

**DOT Hiring Goals by individual Operating Administration**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| OA | FY 2011 | FY 2012 | FY 2013 | FY 2014 | FY 2015 |
| PWD | PWTD | PWD | PWTD | PWD | PWTD | PWD | PWTD | PWD | PWTD |
| FAA | 107 | 46 | 107 | 46 | 107 | 46 | 107 | 46 | 107 | 46 |
| FHWA |  10 |  7 |  9 |  7 |  9 |  7 |  9 |  7 |  9 |  7 |
| FMCSA |  7 |  2 |  7 |  2 |  7 |  2 |  7 |  2 |  7 |  2 |
| FRA |  2 |  2 |  1 |  2 |  2 |  1 |  2 |  2 |  2 |  2 |
| FTA |  4 |  3 |  4 |  4 |  4 |  3 |  4 |  3 |  4 |  3 |
| MARAD |  9 |  2 |  10 |  2 |  9 |  2 |  10 |  2 |  9 |  2 |
| NHTSA |  2 |  2 |  2 |  2 |  2 |  2 |  2 |  2 |  2 |  2 |
| OIG |  2 |  2 |  2 |  2 |  2 |  2 |  2 |  2 |  2 |  2 |
| OST |  2 |  2 |  2 |  2 |  2 |  2 |  2 |  2 |  2 |  2 |
| PHMSA |  2 |  2 |  2 |  2 |  2 |  2 |  3 |  2 |  3 |  2 |
| RITA |  2 |  1 |  1 |  1 |  1 |  1 |  1 |  1 |  1 |  1 |
| SLSDC |  1 |  0 |  1 |  1 |  1 |  0 |  1 |  1 |  1 |  1 |
| **TOTALS** | **150** | **71** | **148** | **73** | **148** | **70** | **150** | **72** | **149** | **72** |

DOT’s hiring goals for PWTD’s were established based on a 3% hiring goal of FY 2010 actual hiring numbers for each OA. DOT anticipates that hiring for FY 2011 and beyond will be at the same rate as FY 2010 actual hires.

