

Affirmative Action Plan for the Recruitment, Hiring, Advancement, and Retention of Persons with Disabilities

To capture agencies' affirmative action plan for persons with disabilities (PWD) and persons with targeted disabilities (PWTD), EEOC regulations (29 C.F.R. § 1614.203(e)) and MD-715 require agencies to describe how their affirmative action plan will improve the recruitment, hiring, advancement, and retention of applicants and employees with disabilities.

Section I: Efforts to Reach Regulatory Goals

EEOC regulations (29 CFR §1614.203(d)(7)) require agencies to establish specific numerical goals for increasing the participation of persons with disabilities and persons with targeted disabilities in the federal government

1. Using the goal of 12% as the benchmark, does your agency have a trigger involving PWD by grade level cluster in the permanent workforce? If "yes", describe the trigger(s) in the text box.

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------|-----|
| a. Cluster GS-1 to GS-10 (PWD) | Answer | Yes |
| b. Cluster GS-11 to SES (PWD) | Answer | Yes |

The grade level cluster for GS-01 to GS-10 is at 7.73% which is below the benchmark. The grade level cluster for GS-11 to SES is at 6.99% which is below the benchmark.

*For GS employees, please use two clusters: GS-1 to GS-10 and GS-11 to SES, as set forth in 29 C.F.R. § 1614.203(d)(7). For all other pay plans, please use the approximate grade clusters that are above or below GS-11 Step 1 in the Washington, DC metropolitan region.

2. Using the goal of 2% as the benchmark, does your agency have a trigger involving PWTD by grade level cluster in the permanent workforce? If "yes", describe the trigger(s) in the text box.

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|--------|----|
| a. Cluster GS-1 to GS-10 (PWTD) | Answer | No |
| b. Cluster GS-11 to SES (PWTD) | Answer | No |

Grade Level Cluster(GS or Alternate Pay Planb)	Total	Reportable Disability		Targeted Disability	
	#	#	%	#	%
Numarical Goal	--	12%		2%	
Grades GS-1 to GS-10	14740	1139	7.73	383	2.60
Grades GS-11 to SES	11588	810	6.99	276	2.38

3. Describe how the agency has communicated the numerical goals to the hiring managers and/or recruiters.

The numerical goals are displayed on the Workforce Management Dashboards and the Cultural Transformation Accountability Report and discussed during the Workforce Planning Sessions on the USDA Cultural Transformation Metrics.

Section II: Model Disability Program

Pursuant to 29 C.F.R. § 1614.203(d)(1), agencies must ensure sufficient staff, training and resources to recruit and hire persons with disabilities and persons with targeted disabilities, administer the reasonable accommodation program and special emphasis program, and oversee any other disability hiring and advancement program the agency has in place.

A. PLAN TO PROVIDE SUFFICIENT & COMPETENT STAFFING FOR THE DISABILITY PROGRAM

1. Has the agency designated sufficient qualified personnel to implement its disability program during the reporting period? If “no”, describe the agency’s plan to improve the staffing for the upcoming year.

Answer Yes

2. Identify all staff responsible for implementing the agency's disability employment program by the office, staff employment status, and responsible official.

Disability Program Task	# of FTE Staff By Employment Status			Responsible Official (Name, Title, Office Email)
	Full Time	Part Time	Collateral Duty	
Processing applications from PWD and PWTB	132	0	0	Erica Nieto Assistant Director enieto@fs.fed.us
Answering questions from the public about hiring authorities that take disability into account	132	0	0	Erica Nieto Assistant Director enieto@fs.fed.us
Processing reasonable accommodation requests from applicants and employees	6	0	0	Robin C. Kilgore Assistant Director robinckilgore@fs.fed.us
Section 508 Compliance	1	0	0	Mitch Ringer Information Architect mringer@fs.fed.us
Architectural Barriers Act Compliance	1	0	0	Tinelle Bustam, PhD National Director tbustam@fs.fed.us
Special Emphasis Program for PWD and PWTB	1	6	0	Gerald P. McGaughran Disability Employment Program Manager jmcgaughran@fs.fed.us

3. Has the agency provided disability program staff with sufficient training to carry out their responsibilities during the reporting period? If “yes”, describe the training that disability program staff have received. If “no”, describe the training planned for the upcoming year.

Answer Yes

The national Disability Employment Program Manager and collateral duty SEPMs participate in quarterly meetings and training sponsored by the USDA OASCR. Personnel also participate in the Federal Exchange and Disability (FEED) meetings where participants learn about policies/guidelines, standard operating procedures, tools and partnerships. Some of the activities included with the FEED meetings can suffice as in-service training for practitioners.

B. PLAN TO ENSURE SUFFICIENT FUNDING FOR THE DISABILITY PROGRAM

Has the agency provided sufficient funding and other resources to successfully implement the disability program during the reporting period? If “no”, describe the agency’s plan to ensure all aspects of the disability program have sufficient funding and other resources.

Answer Yes

Section III: Program Deficiencies In The Disability Program

Brief Description of Program Deficiency	A.2.b.3. Reasonable accommodation procedures? [see 29 CFR § 1614.203(d)(3)(i)] If so, please provide the internet address in the comments column.		
Objective	Ensure written materials featuring the variety of EEO programs and administrative and judicial remedial procedures are “prominently posted” in all personnel and EEO offices throughout the workplace to inform employees and applicants.		
Target Date	Sep 30, 2018		
Completion Date			
Planned Activities	<u>Target Date</u>	<u>Completion Date</u>	<u>Planned Activity</u>
	Feb 15, 2019		Provide a response to the US EEOC June 27 2018 Technical Assistance Letter, regarding corrective actions.
	Mar 30, 2019		Create and post on FS WWW Reasonable Accommodation Procedures: approved by the EEOC
	Mar 30, 2019		Insure approved RA Procedures contain a subsection featuring information to attain Personal Assistance Services (PAS).
	May 30, 2019		Establish numerical goals for PWD adopting the 12% goal for grade ranges GS-1 to GS-10 and GS-11 to SES.
	Sep 30, 2019		Submit compliant RA Procedures to EEOC for review prior to posts on Agency public website.
Accomplishments	<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Accomplishment</u>	
	2018	The FS adopted the PWD 12% numerical goal. Compliant RA procedures were submitted to EEOC for approval. Forest Service RA procedures were posted on the Agency public website which will change once the USDA finalized their policy and the FS adopts it.	

