

Statement for the Record



**Submitted by
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**In Support of a Hearing on
“Building Capabilities: The Intelligence Community’s National
Security Requirement for Diversity of Languages, Skills, and Ethnic
and Cultural Understanding”**

**Before the
House Permanent Select Committee On Intelligence**

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I. INTRODUCTION

Chairman Goss, Ranking Member Harman, and distinguished Members of this Committee, thank you for this opportunity to discuss the National Imagery and Mapping Agency's (NIMA) Diversity posture. My Deputy Director, Ms Joanne Isham, and I firmly believe that NIMA's success in accomplishing its mission of providing timely, relevant, and accurate geospatial intelligence is inextricably tied to our efforts to recruit, hire, train, and retain a first-class workforce. We also believe that diversity in the workforce is a "force multiplier" and, if we are to provide our customers with an accurate view of the world, our employees must adequately reflect the diversity of our customers. Diversity isn't only the right thing to promote, it is requisite to our business. We would emphasize, however, that our outreach efforts will not be conducted in a manner that undercuts equal opportunity and recruitment for all racial and ethnic groups, both minority and non-minority. Nor are our diversity programs intended to achieve proportional representation on the basis of race or ethnicity. We are committed to making NIMA the "Agency of choice" for all top-notch individuals who want a challenging, exciting, rewarding career in the Intelligence Community (IC).

In order to create and maintain a workforce with the necessary educational, linguistic, ethnic, and experiential background and skills, leaders at all levels of NIMA are committed to fostering an inclusive working environment that values each member's unique capabilities and contributions. One of the role models and most ardent champions for NIMA's commitment to diversity is Ms Isham, the highest-ranking woman in the IC. Throughout her career, Ms Isham has demonstrated that capable, competent individuals, regardless of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, or disability can rise to the most senior leadership positions in the IC. At another level in the organization, earlier this year a hearing-impaired NIMA analyst presented a briefing during a Homeland Security conference to an audience of over 500 people. This example confirms my strongly-held belief that NIMA's success is drawn from the capabilities of a tremendously diverse and talented workforce. Earlier this year, we celebrated NIMA's legacy

of diversity by commemorating the 1803 Lewis and Clark Expedition, the first true Geospatial Intelligence effort in the United States. As NIMA continues to do today, Lewis and Clark combined the capabilities of a highly capable, yet diverse, team to accomplish a challenging, rewarding, and successful mission of discovery.

We are proud of our accomplishments in the area of Diversity; however, several challenges remain. Among the most significant are competition with the private sector for qualified personnel and the ability to replace the large number of experienced persons soon eligible for retirement. Later in this statement, I will discuss some actions that NIMA is taking to address these challenges.

I will present NIMA's Diversity posture in four major areas: (1) policy, (2) diversity initiatives and activities, (3) analysis of diversity trends, and (4) significant challenges, and actions NIMA is taking to address them.

II. NIMA DIVERSITY POLICY

NIMA's Diversity Policy is outlined in several key documents:

a. **Diversity Leadership Commitment Statement**. NIMA published its Diversity Leadership Commitment Statement on 27 January 2003. This Statement, created and signed by the Agency's senior leaders, discusses NIMA's commitment to promote diversity and provide an environment where each individual is respected, honored, supported, and rewarded on the basis of personal achievement and contribution.

b. **Diversity Strategic Plan**. NIMA's 2003 Diversity Strategic Plan discusses our commitment to diversity and outlines the following goals:

Goal 1: Mission Accomplishment: Help employees view diversity from its broadest perspective as a business imperative that facilitates mission accomplishment.

Goal 2: People: Encourage processes and systems that support the growth, development, and competitiveness of our people.

Goal 3: Leadership Excellence: Engage management and employees in an active partnership to foster inclusive leadership skills across all levels of the organization.

c. **Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Statement.** This statement is published and distributed annually to reflect our commitment to a workplace free of discrimination and harassment and to reiterate our commitment to an organization of equal employment opportunities.