**AGENCY STRATEGIES**

**DOT trends to continue:**

* DOT has employed a full-time Selective Placement Coordinator since 2006. The Selective Placement Coordinator has performed and will continue the following activities.
	+ Maintain the web site for DOT’s Selective Placement Program. Information was developed and posted for managers, job applicants with disabilities, and Human Resource professionals. There is also a section for posting DOT’s non-competitive vacancy announcements.
	+ Host a number of webinars and presentations for managers and supervisors on inclusion training, Disability Resource Center (DRC) services, how managers can use Schedule A Hiring Authority, and the DOT Selective Placement Program.
	+ Maintain and strengthen partnerships with the local vocational rehabilitation offices, including making presentations to the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR), and other Federal agencies and organizations to support the recruitment and hiring of persons with disabilities. Based on the outreach activities with the CSAVR, DOT received a National “Employer of the Year” award in 2009.
	+ Maintain partnerships through participation in career fairs and presentations to students with disabilities on Schedule A policy, how to write a Federal resume and other disability employment related topics. Included in the partnerships are Gallaudet University and National Technical Institute for the Deaf. In addition, DOT collaborated with the Gallaudet University’s Career Center and established the framework for implementing a volunteer internship program with DOT headquarters managers. DOT has sponsored several students through this program.
	+ Provide technical assistance and consultation opportunities to employees with disabilities, managers, and staffing specialists on the recruitment, advancement, and retention of persons with disabilities.
	+ Maintain membership with the Federal Disability Workforce Consortium’s (FDWC) Steering Committee. This committee supports and hosts many activities and presentations on varying issues affecting the Federal government in their efforts to recruit, retain, and advance individuals with disabilities.
* Centralized funding for reasonable accommodations
	+ The Department of Transportation established the DRC with a centralized reasonable accommodation fund in 1999. The DRC manages centralized interpreting services and personal assistance services for any applicant or employee with a disability located across the United States. In addition, the DRC manages DOT’s partnership with the Department of Defense’s Computer/Electronic Reasonable Accommodation Program (CAP) to support the purchase of some of DOT’s reasonable accommodations.
* Inclusion of disability hiring in strategic planning.
	+ FAA, the largest component of DOT, comprising approximately 83% of the DOT workforce, has included disability hiring in its annual agency strategic plan since fiscal year 2009. Under the goal of organizational excellence, with the objective to “make the organization more effective with stronger leadership, a results-oriented, high-performance workforce, and a culture of accountability,” there is a strategy pertaining to implementing corporate systems, policies, programs, and tools to build a results-oriented high-performance workforce. One of the initiatives under this strategy requires each FAA organization to track and report quarterly on actions taken in support of the Secretary of Transportation’s fiscal year goal that 3 percent of all new hires are individuals with targeted disabilities. Similarly, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) developed an agency goal for Fiscal Year 2010 that 33 of all new FHWA hires (roughly 3% of the projected hires for that fiscal year) would be people with targeted disabilities. The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) has also adopted the 3 % hiring goal into its plans. These individual OA goals will be continued under the larger umbrella of this Plan.
		- Within the 5 years covered by this recruitment Plan, the DOHRM and DOCR will recommend similar initiatives to the overall DOT strategic plan and DOT’s Strategic Human Capital Plan. Inclusion of these initiatives at the Departmental level will require all OAs to add related initiatives to their agency-specific strategic plans.
* DOT Disability Listening Sessions
	+ DOT senior level management has hosted quarterly headquarters listening sessions for the internal DOT disability community since 2007. These sessions provide an open forum to gain feedback and provide answers to questions on accessibility issues relating to workplace environment for employees with disabilities.
	+ DOT will continue these listening sessions and use them to solicit feedback on specific topics related to disability employment at DOT, and career advancement for employees with disabilities. DOT will also look for ways to broadcast these sessions to the offices outside of headquarters.
* In August 2009, the FAA sponsored a DOT-wide hiring event for people with disabilities. The number of hires made from the event was very low compared to the more than 1,200 prospective applicants that attended. DOT will work with its OA’s to analyze the event’s outcomes and will plan and execute future hiring events with specific, results-oriented outcomes in mind.
	+ In addition, several DOT OAs participated in the OPM-sponsored hiring event for people with disabilities in April 2010.
	+ DOT will hold hiring events annually. The event structure will be determined by available resources and lessons learned from similar hiring events produced by DOT and other Federal agencies. The DOT event proposed for FY 2011 is a day of interviews and education coordinated through use of the OPM Shared Register of Candidates with Disabilities, provided by Bender Consulting Services, Inc.
	+ Future events, as determined appropriate, will also be coordinated with the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation, Veterans Affairs Vocational Rehabilitation and Education offices, Ticket-to-Work Employment Networks, and Employment One-Stop Career Centers.
* The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) created a *Recruitment Resource Guide for Hiring People with Disabilities* as a resource for managers to access for information on targeted disabilities, the hiring process, reasonable accommodations, interviewing persons with disabilities, and helpful organizations and agencies in their regions. This resource guide will be the basis for a Departmental resource guide for hiring managers, which will also include a template for non-competitive job vacancy announcements, a copy of the DOT “Guidance for Accessible Workplace Programs and Activities for Individuals with Disabilities,” and information on the DRC.

**RECRUITMENT**

Disability exists without regard to gender, race, or ethnic background. However, people with disabilities, especially targeted disabilities, from diverse backgrounds have even lower representation within the DOT and overall Federal workforces than would be expected based on their measured population. DOT recognizes that diverse persons with disabilities may not view themselves as part the larger disability community. Therefore, increased recruitment of people with disabilities must target all communities.

People with disabilities, especially targeted disabilities, will be recruited for all occupational series within DOT.  There are some (Mission Critical) occupations within DOT with medical certification requirements.  These medical requirements, however, do not inherently preclude the hiring of people with disabilities into those occupations.  DOT will also recruit people with disabilities into all grade levels.  Approximately 40 percent of the DOT workforce is at the GS 12 and GS 13 levels.  Another 33 percent are at the GS 14 level.  People with targeted disabilities have the greatest difficulty entering the Federal workforce in general, regardless of grade level.  Due to the GS level of the majority of DOT positions, DOT will put extra emphasis on bringing people with disabilities, especially targeted disabilities, into the Federal workforce at non entry-level GS levels as well as work to target hiring persons with disabilities into DOT’s mission critical positions.

**Increase Use of Schedule A Hiring**

DOT will increase use of the Federal Government's Schedule A excepted service hiring authority for persons with disabilities and increase participation of individuals with disabilities in internships, fellowships, and training and mentoring programs. Similarly, FAA, an excepted service agency, will use its “On-the-Spot” non-competitive hiring authority.