Brief Description of Program Deficiency	B.4.a.8. to effectively administer its special emphasis programs (such as, Federal Women’s Program, Hispanic Employment Program, and People with Disabilities Program Manager)? [5 USC § 7201; 38 USC § 4214; 5 CFR § 720.204; 5 CFR § 213.3102(t) and (u); 5 CFR § 315.709]		
Objective	Fill the vacant Hispanic Employment Program Manager position		
Target Date	Oct 1, 2018		
Completion Date			
Planned Activities	<u>Target Date</u>	<u>Completion Date</u>	<u>Planned Activity</u>
	Oct 1, 2018		Advertise Position
	Oct 1, 2018		Request exemption in Hiring Projections Portal
	Oct 1, 2018		Conduct Interviews, make selection and offer
Accomplishments	<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Accomplishment</u>	
	2018	In response to the USDA Secretary’s, Phase III, One USDA, Civil Rights Reorganization direction, Special Emphasis Program will transition out of Forest Service FS Civil Rights to the new FS Work Environment and Performance Office. A contractor is currently developing a workload analysis that will direct the design of the new organizational structure. The FS Forest Service currently has three (3) full time FTE to administer the three EEOC mandated and four USDA mandated special emphasis programs/groups. The workload analysis will determine if additional resources are needed. The analysis will be complete March 2019.	

Brief Description of Program Deficiency	C.2.b.5. Does the agency process all initial accommodation requests, excluding ongoing interpretative services, within the time frame set forth in its reasonable accommodation procedures? [see MD-715, II(C)] If “no”, please provide the percentage of timely-processed requests, excluding ongoing interpretative services, in the comments column.		
Objective	Educate and train Disability Program Managers, supervisors, managers, and employees on reasonable accommodation RA competencies to ensure a minimum of 90% of accommodation requests are processed within the time frame set forth in the Agency procedures for reasonable accommodation RA.		
Target Date	Sep 30, 2018		
Completion Date			
Planned Activities	<u>Target Date</u>	<u>Completion Date</u>	<u>Planned Activity</u>
	Sep 30, 2018		Provide quarterly RA reports of national data and trend analysis to Agency leadership and field CR Directors in the field.
	Jun 30, 2019		Review RA processing time impacts and inform RA processing practitioners
	Sep 30, 2019		Ongoing monitoring to ensure all RA case requests are processed within 30 calendar days at least 90% of the time.
	Sep 30, 2020		Ensure all employees who work on, oversee or supervise the RA process are trained, and skilled regarding RA and PAS administration requirements.
Accomplishments	<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Accomplishment</u>	
	2018	The MD-715 Report score for FY18 period (10/1/2017 to 9/30/2018), is 86.20% or 87%, or <-3.8% below the required 90% of RA requests to be processed within the 30 day timeframe. However, the FS RA Specialist Team: RA Case Report indicates the FS exceeded the 90% cases processed timely goal, during the 4th quarter FY 2018, with 91%. To support consistent and continuous access and delivery across CR Service Centers, the FS reviewed all RA training presentations and consolidated them on one internet site. The FS provided recently developed blended in-person and online supervisor training courses through Ag Learn, promoting professional leadership development and better preparing supervisors for success in their critical role. All Service Centers provided RLT/SLTs quarterly CR Topic updates which included RA. Optional additional ad hoc training/presentations/updates were available by leadership request as well. DCSC: Conducted EEO/OCR training to approximately 1,867 FS employees, of which an estimated 453 were supervisors/manager. Topics included: Equal Opportunity, Employment, RA and Anti-Harassment. DCSC + R3: Served as the OCR Representative and Presenter at the National New Supervisor Quarterly Training Program: 86 new supervisors, which included new supervisor training on Equal Opportunity, Employment, RA, and Anti-Harassment across the Agency/country. R3: Ten (10) Equal Opportunity, Employment, and RA training sessions provided to over 1700 FS employees in R3 and Albuquerque Service Center (ASC). R3: Three (3) Equal Opportunity, Employment, and RA training sessions were conducted to 150 Assistant Directors and Law Enforcement employees. R3: Four (4) New Employee Orientation training sessions were offered including: Equal Opportunity, Employment, RA and Anti-Harassment, 1 regional, and 3 national sessions with 238 employees. R3: Three (3) New Supervisor Training sessions Equal Opportunity, Employment, RA and Anti-Harassment) to 120 supervisors.	

Section IV: Plan to Recruit and Hire Individuals with Disabilities

Pursuant to 29 C.F.R. §1614.203(d)(1)(i) and (ii), agencies must establish a plan to increase the recruitment and hiring of individuals with disabilities. The questions below are designed to identify outcomes of the agency’s recruitment program plan for PWD and PWTD

A. PLAN TO IDENTIFY JOB APPLICATIONS WITH DISABILITIES

1. Describe the programs and resources the agency uses to identify job applicants with disabilities, including individuals with targeted disabilities.

Key Programs, Resources, Strategies: The FY18-19 FS Recruitment Plan(s) - participation with National Talent Acquisition Network (NTAN) and other coordinated national recruitment events focusing on outreach/ recruitment of PWD/PWTD candidates. Customized Recruitment Plans for specific event are developed, including assignment of members of the national cadre to attend each event. Recruiter cadre are trained/informed regarding updated guidance, use of Schedule A Authority, and shared key PWD/PWTD recruitment network sources. FY19 FS Recruitment Plan(s) will utilize recruitment sources including: Resume Mining USAJOBS, Department of Labor’s Workforce Recruitment Program (WRP) of Schedule A eligible college students and recent graduates, Job Corps Centers, POCs at local schools/colleges serving students with disabilities, American Job Centers (AJCs), Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehab, National Employment Team (NET), Veteran Recruitment Agencies, Centers for Independent Living (CILs), Disability & Veterans Community Resources Directory, Employment Networks (ENs), and Recruit Ability. FS’s negotiated Union Agreement supports flexibility of Selecting Officials to fill vacancies noncompetitively via Schedule A at any grade level.