III. NIMA DIVERSITY INITIATIVES AND ACTIVITIES

a. **Organizational Culture.** As previously mentioned in this statement, the leaders of NIMA are working together to create an environment that values the capabilities and contributions of all employees. For NIMA's leaders, diversity means more than concern with diverse workforce representation. We believe diversity leads to effective mission accomplishment when it exists in an inclusive environment. An inclusive organizational culture leverages diversity by creating an environment in which all employees are enabled to do their best work and are valued for their contributions regardless of differences. To continue achieving high levels of mission readiness and innovation, NIMA recognizes the need for all employees to bring all their talents and energies to the workplace. By working together, we can achieve results that no individual or homogeneous group could.

The foundation for this culture begins with our core values of teamwork, creativity, risk-taking, diversity, and mutual trust and respect. This foundation is established during the orientation process and continues throughout the lifecycle of the employee's tenure at the agency. At NIMA, employees with varying backgrounds and experiences are encouraged to create value for the organization by leveraging their knowledge and experience toward innovation, creative problem solving, and collaboration in service of the agency's mission. One of the most critical goals of our diversity initiative is to help employees view diversity from its broadest perspective as being more than just the right thing to do, but to see diversity and

inclusion as the business model that facilitates mission accomplishment. Diversity is an enterprise-wide initiative that is facilitated by key initiatives across the agency. Highlights of those initiatives follow.

b. **Recruiting.** I believe aggressive and focused recruiting on a sustained basis is the ultimate solution to rectifying diversity shortfalls. Accordingly, one of the cornerstones in NIMA's Diversity Management Initiative is our recruitment process. In order to realize NIMA's vision of recruiting a "world-class workforce" and to ensure that the best talent is available to accomplish the Agency's mission, diversity initiatives are integrated into every element of our recruitment program. In fact, one of the Agency's primary transformational goals is to centralize, streamline, and accelerate NIMA's current recruitment business process so we will be in a better position to attract exceptional applicants before they can be recruited by other organizations in the public and private sector. Transformational recruiting measures to increase the depth of the minority candidate pool (such as creating a robust employee referral program, implementing advertising campaigns, developing a pipeline of qualified applicants available to address unplanned requirements quickly, and establishing a Future Needs Database that can be rapidly queried in order to identify candidates for future vacancies) will enable NIMA to lead the way in the recruitment and hiring of high quality applicants.

Among NIMA's most important recruitment initiatives are diversity recruitment efforts. For example, NIMA sponsored the Model United Nations program in coordination with the North Carolina Consortium for Intercultural and International Education (NCCIIE). As a follow-up to this very successful program, NIMA intends to develop a cyclical relationship with the universities comprising the NCCIIE. This cyclical relationship will involve communicating with the respective universities through campus visits (including tailored departmental visits two to three times a year) and correspondence that includes informative media references regarding NIMA. The goals of these diversity recruitment efforts are to increase NIMA name recognition, educate the media and influential community leaders, educators, and alumni on NIMA's mission

and, most importantly, increase awareness of NIMA employment opportunities among minority candidates so we will be the “agency of choice” when these individuals are making decisions on future employment.

NIMA has also added a Diversity Recruitment Program Manager to its Recruitment Center staff to ensure a continuous focus on diversity recruitment efforts. This individual is the liaison with key Diversity and EEO leaders in NIMA to discuss issues related to the acquisition and retention of NIMA talent, represents the NIMA Recruitment Center at external government fora related to diversity recruitment initiatives, develops strong ties in the IC and Department of Defense (DoD) Community to enhance NIMA’s diversity recruiting efforts and support community diversity activities, and establishes strong relationships with various academic institutions and diversity-related professional societies.

The strategic goals of NIMA’s investment in these diversity initiatives are:

- (1) Create instant name recognition for the Agency among minority groups.
- (2) Establish a robust Student Employment (co-op or intern) Program.
- (3) Recruit high caliber candidates, with a preferred Grade Point Average of 3.0 for all applicants.
- (4) Foster long-term relationships between NIMA and key universities, colleges, professional organizations, and diversity groups.