* The DOT Selective Placement Program Coordinator will recommend revisions to the language in DOT vacancy announcements that unequivocally states that DOT encourages people with disabilities, especially people with targeted disabilities, to apply for DOT jobs. Similar recommendations will be made within FAA Human Resource Management. The proposed language will also provide applicants information on how to use the Schedule A (for FAA, On-the-Spot) hiring authority.
* DOT, including FAA, will continue to aggressively recruit people with disabilities, especially people with targeted disabilities, for its mission critical occupations, and agency-specific student and/or career development programs.
* DOT will encourage all managers to recruit Schedule A applicants prior to competitively announcing positions. This will also help serve the purpose of hiring reform in reducing hiring process time. In addition, all competitively announced positions can be filled non-competitively.
	+ DOT will pilot with several OAs training HR Staffing Specialists to strongly encourage their hiring managers to look at Schedule A applicants for vacancies before a competitive job is announced. If no Schedule A selection is made, hiring managers will be asked to provide a justification of why an eligible Schedule A applicant was not selected.
* DOT OAs, except the FAA and the Office of the Inspector General, use the Executive Agent (EA) Hiring Manager automated staffing system for competitive announcements. The DOT Selective Placement Program Coordinator and Departmental Disability Employment Program Manager will work with the EA automated staffing office to determine the most effective way to advertise competitive announcements to the disability community.

**Education and Training**

Attitudes, including bias toward low expectations for people with disabilities, were identified as the most significant barrier to employment of people with disabilities in testimony to the United States Senate Subcommittee on Oversight of Government Management, the Federal Workforce, and the District of Columbia, Committee on Homeland Security and Government Affairs in February 2011. DOT training efforts will broach these attitudinal barriers and demonstrate that managers need not be wary or reluctant to hire and employ people with disabilities, especially people with targeted disabilities. Training and education will be provided in a variety of forms: in-person, webinars, and through DOT’s on-line Training Management System (TMS) and FAA’s electronic Learning Management System (eLMS). The TMS and eLMS will be used to track completion of mandatory training, regardless of the form in which it is delivered. The Offices of Human Resource Management and Civil Rights will work together to create and deliver the training and education discussed below. These efforts would also be folded into the DOT Training Center proposed in the draft DOT Strategic Human Capital Plan.

* The Departmental Selective Placement Program Coordinator and Disability Employment Program Manager will create and maintain a DOT-wide Disability Employment information web page through the DOT’s internal SharePoint network.
	+ Goals identified in this Plan, and progress made toward those goals, will be updated quarterly.
	+ The FAA Office of Civil Rights maintains a separate agency internal website that will be updated to provide a link to the overall DOT page.
* Training on Schedule A/On-the-Spot hiring and the reasonable accommodations process (including the DOT On-line Accommodations Tracking System) will be conducted for Human Resources (HR) staffing specialists and hiring managers. This strategy will be included in the manager training initiatives provided in the DOT Strategic Human Capital Plan.
	+ The OPM 5-minute video on Schedule A will satisfy the Schedule A training requirement.
	+ The Departmental Selective Placement Program Coordinator will partner with the Departmental Offices of Human Resource Management Policy and the DOT Personnel Processing Focus Group to include training on how to properly code personnel actions, especially Schedule A, in the mandatory training for HR Staffing Specialists.
	+ Training on how to properly onboard a person with a disability who needs reasonable accommodations (i.e., have the accommodations in place before they start work) will be created by the Departmental Selective Placement Program Coordinator and Disability Employment Program Manager, and given to all HR Staffing Specialists and hiring managers.
	+ The FAA Selective Placement Coordinator will work with FAA HR Personnel Specialists, Employment Service Managers, and hiring managers to increase awareness and use of the On-the-Spot policy, revised in January 2010.
* Education for DOT managers and employees
	+ Educational sessions will be conducted on how to find applicants, such as how to use the Workforce Recruitment Program for College Students with Disabilities, how to work with local vocational rehabilitation offices and/or the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation, how to use OPM Shared Register of Candidates with Disabilities, how to contact Veterans Affairs and Veterans groups will be offered to all DOT managers and employees.
	+ DOT will share success stories of other hiring managers who have hired a person with a disability.
	+ Educational sessions on the SF-256 (“Self-Identification of Disability”) will be offered to all DOT managers and employees.
	+ DOT will provide training on interviewing people with disabilities.
	+ DOT will provide inclusion training.
	+ DOT will post a variety of resources on a centralized SharePoint and DRC website. Materials will include the Departmental “Recruitment Resource Guide” and tip sheets for managers.
* Education and Outreach for People with Disabilities
	+ DOT will provide annual educational sessions on the DOT hiring process, especially Schedule A. Prepared materials may be posted on the TMS in the future.
		- All DOT employees will be offered opportunities to participate in outreach, education, and recruitment events targeting the disability community.
	+ DOT will continue to develop and expand the existing external web site where resources and information are posted to support each stage of the employment life cycle for applicants and employees with disabilities. The site will maintain a current list of specific contacts within human resource management and civil rights that supports this Plan.