2. Pursuant to 29 C.F.R. §1614.203(a)(3), describe the agency’s use of hiring authorities that take disability into account (e.g., Schedule A) to recruit PWD and PWTD for positions in the permanent workforce

Agency Union Agreement supports flexibility of Selecting Officials to fill vacancies noncompetitively via Schedule A at any grade level. Agency Employment Outreach Database provides eligible external and internal Schedule A candidates the opportunity to respond directly to Selecting Officials posting Outreach Notices before Officials have opted to post their vacancies on USAJobs and thus a chance of convincing Officials, in advance, to consider or even select them noncompetitively, rather than proceeding to post their vacancy on USAJobs.

3. When individuals apply for a position under a hiring authority that takes disability into account (e.g., Schedule A), explain how the agency (1) determines if the individual is eligible for appointment under such authority; and, (2) forwards the individual's application to the relevant hiring officials with an explanation of how and when the individual may be appointed.

Agency Union Agreement supports flexibility of Selecting Officials to fill vacancies noncompetitively via Schedule A at any grade level. Agency Employment Outreach Database provides eligible external and internal Schedule A candidates the opportunity to respond directly to Selecting Officials posting Outreach Notices before Officials have opted to post their vacancies on USAJobs and thus a chance of convincing Officials, in advance, to consider or even select them noncompetitively, rather than proceeding to post their vacancy on USAJobs.

4. Has the agency provided training to all hiring managers on the use of hiring authorities that take disability into account (e.g., Schedule A)? If “yes”, describe the type(s) of training and frequency. If “no”, describe the agency’s plan to provide this training.

Answer Yes

All new Supervisors complete core training that includes updated modules on recruiting using Schedule A Authority, RA, and resources available through SEPs.

B. PLAN TO ESTABLISH CONTACTS WITH DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT ORGANIZATIONS

Describe the agency’s efforts to establish and maintain contacts with organizations that assist PWD, including PWTD, in securing and maintaining employment.

The FY18-19 FS Recruitment Plan(s) - participation with NTAN and other coordinated national recruitment events focusing on outreach/ recruitment of PWD/PWTD candidates. Customized Recruitment Plans for specific event are developed, including assignment of members of the national cadre to attend each event. Recruiter cadre are trained/informed regarding updated guidance, use of Schedule A Authority, and shared key PWD/PWTD recruitment network sources. FY19 FS Recruitment Plan(s) will utilize

recruitment sources including: Resume Mining USAJOBS, Department of Labor’s WRP of Schedule A eligible college students and recent graduates, Job Corps Centers; and POCs at local schools/colleges serving students with disabilities, AJCs, Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation, NET, Veteran Recruitment Agencies, Centers for Independent Living (CILs), Disability & Veterans Community Resources Directory, Employment Networks (ENs), and Recruit Ability. FS’s negotiated Union Agreement supports flexibility of Selecting Officials to fill vacancies noncompetitively via Schedule A at any grade level.

C. PROGRESSION TOWARDS GOALS (RECRUITMENT AND HIRING)

1. Using the goals of 12% for PWD and 2% for PWTD as the benchmarks, do triggers exist for PWD and/or PWTD among the new hires in the permanent workforce? If “yes”, please describe the triggers below.

- a. New Hires for Permanent Workforce (PWD) Answer Yes
- b. New Hires for Permanent Workforce (PWTD) Answer No

A trigger among permanent workforce New Hires is PWD are presently at 7.38% which is below EEOC’s 12% goal. However, this number has increased from 5.38% in FY 2017.

New Hires	Total (#)	Reportable Disability		Targeted Disability	
		Permanent Workforce (%)	Temporary Workforce (%)	Permanent Workforce (%)	Temporary Workforce (%)
% of Total Applicants	0				
% of Qualified Applicants	0				
% of New Hires	0				

2. Using the qualified applicant pool as the benchmark, do triggers exist for PWD and/or PWTD among the new hires for any of the mission- critical occupations (MCO)? If “yes”, please describe the triggers below. Select “n/a” if the applicant data is not available for your agency, and describe your plan to provide the data in the text box.

- a. New Hires for MCO (PWD) Answer Yes
- b. New Hires for MCO (PWTD) Answer N/A

Means are being developed to monitor and report this information, which is readily available to line officers and management officials through official request to the WO HRM DMAT.

New Hires to Mission-Critical Occupations	Total (#)	Reportable Disability		Targetable Disability	
		Qualified Applicants (%)	New Hires (%)	Qualified Applicants (%)	New Hires (%)
Numerical Goal	--		12%		2%

3. Using the relevant applicant pool as the benchmark, do triggers exist for PWD and/or PWTD among the qualified internal applicants for any of the mission-critical occupations (MCO)? If “yes”, please describe the triggers below. Select “n/a” if the applicant data is not available for your agency, and describe your plan to provide the data in the text box.

- a. Qualified Applicants for MCO (PWD) Answer No
- b. Qualified Applicants for MCO (PWTD) Answer No

Means are being developed to monitor and report this information, which is readily available to line officers and management officials through official request to the WO HRM DMAT.

4. Using the qualified applicant pool as the benchmark, do triggers exist for PWD and/or PWTD among employees promoted to any of the mission- critical occupations (MCO)? If “yes”, please describe the triggers below. Select “n/a” if the applicant data is not available for your agency, and describe your plan to provide the data in the text box.
 - a. Promotions for MCO (PWD) Answer No
 - b. Promotions for MCO (PWTD) Answer No

Means are being developed to monitor and report this information, which is readily available to line officers and management officials through official request to the WO HRM DMAT.

Section V: Plan to Ensure Advancement Opportunities for Employees with Disabilities

Pursuant to 29 C.F.R. §1614.203(d)(1)(iii), agencies are required to provide sufficient advancement opportunities for employees with disabilities. Such activities might include specialized training and mentoring programs, career development opportunities, awards programs, promotions, and similar programs that address advancement. In this section, agencies should identify, and provide data on programs designed to ensure advancement opportunities for employees with disabilities.

A. ADVANCEMENT PROGRAM PLAN

Describe the agency’s plan to ensure PWD, including PWTD, have sufficient opportunities for advancement.