These diversity recruitment initiatives have already generated noticeable results. For example, the number of minority new hires for FY 2003 is 3 percent higher than what is currently in the workforce.

	<u>Current Workforce</u>	<u>FY03 New Hires</u>
White	82.0%	79.0%
Black	13.2%	14.0%
Hispanic	2.4%	3.8%
Asian/Pacific Islander	1.3%	1.8%
American Indian/Alaskan Native/Unknown	1.1%	1.4%

c. **Training and Professional Development.** One of the goals of NIMA's training philosophy is to integrate diversity throughout all of our training and development programs. We provide our employees with training and educational programs that focus on the breadth and variety of diversity, from race and gender to thinking styles. In support of this goal, NIMA's Training and Doctrine Directorate is revolutionizing Agency leadership training by embracing a stair-stepped training design to foster and develop a NIMA-wide leadership culture. This leadership continuum ensures that all employees, from the newest Band 1 through the executive ranks, learn, and know how to practice, shared leadership precepts. The continuum starts with the "**Laying the Foundation**" courses that introduce fundamental leadership and followership concepts for Band 1 and 2 employees and, ultimately, reaches our "**Showing the Way**" course for senior executives. The types of courses one might see as they navigate their career are "**Program on Creative Leadership**" and "**Leadership Lessons from Lincoln.**" Diversity principles are interwoven throughout each program. Roughly thirty-two percent of the participants in these programs are women and sixteen percent are other minorities. This participation rate mirrors the workforce representation of both groups and demonstrates our commitment to ensuring diversity throughout the agency's leadership ranks, both now and in the future. We encourage our senior leaders to participate in this program at all levels and to share their experiences with those employees who are in the early stages of their careers.

In addition, our Office of Continuing Education offers a wide range of educational programs designed to provide our employees with opportunities normally found in the private sector. Our **VECTOR** Program pays the selected employee's full salary and educational expenses to attend colleges and universities from across the country in full-time and part-time studies curricula related to the NIMA mission. We believe the flexibility built into the program facilitates the growth and development of employees from diverse familial, functional, and educational backgrounds. We offer, through our Tuition Assistance Program (TAP), full tuition reimbursement on a course-by-course basis to any employee taking courses at accredited

institutions of higher learning that will enhance their value to the Agency. In Fiscal Year (FY) 2003 alone, the Agency invested \$1.7 million for nearly one thousand discrete training events at colleges, universities (to include HBCU/MI), and senior service schools.

d. EEO. At NIMA we have a robust Office of Equal Employment Opportunity that implements our regulatory complaints process. In the last three years, our formal complaints have decreased 1/3 each year as a direct result of our aggressive use of alternate dispute resolution (ADR). Now, in 2003, we have only 20 formal cases, down from approximately 60 in 2000. Each case that uses ADR costs a nominal \$200.00 and takes approximately 4-8 weeks to resolve. A formal EEO case takes approximately 9-12 months and costs the federal government \$ 80,000 - \$100,000 each. We have found new complainants coming forward asking for "mediation" rather than asking to file a complaint. Our employees see the immediacy of resolution as making them more productive and able to avoid the emotional stress of a formal complaint. Our supervisors realize that immediate conflict resolution is not only cost-effective, but lessens the impact on the employees' productivity and morale.

In addition, our EEO runs a very robust special emphasis program (SEP) that educates, informs, observes, and celebrates the contributions of underrepresented minorities and women in the NIMA workforce. Our SEP is an inclusive set of observations focused on the contributions of African Americans, Hispanics, Asian Pacific Islanders, Women and People with Disabilities. Not only do our SEPs celebrate contributions, but also produce initiatives to solve barriers that affect underrepresented groups and thus impact the effectiveness of the entire Agency. One example of this kind of initiative is our Deaf and Hard of Hearing Council, a subgroup of our People with Disabilities. The Deaf and Hard of Hearing Council researched and defined requirements for IC-wide advanced teletype and video teleconferencing connectivity. This initiative, once implemented, will incorporate the Deaf in conference calls and office staff meetings, thus including deaf employees more fully in day-to-day operations.