**Re-Survey Disability Status of DOT Workforce**

* New hire on-boarding is completed through an on-line process using “Employee Express,” an on-line system maintained by the Department of Interior’s National Business Center. At the time of this Plan, Employee Express has not fully revised its “Disability Update” section to reflect the revised SF-256. Once Employee Express is updated to reflect revised SF-256, an annual broadcast message will be sent to all DOT employees to update disability status. The broadcast message will include information on Executive Order 13548, the SF-256 categories, and information on how to voluntarily report disability status. Employees will be assured that the information collected will only be used to determine whether the agency is meeting its hiring and retention goals.

**Evaluation of Hiring Process**

* The Departmental and OA Offices of Civil Rights will continually evaluate the hiring process to identify potential barriers to employment for several protected groups with lower than expected participation in the DOT workforce.
* Hiring reform has focused entirely on decreasing the time it takes to hire someone into the Federal service. The Departmental and OA Offices of Civil Rights will be monitoring the effects of decreased timelines on the diversity of new hires in DOT. The requirements of hiring reform have led to more standardized practices: standard vacancy announcements, and the elimination of narrative questions. DOT Offices of Civil Rights’ barrier analysis will focus on identifying any unintended negative consequences from hiring reform on diversity in hiring at DOT.

**Partnering to Identify Qualified People with Disabilities**

* DOT will continue to register vacancies with the Employer Assistance and Resource Network (EARN), which is sponsored by the Department of Labor. EARN is a nationwide, cost-free employer referral and technical assistance service that connects employers with job vacancies to employment service providers who have direct access to job ready individuals with disabilities.
* DOT will continue to use its partnership with the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation, sponsored by the Department of Education Rehabilitation Services Administration, to disseminate job openings to the appropriate regional offices of vocational rehabilitation.
* DOT will market the Workforce Recruitment Program for College Students with Disabilities on a broad scale to both HR professionals and hiring managers within DOT.
* DOT will continue to take advantage of the OPM-sponsored services that create registries and other tools to increase the hiring of persons with disability. The Departmental Selective Placement Program Coordinator and Disability Employment Program Manager will ensure that HR specialists and DOT hiring officials are aware of how to access the on-line list of qualified individuals with disabilities that is available to all Federal agencies.
* The Departmental Selective Placement Program Coordinator will be tasked with creating a mechanism to track Schedule A eligible applicants who have expressed interest in careers with DOT, as well as maintaining an applicant supply file.

**Wounded Warrior Employment Initiatives**

In support of the Executive Order 13518, “Employment of Veterans in the Federal Government,” a DOT Veteran Employment Operational Plan was unveiled in May 2010. The plan highlights strategies, partnerships, new initiatives, and performance metrics to recruit, hire, train, and retain a broader talent pool of transitioning service men and women to support DOT’s mission-critical demands. The plan identifies key roles and responsibilities for internal stakeholders, requiring a commitment from each OA to ensure success and to ensure that veteran recruitment complies with the ongoing effort to improve the DOT hiring process. The plan links directly with the DOT Strategic Plan Goal of Organizational Excellence and the four goals identified in the Government’s Veterans Recruitment and Employment Strategic Plan for FY 2010-2012 (Leadership Commitment; Skill Development and Employment; Marketing Veterans Recruitment; and Information Gateway). Implementing the strategies in this plan will help the Department continue to tap into a pool of well-trained, qualified, highly-skilled, and diverse applicants. Outside of the U.S. Department of Defense/Department of Veteran Affairs, DOT ranks “first” in veteran employment.  DOT aims to continue to strengthen its position as a leader in veteran recruitment and hiring.