The Agency has two Leadership Training Programs: 1) The SLP follows a competitive internal selection process, with final vetting by the Agency’s Executive Leadership Team; 2) The National New Leader Program. Any permanent employee with one full year of Agency service at the time of application submission can apply at the GS 7-11 level. Individuals are nominated for this program based on their desire and interest to develop their leadership potential and their high self-motivation to complete all requirements and participate fully in all components of the program. The unit will collect applications and establish its review process for prioritizing nominations. Once the applicant has completed their portion of the application package, the applicant will forward the package to their supervisor. The supervisor will then complete the supervisor assessment and endorsement and include with the application package. Employees with disabilities activities might include specialized training and mentoring programs, career development opportunities, awards programs, promotions, and similar programs that address advancement. In this section, agencies should identify, and provide data on programs designed to ensure advancement opportunities for employees with disabilities. Using Table B12 table to monitor.

B. CAREER DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITES

1. Please describe the career development opportunities that the agency provides to its employees.

Civil Rights, HRM and WEPO will conduct PWD barrier analyses focusing on GS-13, 14, 15-levels and SES feeder pools: seeking recommendations and next steps. CR and HRM will analyze data from Tables B4, B7, B9, B11, and B12 to monitor workforce representation among these groups. Transition applicant flow data from E-Recruit to USA Staffing: used for year-end data. N As for the career development opportunities data requested in the next section: None is due this reporting cycle. Collection begins with the FY 2019 MD-715 report, which is due on February 28, 2019.

2. In the table below, please provide the data for career development opportunities that require competition and/or supervisory recommendation/ approval to participate.

Career Development Opportunities	Total Participants		PWD		PWTD	
	Applicants (#)	Selectees (#)	Applicants (%)	Selectees (%)	Applicants (%)	Selectees (%)
Internship Programs						
Fellowship Programs						
Mentoring Programs						
Coaching Programs						
Training Programs						
Detail Programs						
Other Career Development Programs						

3. Do triggers exist for PWD among the applicants and/or selectees for any of the career development programs? (The appropriate benchmarks are the relevant applicant pool for the applicants and the applicant pool for selectees.) If “yes”, describe the trigger(s) in the text box. Select “n/a” if the applicant data is not available for your agency, and describe your plan to provide the data in the text box.

a. Applicants (PWD) Answer N/A

b. Selections (PWD) Answer N/A

Means are being developed to monitor and report this information, which is readily available to line officers and management officials through official request to the WO HRM DMAT.

4. Do triggers exist for PWTD among the applicants and/or selectees for any of the career development programs? (The appropriate benchmarks are the relevant applicant pool for the applicants and the applicant pool for selectees.) If “yes”, describe the trigger(s) in the text box. Select “n/a” if the applicant data is not available for your agency, and describe your plan to provide the data in the text box.

a. Applicants (PWTD) Answer N/A

b. Selections (PWTD) Answer N/A

Means are being developed to monitor and report this information, which is readily available to line officers and management officials through official request to the WO HRM DMAT.

C. AWARDS

1. Using the inclusion rate as the benchmark, does your agency have a trigger involving PWD and/or PWTD for any level of the time-off awards, bonuses, or other incentives? If “yes”, please describe the trigger(s) in the text box.

a. Awards, Bonuses, & Incentives (PWD) Answer Yes

b. Awards, Bonuses, & Incentives (PWTD) Answer No

The PWD inclusion rate was 52.46% compared to PWOD rate which is 69.66%

Time-Off Awards	Total (#)	Reportable Disability %	Without Reportable Disability %	Targeted Disability %	Without Targeted Disability %
Time-Off Awards: 1-9 hours : Total Time-Off Awards Given	1343	7.67	84.07	2.61	5.06
Time-Off Awards: 9+ hours : Total Time-Off Awards Given	2109	9.20	83.88	2.47	6.73

Cash Awards	Total (#)	Reportable Disability %	Without Reportable Disability %	Targeted Disability %	Without Targeted Disability %
Cash Awards: \$100 - \$500: Total Cash Awards Given	2716	7.92	92.08	2.98	4.93
Cash Awards: \$501+: Total Cash Awards Given	12292	7.07	92.93	2.57	4.50

2. Using the inclusion rate as the benchmark, does your agency have a trigger involving PWD and/or PWTD for quality step increases or performance-based pay increases? If “yes”, please describe the trigger(s) in the text box.

a. Pay Increases (PWD) Answer Yes

b. Pay Increases (PWTD) Answer Yes

The PWTD inclusion rate was 1.47%; the PWOTD inclusion rate was 3.50% The PWD inclusion rate was 2.02%; the PWOD inclusion rate was 2.44%

Other Awards	Total (#)	Reportable Disability %	Without Reportable Disability %	Targeted Disability %	Without Targeted Disability %
Quality Step Increases (QSI): Total QSIs Awarded	679	6.19	93.81	1.47	4.71
Performance Based Pay Increase	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

3. If the agency has other types of employee recognition programs, are PWD and/or PWTD recognized disproportionately less than employees without disabilities? (The appropriate benchmark is the inclusion rate.) If “yes”, describe the employee recognition program and relevant data in the text box.

a. Other Types of Recognition (PWD) Answer N/A

b. Other Types of Recognition (PWTD) Answer N/A

Routinely, the Chief, Regional Foresters and Station Directors (National Leadership Council) reward employees through Honor Awards. Likewise, local line officers, managers, supervisors issue performance awards, and staff recommend “Spot Awards” (cash) or time-off awards. However, there are no known systems in place to monitor inclusion rates for these forms of recognition.

D. PROMOTIONS

1. Does your agency have a trigger involving PWD among the qualified internal applicants and/or selectees for promotions to the senior grade levels? (The appropriate benchmarks are the relevant applicant pool for qualified internal applicants and the qualified applicant pool for selectees.) For non-GS pay plans, please use the approximate senior grade levels. If “yes”, describe the trigger(s) in the text box. Select “n/a” if the applicant data is not available for your agency, and describe your plan to provide the data in the text box.

a. SES

i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWD) Answer No

ii. Internal Selections (PWD) Answer Yes

b. Grade GS-15

i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWD) Answer No

ii. Internal Selections (PWD) Answer Yes

c. Grade GS-14

i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWD) Answer No

ii. Internal Selections (PWD)	Answer	Yes
d. Grade GS-13		
i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWD)	Answer	No
ii. Internal Selections (PWD)	Answer	Yes

SES: The USDA is responsible all aspects of SES program administration, selections, conversions and placements. However, the FS monitors conversions from career appointments to SES and career appointments for both PWD and PWTD. PWD and PWTD were not chosen for advanced positions at their representative rate for GS13 – 15.