Our SEPs also partner with our Human Resources (HR) Directorate as adjunct recruiters.

In recruitment, it is important that candidates know that our agency is an inclusive one and that minority candidates can see themselves filling responsible, successful positions in NIMA. Our progress for minority employees reaching the higher rungs of the organization has greatly improved since 2000. We also have seen a positive result from our HR Total Pay Compensation (TPC) promotion system that replaces lock-step promotions with merit-based assessments. In our first year of TPC, African American men, traditionally a group underrepresented in the promotion process, were promoted at a rate greater than their representation in the NIMA population. Black men represent 5.5% of NIMA and last year earned 5.7% of the promotions – this trend could lead to pay parity in a 3-5 year timeframe. Women of all races earned promotions at or above their representation within the NIMA population.

Our EEO takes on management initiatives that aid all of NIMA, but have special emphasis on uplifting underrepresented groups. One such initiative is the **HORIZON** Program. This program is designed to transition employees who are in outdated occupations or those occupations that are to be outsourced. NIMA is using the **HORIZON** Program to help transition employees into needed occupations. As the agency continues to evolve, we must encourage employees to change and grow personally and professionally. **HORIZON** is one program we have implemented to achieve that goal; it is a 21st century upward mobility program - a customized retooling of an employee's skills through mentoring, on the job training, and classroom education.

In sum, we believe we have a robust EEO program which aids NIMA in its continued efforts to recruit, retain, and reward a productive, inspired, and diverse workforce.

e. **Academic Research.** NIMA is committed to using the considerable talent available at all institutions, including HBCU/MI and Native American Institutions, to conduct unclassified basic research projects that have the potential to spark student interest in future careers in the IC and to help them develop the required competencies. Via grants from the NIMA Academic

Research Program (part of the InnoVision Directorate), we are currently funding projects at six HBCU/MI. The total FY 2003 Research and Development funding for these projects was \$300 thousand. Academic research areas include Automated Data Extraction, Geodesy and Geophysics, and Knowledge Discovery, Development, and Dissemination.

IV. ANALYSIS OF DIVERSITY TRENDS

In order to drive a higher level of competency across the organization, NIMA created the TPC system for the 2002 performance cycle. In FY 2003, the process resulted in a leveling of merit increases and promotions across ethnic groups. Statistics for FY 2003 show:

- a. In FY 2003, average salary increased (as a percentage) for all ethnic groups when compared with FY 2000 – FY 2002.
- b. NIMA's three largest ethnic groups – White, Black, and Hispanic – all had average salary increases of 2.6%; Asians and an "Other" category that includes American Indians had a slightly higher salary increase of 2.7%.
- c. In FY 2003, Blacks had a somewhat lower average bonus than Whites, but the comparable ratios marginally improved this year (Blacks' bonuses (\$1,688) averaged 94.9% of White bonuses (\$1,779)) when compared with FY 2002 (Blacks' bonuses (\$1,078) averaged 94.3% of White bonuses (\$1,144)).
- d. The distribution of promotions was relatively proportional, with White employees (who comprise 82% of the workforce population) receiving 83.1% of promotions, Black employees (13.2% of the workforce population) receiving 13.9% of promotions - - the first time this has occurred since NIMA stand-up; Hispanic employees (2.4% of the workforce population) receiving 1.9%, Asian employees (1.3% of the workforce population) receiving 0.5%, and American Indian employees (0.7% of the workforce population) receiving 0.5%.

- e. When compared with their percentage of the total NIMA population (32.5%), women received a larger proportional share of total promotions (37.4%), but did not receive as many promotions as men at higher pay band levels (Bands 4 and 5).

These statistics indicate that NIMA's TPC is moving the Agency in the right direction, toward "leveling the playing field," and ensuring the application of merit system principles, while simultaneously driving the organization toward higher levels of performance from all employees.