* Some veterans with disabilities (“Wounded Warriors”) may not view themselves as part of the larger disability community. Outreach recruitment efforts must specifically target veterans with disabilities. This includes partnering with the Department of Veterans Affairs Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Service and a multitude of organizations that serve Wounded Warriors.

**Student Employment**

Student programs will serve to build a pipeline of potential candidates with disabilities for full-time employment within DOT and counteract attitudinal barriers to employment of people with disabilities.

DOT internships provide a pipeline for talented students to fill mission-critical, entry-level, and other positions. They provide an opportunity for students to gain technological knowledge and expertise needed to maintain our Nation’s transportation system. DOT has several internship opportunities aimed at providing current high school and college students, and recent college graduates with meaningful developmental and work experience in the transportation industry. DOT currently runs a number of student programs including: Student Temporary Employment Program (STEP), Student Career Experience Program (SCEP), Student Transportation Internship Program for Diverse Groups (STIPDG), and the Dwight David Eisenhower Transportation Fellowship Program. Going forward, DOT will adopt new program rules for its internship programs once OPM issues regulations implementing the President’s Executive Order for Recruiting and Hiring Students (2010) and Recent Graduates pursuant to the President’s Student Pathways Program.

* DOT OA Internship Program Managers will be strongly encouraged to increase recruitment of students with disabilities for consideration for each available internship program in their respective OAs. Our goal is to refer at least 3 qualified students with disabilities to each internship opportunity.
	+ For example, the Minority Serving Institution (MSI) Internship Program at FAA has been implementing Executive Order 13163 (“Increasing the Opportunity for Individuals with Disabilities to Be Employed in the Federal Government”) since 2000.
* The FAA will continue to apply a renewed focus on increasing the number of People with Disabilities that participate in internship programs at the FAA by using the existing contract vehicle for the Minority Serving Institutions (MSI) Internship Program.
	+ - In response to Executive Order 13548, the FAA MSI Internship Program Managers will be required to recruit and refer qualified WRP candidates to FAA selecting officials and managers with internship positions available.
* DOT will establish Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with key colleges and universities that have a high number of students with disabilities, including Gallaudet University and the National Technical Institute for the Deaf/Rochester Institute of Technology. In addition, DOT will develop partnerships with the disability support service offices on those campuses that receive money from DOT for technical training curricula. These MOU’s will create a pipeline of students with disabilities for internships throughout DOT.

**RETENTION**

**Federal Employees’ Compensation Act (Workers’ Compensation)**

In calendar year 2011, FAA will assume the responsibility for managing all DOT workers’ compensation claims. The FAA’s National Workers’ Compensation Branch (NWCB) will serve as the corporate office for the DOT’s injury compensation program.

As the FAA’s largest Line of Business, the Air Traffic Organization (ATO) is also DOT’s largest promulgator of injury and illness claims, with Air Traffic Controllers representing the largest group of claimants. In the interest of containing workers’ compensation costs, the ATO obtained funding for modified, light duty positions to be used for returning partially disabled employees to gainful employment. By centrally funding these positions at the ATO Headquarters level, the ATO is able to offer their facilities additional staff at no additional cost to a given facility. The ATO Workforce Services Division and the NWCB created a collaborative process whereby the NWCB identifies an ATO employee with some work capacity who is deemed to be a good candidate for reemployment. The specifics on the individual’s work tolerance limitations are provided to ATO Workforce Services who in turn works to identify a medically suitable position. Once a position is identified, the two offices coordinate on drafting and issuing a written job offer. The NWCB then monitors the case until the employee either accepts the position and enters on duty, or, in some instances, has his or her benefits terminated by DOL for refusing suitable employment.

* Worker’s Compensation policy and reasonable accommodation processes often overlap when injured workers return to work. Managers and Worker’s Compensation case managers must be knowledgeable of when claimants would also be covered by the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended. In addition, selective placement personnel and disability employment program managers must be skillful in understanding of the Worker’s Compensation definition of disability and the services offered under the program. DOT will create and conduct training for Selective Placement Coordinators, Disability Employment Program Managers, Employee Relations personnel, and Worker’s Compensation case managers on how the policies overlap. Increased coordination between the myriad of offices should result in increased return-to-work successes for DOT.
* As Worker’s Compensation claim management is consolidated, a new step in the process will be added. Whereas OAs have traditionally focused on the injured worker’s commuting area when looking for alternative work, injured workers who are medically able to return to work other than their original position will be referred to the Departmental Selective Placement Program to identify any potential, legitimate positions available across the DOT.