2. Does your agency have a trigger involving PWTD among the qualified internal applicants and/or selectees for promotions to the senior grade levels? (The appropriate benchmarks are the relevant applicant pool for qualified internal applicants and the qualified applicant pool for selectees.) For non-GS pay plans, please use the approximate senior grade levels. If “yes”, describe the trigger(s) in the text box. Select “n/a” if the applicant data is not available for your agency, and describe your plan to provide the data in the text box.

a. SES		
i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWTD)	Answer	No
ii. Internal Selections (PWTD)	Answer	No
b. Grade GS-15		
i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWTD)	Answer	No
ii. Internal Selections (PWTD)	Answer	No
c. Grade GS-14		
i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWTD)	Answer	No
ii. Internal Selections (PWTD)	Answer	No
d. Grade GS-13		
i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWTD)	Answer	No
ii. Internal Selections (PWTD)	Answer	No

The USDA is responsible all aspects of SES selections and placements. USDA, not the FS, hires SES employees. However, FS monitors conversions from career appointments to SES and career appointments for both PWTD and PWD. The FS is developing reports to track and monitor this information because the present tables do not.

3. Using the qualified applicant pool as the benchmark, does your agency have a trigger involving PWD among the new hires to the senior grade levels? For non-GS pay plans, please use the approximate senior grade levels. If “yes”, describe the trigger(s) in the text box. Select “n/a” if the applicant data is not available for your agency, and describe your plan to provide the data in the text box.

a. New Hires to SES (PWD)	Answer	No
b. New Hires to GS-15 (PWD)	Answer	No
c. New Hires to GS-14 (PWD)	Answer	No
d. New Hires to GS-13 (PWD)	Answer	No

The USDA is responsible all aspects of SES selections and placements. USDA, not the FS, hires SES employees. However, FS monitors conversions from career appointments to SES and career appointments for both PWTD and PWD. The FS is developing reports to track and monitor this information because the present tables do not.

4. Using the qualified applicant pool as the benchmark, does your agency have a trigger involving PWTD among the new hires to the senior grade levels? For non-GS pay plans, please use the approximate senior grade levels. If “yes”, describe the trigger(s) in the text box. Select “n/a” if the applicant data is not available for your agency, and describe your plan to provide the data in the text box.

- a. New Hires to SES (PWTD) Answer Yes
- b. New Hires to GS-15 (PWTD) Answer Yes
- c. New Hires to GS-14 (PWTD) Answer Yes
- d. New Hires to GS-13 (PWTD) Answer Yes

The USDA is responsible all aspects of SES selections and placements. USDA, not the FS, hires SES employees. However, FS monitors conversions from career appointments to SES and career appointments for both PWTD and PWD. The FS is developing reports to track and monitor this information because the present tables do not.

5. Does your agency have a trigger involving PWD among the qualified internal applicants and/or selectees for promotions to supervisory positions? (The appropriate benchmarks are the relevant applicant pool for qualified internal applicants and the qualified applicant pool for selectees.) If “yes”, describe the trigger(s) in the text box. Select “n/a” if the applicant data is not available for your agency, and describe your plan to provide the data in the text box.

- a. Executives
 - i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWD) Answer N/A
 - ii. Internal Selections (PWD) Answer N/A
- b. Managers
 - i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWD) Answer N/A
 - ii. Internal Selections (PWD) Answer N/A
- c. Supervisors
 - i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWD) Answer N/A
 - ii. Internal Selections (PWD) Answer N/A

The USDA is responsible all aspects of SES selections and placements. USDA, not the FS, hires SES employees. However, FS monitors conversions from career appointments to SES and career appointments for both PWTD and PWD. The FS is developing reports to track and monitor this information because the present tables do not.

6. Does your agency have a trigger involving PWTD among the qualified internal applicants and/or selectees for promotions to supervisory positions? (The appropriate benchmarks are the relevant applicant pool for qualified internal applicants and the qualified applicant pool for selectees.) If “yes”, describe the trigger(s) in the text box. Select “n/a” if the applicant data is not available for your agency, and describe your plan to provide the data in the text box.

- a. Executives
 - i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWTD) Answer N/A

ii. Internal Selections (PWTD)	Answer	N/A
b. Managers		
i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWTD)	Answer	N/A
ii. Internal Selections (PWTD)	Answer	N/A
c. Supervisors		
i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWTD)	Answer	N/A
ii. Internal Selections (PWTD)	Answer	N/A

The USDA is responsible all aspects of SES selections and placements. USDA, not the FS, hires SES employees. However, FS monitors conversions from career appointments to SES and career appointments for both PWTD and PWD. The FS is developing reports to track and monitor this information because the present tables do not.

7. Using the qualified applicant pool as the benchmark, does your agency have a trigger involving PWD among the selectees for new hires to supervisory positions? If “yes”, describe the trigger(s) in the text box. Select “n/a” if the applicant data is not available for your agency, and describe your plan to provide the data in the text box.
- | | | |
|------------------------------------|--------|-----|
| a. New Hires for Executives (PWD) | Answer | N/A |
| b. New Hires for Managers (PWD) | Answer | N/A |
| c. New Hires for Supervisors (PWD) | Answer | N/A |

The USDA is responsible all aspects of SES selections and placements. USDA, not the FS, hires SES employees. However, FS monitors conversions from career appointments to SES and career appointments for both PWTD and PWD. The FS is developing reports to track and monitor this information because the present tables do not.

8. Using the qualified applicant pool as the benchmark, does your agency have a trigger involving PWTD among the selectees for new hires to supervisory positions? If “yes”, describe the trigger(s) in the text box. Select “n/a” if the applicant data is not available for your agency, and describe your plan to provide the data in the text box.
- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------|-----|
| a. New Hires for Executives (PWTD) | Answer | N/A |
| b. New Hires for Managers (PWTD) | Answer | N/A |
| c. New Hires for Supervisors (PWTD) | Answer | N/A |

The USDA is responsible all aspects of SES selections and placements. USDA, not the FS, hires SES employees. However, FS monitors conversions from career appointments to SES and career appointments for both PWTD and PWD. The FS is developing reports to track and monitor this information because the present tables do not.