V. DIVERSITY CHALLENGES

The challenges that NIMA currently faces with respect to our diversity efforts include:

a. Challenges

- (1) An applicant must have U.S. citizenship to obtain the requisite security clearance at NIMA.
- (2) The lengthy security clearance process can be discouraging to many entry-level candidates (unless we recruit them early in their college career) and, for that matter, to experienced hires, unless they are currently employed and, importantly, can afford to wait.
- (3) In order to recruit and retain employees, NIMA is able to offer such benefits as reimbursement of moving costs (even on initial appointments), recruitment or relocation bonuses up to 25% of base pay, student loan repayment for new hires, and retention allowances to retain employees who might otherwise leave federal service. The agency is also pursuing authority to extend Washington DC area locality pay to all NIMA employees. Funding often impacts use of these authorities and flexibilities, but their judicious use will position NIMA to hire and keep the best workforce possible.
- (4) NIMA does not have the same level of name recognition as other members of the IC so, in order to attract the highly qualified applicants that we are seeking, our

Recruiting Center has to market the Agency name and build awareness of who we are and what we do.

(5) Retirements. By the end of FY 2004, 14.6% of the NIMA workforce is or will be eligible for Optional Retirement. That figure increases to 33.5% by the end of FY 2009. Table 1 depicts cumulative retirement eligibility rates by FY.¹

Table 1:

Fiscal Year	NIMA	DC	St. Louis
End of FY 04	14.6%	13.6%	17.6%
FY05	17.5%	16.2%	21.2%
FY 06	20.9%	19.3%	25.5%
FY 07	24.6%	22.2%	30.8%
FY 08	28.9%	25.8%	36.8%
FY 09	33.5%	29.7%	42.8%

It should be noted that the numbers in Table 1 reflect when an employee becomes eligible for retirement. An HR study on retirement trends² found that NIMA employees actually retire at the following rates (Table 2).

Table 2:

Timeframe	NIMA	DC	St. Louis
Within 1 year of eligibility	41.4%	46.6%	34.4%
Within 2 years of eligibility	56.4%	62.8%	48.6%
Within 5 years of eligibility	82.2%	86.5%	77.1%

Conclusions:

Tables 1 and 2 indicate that NIMA employees are not likely to retire in huge numbers over the next five years because the overwhelming majority of the workforce will not be eligible for optional retirement for at least 5 years. Additionally, a large percentage of employees will continue working for at least two years after they become eligible. This is good news for NIMA if workforce requirements continue to increase.

¹ Figures include approximately 800 CIA employees whose optional retirement eligibility dates were estimated in the absence of actual data.

² Study covered DoD cadre employees who retired between 1999 and March 2003. CIA retirements were not available.

NIMA has the opportunity to do succession planning in both the leadership and technical arenas in a deliberate manner. This is not to imply that planning should be done slowly or delayed, rather that the agency has sufficient time to thoroughly analyze what its future leadership and technical requirements will be and how the workforce can be transitioned to meet these requirements.

(6) Languages. NIMA employees are requested to self-identify and assess their levels of proficiency in reading and writing foreign languages using PeopleSoft, NIMA's Human Resources Management System. Foreign language proficiency is required in the Translator, Scientific Linguist, and Toponymist work roles. French, Spanish, and German are the most commonly cited "languages of proficiency."

Conclusions:

NIMA should require employees to update their foreign language proficiencies in PeopleSoft.

NIMA should try to identify ways to incentivize knowledge of foreign languages, particularly in key strategic areas, regardless of the employee's work role.

NMA should offer more language classes, publicize their availability, and encourage management to stress their importance to the workforce.

(7) Although 11.6% of NIMA's Senior Executive Service (SES) ranks in 2003 were members of a minority group (as compared to the 7% reported in 2002), we still have fewer women and minorities in the SES, Senior Intelligence Service, and upper pay band levels than their overall representation in NIMA. We have launched a new leadership development and succession building initiative to help increase the competitiveness of women and minorities for these positions.