**Retention of Employees with Disabilities**

DOT will analyze attrition to determine the reasons employees with disabilities are leaving. Among other things, DOT will use exit surveys, employee feedback surveys and other data to reveal whether certain parts of the work environment are triggering attrition of valued federal employees.

* Exit surveys
	+ The offices of human resource management and civil rights will create standard disability-related questions to be included in the DOT exit survey. Data gathered from these questions will inform both offices on barriers to employment of people with disabilities within DOT.
* The data will be captured semi-annually.
* Pursuant to the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission’s Management Directive-715, DOT will continue to conduct barrier analyses of trends and participation rates.
* Offices of human resource management and civil rights will continue to convene listening sessions and create focus groups to capture employee opinions on issues related to disability employment within DOT.

**ADVANCEMENT**

**Professional Development Programs**

* DOT plans to evaluate existing OA developmental programs to determine if the size and scope of these programs can serve a Departmental audience. The data collected from these programs will provide insight into the impact the established OA programs are having on the leadership diversity of the Department and help to identify which of those OA programs should be adopted on a DOT level. Emphasis on diversity recruitment, including people with disabilities, will be woven into the expanded programming.

**Mentoring Programs**

* + DOT Mentoring Programs are currently decentralized throughout the Department. There are both formal and informal programs being administered within some of DOT’s operating administrations.
		- The Departmental Selective Placement Program Coordinator and the Disability Employment Program Manager will work with the programs managers to develop ways to increase participation of employees with disability in the programs.
* The Departmental Training and Development Program Manager will partner with the DOT employee organizations for employees with disabilities.
	+ The Departmental Training and Development Program Manager will brief current employees with disabilities on available current professional development opportunities.
		- Program information will be posted in a central location on the DOT Rotational Assignment intranet site.

**PLAN SUPPORTS**

**Reasonable Accommodations**

The implementation of an accessible, useful and timely reasonable accommodations system is one of the best practices available for retaining employees with disabilities.

* In an effort to ensure that the reasonable accommodations process is not a barrier to employment of people with disabilities, DOT will review its reasonable accommodation policy and update and revise its policy as appropriate (DOT Order 1011.1). The ongoing process will include updating the Order to reflect the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments of 2008 and the Genetic Information Nondisclosure Act.
	+ When the revised updated Order is finalized, a mandatory training course will be created for Human Resource Management personnel, Civil Rights personnel, and hiring managers.
	+ An educational session on the revised reasonable accommodation process for employees will also be created and offered to all DOT employees.
* The DOT implemented its On-line Accommodations Tracking System (OATS) in Fiscal Year 2009. Use of OATS for barrier analysis will commence in FY 2011, as more information is input into the system by DOT decision makers, and the system itself is amended to provide more illustrative data.
	+ Department Disability Employment Program Managers will be tasked with tracking timeliness of decision making and the appropriateness of accommodation denials.
* DOT is working to ensure employees with disabilities who are eligible to telework have access to telework. This includes evaluating potential technical barriers to remote access and resolving them.
	+ Information and resources on telework will be available in a centralized location on the DOT intranet site.

**Performance Measures**

* Progress will be measured by monitoring hiring of people with disabilities and people with targeted disabilities on a quarterly basis. These numbers will be reported to the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Administration and the Executive Director of FAA Human Resource Management Programs and Policies.
	+ As part of this monitoring, the number of student employees with disabilities will also be monitored.
	+ The Secretary will recognize the OA that has met or exceeded the Department’s 3% hiring goal.
* The Departmental Selective Placement Program Coordinator will create a tracking mechanism of Schedule A eligible applicants interested in DOT careers.
	+ If possible, the tracking will include those applicants who are hired.
* A means to track the number of managers who seek to fill positions through Schedule A before posting a vacancy for competitive bid will be developed.
* HR Staffing Specialists will be informed of the tracking mechanism during the mandatory Schedule A and personnel action coding trainings.

**CONCLUSION**

The Department of Transportation’s goal is to be an employer of choice for all employees, including people with disabilities. The Department has increased its hiring of persons with disabilities, including people with targeted disabilities over the last 5 years and we are committed to continue to employing individuals with disabilities, creating an environment that is disability friendly and resolving barriers to employment. People with disabilities remain as one of our Nation’s greatest untapped resources and DOT strives to ensure the talents and unique perspectives are included in the vital work we do every day in serving the American people.