Section VI: Plan to Improve Retention of Persons with Disabilities

To be model employer for persons with disabilities, agencies must have policies and programs in place to retain employees with disabilities. In this section, agencies should: (1) analyze workforce separation data to identify barriers retaining employees with disabilities; (2) describe efforts to ensure accessibility of technology and facilities; and (3) provide information on the reasonable accommodation program and workplace assistance services.

A. VOLUNTARY AND INVOLUNTARY SEPARATIONS

1. In this reporting period, did the agency convert all eligible Schedule A employees with a disability into the competitive service after two years of satisfactory service (5 C.F.R. § 213.3102(u)(6)(i))? If “no”, please explain why the agency did

not convert all eligible Schedule A employees.

Answer No

FS is developing report to track and monitor this information. FS leaders may noncompetitively convert to the competitive service an employee who has completed two or more years of satisfactory service on a non-temporary Schedule A appointment. FS encourages leaders/managers/supervisors to convert Schedule A employees. The conversion must be at the same grade level and a separate action processed for a career ladder promotion (if applicable). However, there is no requirement to convert the employee whom may remain under a Schedule A appointment.

2. Using the inclusion rate as the benchmark, did the percentage of PWD among voluntary and involuntary separations exceed that of persons without disabilities? If “yes”, describe the trigger below.

a. Voluntary Separations (PWD) Answer Yes

b. Involuntary Separations (PWD) Answer Yes

Voluntary Separations: The inclusion rate for PWD is 1.03% compared to 0.29% for PWOD Involuntary Separation: The inclusion rate for PWD is 10.32% compared to 7.39% for PWOD

Seperations	Total #	Reportable Disabilities %	Without Reportable Disabilities %
Permenant Workforce	0	0.00	0.00
Total Separations	2183	10.58	89.42
Voluntary Separations	2089	10.05	89.95
Involuntary Separations	94	22.34	77.66

3. Using the inclusion rate as the benchmark, did the percentage of PWTD among voluntary and involuntary separations exceed that of persons without targeted disabilities? If “yes”, describe the trigger below.

a. Voluntary Separations (PWTD) Answer Yes

b. Involuntary Separations (PWTD) Answer Yes

Voluntary Separations: PWTD Inclusion: 9.48% compared to 7.56% for PWOTD Involuntary Separation: PWTD Inclusion: 0.44% compared to 0.34% for PWOTD

Seperations	Total #	Targeted Disabilities %	Without Targeted Disabilities %
Permenant Workforce	0	0.00	0.00
Total Separations	2183	3.11	96.89
Voluntary Separations	2089	3.11	96.89
Involuntary Separations	94	3.19	96.81

4. If a trigger exists involving the separation rate of PWD and/or PWTD, please explain why they left the agency using exit interview results and other data sources.

Refer to Part I.2. Current Exit Interview Survey does not collect PWD or PWTD information. FS continues to improve the EI survey form and FY19 plans to do this are presented Part I.2. The FS is developing report to track and monitor this information. However, when reviewing our Separations Minority Profile report by disability status and Nature of Action Code, the most frequently cited reasons for separation were: PWD - Retirement-Voluntary, Resignation and Termination - Appointment In; for PWTD, the most frequently cited reasons for separation were: Retirement - Voluntary and Resignation.

B. ACCESSIBILITY OF TECHNOLOGY AND FACILITIES

Pursuant to 29 CFR §1614.203(d)(4), federal agencies are required to inform applicants and employees of their rights under Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. § 794(b), concerning the accessibility of agency technology, and the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. § 4151-4157), concerning the accessibility of agency facilities. In addition, agencies are required to inform individuals where to file complaints if other agencies are responsible for a violation.

1. Please provide the internet address on the agency's public website for its notice explaining employees' and applicants' rights under Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, including a description of how to file a complaint.

The FS public website at <https://www.fs.fed.us> contains a link to the USDA Accessibility Statement addressing rights under Section 508: plus a link to the Nondiscrimination Statement instructions on how to file a complaint. FS FY 2018 Facility Accessibility Survey Results is available in Appendices C17.

2. Please provide the internet address on the agency's public website for its notice explaining employees' and applicants' rights under the Architectural Barriers Act, including a description of how to file a complaint.

The FS public website at <https://www.fs.fed.us/recreation/programs/accessibility/> contains a section titled Accessibility Laws, Regulations, Policies and Guidelines. This section contains additional links to rights under ABA, ABAAS, Section 504, 508, and ADA Title V Section 508c: plus a link to the nondiscrimination statement/instructions on how to file a complaint.

3. Describe any programs, policies, or practices that the agency has undertaken, or plans on undertaking over the next fiscal year, designed to improve accessibility of agency facilities and/or technology.

The FS continues administration of USDA Regulations 7 CFR Parts 15a through 15e, 7CFR Part 15.4(a)(1), and FS Manuals 1300, 6100, and 6600, and FS Handbooks 1709.11; 2709.11; and 7309.11 to ensure Agency plans and practices implemented and monitored FY18-FY19 improve accessibility of Agency program information, facilities, and/or technology. Example 1: Updates to the USDA FS policy to ensure effective telecommunication system is in place and in use for applicants and beneficiaries. Example 2: Issuance of accessible and effective communications resources to guarantee electronic and information technology compliance in accordance with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Example 3: the USDA FS-wide Facility Accessibility Survey and Program Results indicate the Agency' Recreation Site Maintenance and Capital Improvement Funding Program continues to focus on rehabilitation and/or replacement of facilities which are outdated and not in compliance with current accessibility guidelines. FY18-FY19 projects represent the improvements which are being made to administrative facilities, and recreation sites across the Agency to ensure that opportunities are available to PWDs. FY 2018 Facility Accessibility Survey Results are available in Appendices C17.

C. REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION PROGRAM

Pursuant to 29 C.F.R. § 1614.203(d)(3), agencies must adopt, post on their public website, and make available to all job applicants and employees, reasonable accommodation procedures.