(8) We have very few minorities in our core occupational specialties, although NIMA's Analysis and Production Directorate, our largest, has been successful in hiring

Hispanic and Asian- American women. In 2003, 14% of that directorate's female new hires were Hispanic or Asian-American.

(9) NIMA's Student Employment (co-op) Programs are relatively new; therefore it will take several years to fully reap the benefits from this program.

(10) Years of decentralized recruiting and downsizing in the Department of Defense have resulted in the need for our Diversity Recruiting Manager to re-establish relationships at key universities.

(11) NIMA is in critical need of analysts with the following language skills: Russian, Arabic, Persian and/or Pashto, Korean, Chinese, Spanish, and French. These analysts are needed to support the geospatial intelligence mission as geographic names analysts, translators, and linguists.

b. Actions to Address Challenges

(1) Develop a "brand marketing" strategy for the Agency in anticipation of the name change to the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency.

(2) Monitor and evaluate recruiting sources for quality and quantity of minority candidates.

(3) NIMA has created a sponsorship program that assigns a current NIMA employee to every candidate once they have received a conditional offer of employment. The sponsor answers questions, keeps the candidate abreast of significant unclassified NIMA events, and begins the inclusion process long before the new employee enters on duty. This has proven to be an effective method for maintaining the interest of candidates while they await adjudication of their security clearance.

(4) To address the shortage of analysts with specific language skills, NIMA is pursuing graduates of the National Security Education Program (NSEP) of the National Defense University to assist with these functions. The service requirement agreement

allows NSEP award recipients to be hired under Schedule A hiring authority for a term appointment of up to four years.

VI. CONCLUSION

To meet the challenges of the 21st century, NIMA will continue to transform by focusing on our most important asset, our people. As outlined in our *Strategic Intent*, one of NIMA's core values is our commitment to a culture of teamwork, diversity, and mutual trust and respect. Our cadre of diverse, highly skilled, and motivated people is our strategic edge. NIMA remains committed to ensuring it maintains a quality workforce that is second to none in the field of Geospatial Intelligence. NIMA will continue to design and implement policies and programs to attract, develop, and retain a diverse and highly capable workforce. We will provide our employees with human capital management products and services via a comprehensive, integrated human resource management system and develop an integrated attrition, recruitment, and hiring model to recapitalize the NIMA workforce in anticipation of significant attrition caused by the aging of the NIMA workforce and retirements expected in the next 10 years.

Our Diversity Management Initiative is our approach to ensure all employees are valued and appreciated. Because we incorporate inclusive organizational processes, we are striving to be known as an employer of choice and therefore able to recruit, hire, retain, and promote the best and the brightest. The Diversity Initiative also supports our goal of achieving organizational excellence through effective leadership and maintaining a competent, competitive, and qualified workforce. It identifies aspects of NIMA's culture that are exclusive and diversity-resistant, and works to root out ineffective management techniques and processes that do not support effective management decisions. The Diversity Initiative also develops and implements evaluation and assessment instruments to illuminate and eliminate workforce barriers that adversely impact recruitment, hiring, development, and retention.

We recognize that diversity is a force multiplier in the overall Geospatial Intelligence mission, and we have developed partnerships with the other IC Diversity Management Offices. NIMA is an active member of the Community Diversity Issues Board and, together, we are working as one team to identify best practices for recruitment and retention, highlight IC successes in achieving a more diverse workforce, and identify key factors affecting the implementation of effective Community-wide workforce management programs. Diversity is not an adjunct - it is an integral part of our Strategic Intent, and the Diversity Management Initiative provides the oversight to ensure its success. The continued recruitment, development, and recognition of our workforce will ensure our ability to meet NIMA's mission imperatives.

Although we do not require nor request special authorities for addressing specific personnel changes, we ask the Committee to assist our Diversity Management efforts by holding annual hearings on this topic to ensure diversity remains a top IC priority.

Mr. Chairman, that concludes my statement. Thank you for the opportunity to present NIMA's efforts to develop a first-class workforce in support of our national security requirements.