1. Please provide the average time frame for processing initial requests for reasonable accommodations during the reporting period. (Please do not include previously approved requests with repetitive accommodations, such as interpreting services.)

The MD-715 report score for FY18 period (10/1/2017 to 9/30/2018), is 86.20% or 87%, or <-3.8% below the required 90% of RA requests to be processed within the 30 day timeframe. However, the FS exceeded the 90% cases processed timely goal, during the 4th quarter FY 2018, with 91%.

2. Describe the effectiveness of the policies, procedures, or practices to implement the agency's reasonable accommodation program. Some examples of an effective program include timely processing requests, timely providing approved accommodations, conducting training for managers and supervisors, and monitoring accommodation requests for trends.

RA procedures/policy posted, with addendum developed regarding provision of PAS. The Agency continues to display its 508 Accessibility Information link on its front page (intranet/internet CR and FS), with links included to pages on "Understanding

Disabilities”, Awareness, Education and Training, FAQ’s, Web, Procurement, and Legal.

D. PERSONAL ASSISTANCE SERVICES ALLOWING EMPLOYEES TO PARTICIPATE IN THE WORKPLACE

Pursuant to 29 CFR §1614.203(d)(5), federal agencies, as an aspect of affirmative action, are required to provide personal assistance services (PAS) to employees who need them because of a targeted disability, unless doing so would impose an undue hardship on the agency.

Describe the effectiveness of the policies, procedures, or practices to implement the PAS requirement. Some examples of an effective program include timely processing requests for PAS, timely providing approved services, conducting training for managers and supervisors, and monitoring PAS requests for trends.

Through periodic training and resources posted on its Intranet website, the FS continues to enhance the quality of its customer service by continually educating employees, managers, and supervisors. Refer to Part H.2. – advocates education and training of Disability Employment Program Managers, supervisors, managers, and employees regarding building RA and PAS administration competencies.

Section VII: EEO Complaint and Findings Data

A. EEO COMPLAINT DATA INVOLVING HARASSMENT

1. During the last fiscal year, did a higher percentage of PWD file a formal EEO complaint alleging harassment, as compared to the governmentwide average?

Answer Yes

2. During the last fiscal year, did any complaints alleging harassment based on disability status result in a finding of discrimination or a settlement agreement?

Answer Yes

3. If the agency had one or more findings of discrimination alleging harassment based on disability status during the last fiscal year, please describe the corrective measures taken by the agency.

N/A – No finding of discrimination based on disability

B. EEO COMPLAINT DATA INVOLVING REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION

1. During the last fiscal year, did a higher percentage of PWD file a formal EEO complaint alleging failure to provide a reasonable accommodation, as compared to the government-wide average?

Answer Yes

2. During the last fiscal year, did any complaints alleging failure to provide reasonable accommodation result in a finding of discrimination or a settlement agreement?

Answer No

3. If the agency had one or more findings of discrimination involving the failure to provide a reasonable accommodation during the last fiscal year, please describe the corrective measures taken by the agency.

N/A – No finding of discrimination based on disability

Section VIII: Identification and Removal of Barriers

Element D of MD-715 requires agencies to conduct a barrier analysis when a trigger suggests that a policy, procedure, or practice may be impeding the employment opportunities of a protected EEO group.

1. Has the agency identified any barriers (policies, procedures, and/or practices) that affect employment opportunities for PWD and/or PWTD?

Answer No

2. Has the agency established a plan to correct the barrier(s) involving PWD and/or PWTD?

Answer Yes

3. Identify each trigger and plan to remove the barrier(s), including the identified barrier(s), objective(s), responsible official(s), planned activities, and, where applicable, accomplishments

<p>STATEMENT OF CONDITION THAT WAS A TRIGGER FOR A POTENTIAL BARRIER:</p> <p>Provide a brief narrative describing the condition at issue.</p> <p>How was the condition recognized as a potential barrier?</p>	<p>The PWDs grade level representation in GS-01 to GS-10 is 7.73%, and in GS-11 to SES, 6.99%: both below the 12% standard.</p>				
<p>STATEMENT OF BARRIER GROUPS:</p>	<p><i>Barrier Group</i></p> <p>People with Disabilities</p>				
<p>BARRIER ANALYSIS:</p> <p>Provide a description of the steps taken and data analyzed to determine cause of the condition.</p>					
<p>STATEMENT OF IDENTIFIED BARRIER:</p> <p>Provide a succinct statement of the agency policy, procedure or practice that has been determined to be the barrier of the undesired condition.</p>	<p>The specific cause of the less than expected participation rate for PWDs is unknown. Further examination of the policies, procedures, and practices impacting the hiring, retention, and separation processes is needed.</p>				
<p>Objective</p>	<p>Increase workforce participation rates for PWD</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="483 930 1502 1066"> <tr> <td>Date Objective Initiated</td> <td>Sep 30, 2017</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Target Date For Completion Of Objective</td> <td>Sep 30, 2018</td> </tr> </table>	Date Objective Initiated	Sep 30, 2017	Target Date For Completion Of Objective	Sep 30, 2018
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Target Date For Completion Of Objective	Sep 30, 2018				
<p>Responsible Officials</p>	<p>Theodore H. Gutman Director, Civil Rights</p> <p>Mark D. Green Acting Director, Human Resources Management</p>				

Target Date (mm/dd/yyyy)	Planned Activities	Sufficient Staffing & Funding (Yes or No)	Modified Date (mm/dd/yyyy)	Completion Date (mm/dd/yyyy)
09/30/2018	Increase the use of alternative hiring authority	Yes	09/30/2019	
09/30/2018	CR, HRM and WEPO will collaborate to make better use of applicant flow data in developing actionable strategies for improving diversity, outreach and recruitment.	Yes	09/30/2019	
09/30/2018	CR will collaborate with HRM/WEPO to identify areas for improving diversity and develop tools for hiring managers to utilize a targeted outreach plan.	Yes	09/30/2019	
09/30/2018	Further educate and motivate candidates with potential Schedule A eligibility to pursue Certification through the DEPM training tool by which CR Outreach Staff, National Recruitment Team, and Partnership Organizations managing FS-collaborative internship can communicate this information to potential candidates.	Yes	09/30/2019	
09/30/2018	DEPM will develop a training tool supporting voluntary reporting of all disability statuses.	Yes	09/30/2019	
09/30/2018	Continued use of Supplemental Diversity Survey to anonymously obtain more candid, complete snapshots of overall workforce diversity data, including otherwise non-visible or obvious disability statuses (veteran disability ratings, and civilian PWTB/PWD severe health conditions), other RNO/ERI, LGBT, and gender data. Information used for educational, awareness, and sensitivity purposes, and potential alternative or supplemental EEOC reporting purposes.	Yes	09/30/2019	
09/30/2018	HRM and WEPO will work and collaborate with CR managers regarding recruitment and hiring initiatives, workforce and succession planning and serve on the FS Human Capital Planning Workforce Group.	Yes	09/30/2019	
Fiscal Year	Accomplishments			
2018	DEPM developed a training tool for the CR outreach staff, National Recruitment Team, and Partnership Organizations managing FS-collaborative internship programs. The tool presented and clarified the Schedule A Certification process and the noncompetitive eligibility process as a strategy for alerting recruiters and selecting officials of applicant disability diversity. The tool helped clarify disability data Agencies ask veterans and non-veterans to voluntarily provide “for statistical reporting purposes”.			
2018	Continued use of the Supplemental Diversity Survey as a simple, quick tool to anonymously obtain more candid, complete snapshots of overall workforce diversity data, including otherwise non-visible or obvious disability statuses (veteran disability ratings, and civilian PWTB/PWD /severe health conditions), and other RNO/ERI, LGBT, and gender data. Information is used for educational, awareness, and sensitivity purposes, and potential alternative or supplemental EEOC reporting purposes.			
2018	CR is developing a reporting template to track Schedule A conversions.			

<p>STATEMENT OF CONDITION THAT WAS A TRIGGER FOR A POTENTIAL BARRIER:</p> <p>Provide a brief narrative describing the condition at issue.</p> <p>How was the condition recognized as a potential barrier?</p>	<p>PWD are separating at rates exceeding their permanent workforce participation rates</p>				
<p>STATEMENT OF BARRIER GROUPS:</p>	<p><i>Barrier Group</i></p> <p>People with Disabilities</p> <p>People with Targeted Disabilities</p>				
<p>BARRIER ANALYSIS:</p> <p>Provide a description of the steps taken and data analyzed to determine cause of the condition.</p>					
<p>STATEMENT OF IDENTIFIED BARRIER:</p> <p>Provide a succinct statement of the agency policy, procedure or practice that has been determined to be the barrier of the undesired condition.</p>	<p>The specific cause of high separation rates of PWD and PWTD is unknown. Therefore, further examination of policies, procedures and practices impacting the hiring, retention, and separation processes is needed.</p>				
<p>Objective</p>	<p>Retain diverse highly-qualified employees by increasing cultural competencies.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="487 955 649 1094"> <tr> <td>Date Objective Initiated</td> <td>Sep 30, 2017</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Target Date For Completion Of Objective</td> <td>Sep 30, 2018</td> </tr> </table>	Date Objective Initiated	Sep 30, 2017	Target Date For Completion Of Objective	Sep 30, 2018
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Target Date (mm/dd/yyyy)	Planned Activities	Sufficient Staffing & Funding (Yes or No)	Modified Date (mm/dd/yyyy)	Completion Date (mm/dd/yyyy)
09/30/2018	HRM and CR edit the EI Report to capture PWD and PWTD	Yes	09/30/2019	
09/30/2018	Presents reports highlighting PWD and PWTD trends to agency leadership quarterly. DEPM provided quarterly reports of national data and trend analysis for PWD and PWTD to include reasonable accommodation to Agency leadership and Civil Rights directors in the field.	Yes	09/30/2019	
09/30/2018	Develop and deploy an anonymous supplemental diversity survey seeking employee disability status (confidential) data. Raised awareness, and attitudes toward inclusion, by continued use of Supplemental Diversity to anonymously obtain overall workforce diversity representation, including otherwise non-visible or obvious disability statuses (veteran disability ratings, and civilian PWTD/PWD/severe health conditions).	Yes	09/30/2019	
09/30/2018	Develop an employee training tool to clarify rationale and methods to obtain Schedule A Certification - To bring more visibility and embracing of disability diversity in workforce. The DEPM developed a training tool for presenting and clarifying how to Develop an employee training tool to clarify rationale and methods to obtain Schedule A Certification - To bring more visibility and embracing of disability diversity in workforce. The DEPM developed a training tool for presenting and clarifying how to obtain Schedule A Certification, if eligible, and emphasizing the option eligibility offers to encourage everyone to report their status.	Yes	09/30/2019	
09/30/2018	Develop a training tool to communicate agency rationale and benefits associated with employees providing their disability status; explaining the reasons the agency asks/requests all employees to voluntarily report their status and the possible impacts on Federal programs: hiring, promotion, and retention of person(s) with these conditions or experiences.	Yes	09/30/2019	

Fiscal Year	Accomplishments
2018	DEPM plans to develop several CR training tools: 1. To present Schedule A Certification acquisition methods to employees. 2. To present how disability data benefits the organization.
2018	Two employee training tools promoting the benefits of declaring Schedule A conditions were developed in FY 2018. Both tools will be tested/deployed during FY 2019. The goal of trainings was to reduce the number of unregistered Schedule A employees, which will support a more accurate representation of the FS workforce – PWD/PWTD representation.
2018	During the past three fiscal years, the SDS questionnaire was presented to all employees in five of 16 reporting units with a 37% response rate. PWTD Representation rates was approximately 10%. The SDS Data was used to do what ?

4. Please explain the factor(s) that prevented the agency from timely completing any of the planned activities.

Most activities were newly established and initiated. Therefore, there was not sufficient time to assess the impact of planned activities by end of FY 2018. It is the Agency's goal to continue to monitor progress toward correcting identified trigger by or before end of FY 2019.

5. For the planned activities that were completed, please describe the actual impact of those activities toward eliminating the barrier(s).

As of end of FY 2018, planned activities were still in progress.

6. If the planned activities did not correct the trigger(s) and/or barrier(s), please describe how the agency intends to improve the plan for the next fiscal year.

As planned activities were still in progress as described above, it is the Agency's goal to continue to monitor progress toward correcting identified trigger by or before end of FY 2019.