

Subpart D—Construction Contract Equal Opportunity Compliance Procedures

SOURCE: 41 FR 34239, Aug. 13, 1976, unless otherwise noted.

§ 230.401 Purpose.

The purpose of the regulations in this subpart is to prescribe policies and procedures to standardize the implementation of the equal opportunity contract compliance program, including compliance reviews, consolidated compliance reviews, and the administration of areawide plans.

§ 230.403 Applicability.

The procedures set forth hereinafter apply to all nonexempt direct Federal and Federal-aid highway construction contracts and subcontracts, unless otherwise specified.

§ 230.405 Administrative responsibilities.

(a) *Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) responsibilities.* (1) The FHWA has the responsibility to ensure that contractors meet contractual equal opportunity requirements under E.O. 11246, as amended, and title 23 U.S.C., and to provide guidance and direction to States in the development and implementation of a program to assure compliance with equal opportunity requirements.

(2) The Federal Highway Administrator or a designee may inquire into the status of any matter affecting the FHWA equal opportunity program and, when considered necessary, assume jurisdiction over the matter, proceeding in coordination with the State concerned. This is without derogation of the authority of the Secretary of Transportation, Department of Transportation (DOT), the Director, DOT Departmental Office of Civil Rights (OCR) or the Director, Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP), Department of Labor.

(3) Failure of the State highway agency (SHA) to discharge the responsibilities stated in § 230.405(b)(1) may result in DOT's taking any or all of the following actions (see appendix A to 23

CFR part 630, subpart C "Federal-aid project agreement"):

(i) Cancel, terminate, or suspend the Federal-aid project agreement in whole or in part;

(ii) Refrain from extending any further assistance to the SHA under the program with respect to which the failure or refusal occurred until satisfactory assurance of future compliance has been received from the SHA; and

(iii) Refer the case to an appropriate Federal agency for legal proceedings.

(4) Action by the DOT, with respect to noncompliant contractors, shall not relieve a SHA of its responsibilities in connection with these same matters; nor is such action by DOT a substitute for corrective action utilized by a State under applicable State laws or regulations.

(b) *State responsibilities.* (1) The SHA's, as contracting agencies, have a responsibility to assure compliance by contractors with the requirements of Federal-aid construction contracts, including the equal opportunity requirements, and to assist in and cooperate with FHWA programs to assure equal opportunity.

(2) The corrective action procedures outlined herein do not preclude normal contract administration procedures by the States to ensure the contractor's completion of specific contract equal opportunity requirements, as long as such procedures support, and sustain the objectives of E.O. 11246, as amended. The State shall inform FHWA of any actions taken against a contractor under normal State contract administration procedures, if that action is precipitated in whole or in part by non-compliance with equal opportunity contract requirements.

§ 230.407 Definitions.

For the purpose of this subpart, the following definitions shall apply, unless the context requires otherwise:

(a) *Actions*, identified by letter and number, shall refer to those items identified in the process flow chart. (Appendix D);

(b) *Affirmative Action Plan* means a written positive management tool of a total equal opportunity program indicating the action steps for all organizational levels of a contractor to initiate

and measure equal opportunity program progress and effectiveness. (The Special Provisions [23 CFR part 230 A, appendix A] and areawide plans are Affirmative Action Plans.);

(c) *Affirmative Actions* means the efforts exerted towards achieving equal opportunity through positive, aggressive, and continuous result-oriented measures to correct past and present discriminatory practices and their effects on the conditions and privileges of employment. These measures include, but are not limited to, recruitment, hiring, promotion, upgrading, demotion, transfer, termination, compensation, and training;

(d) *Areawide Plan* means an Affirmative Action Plan approved by the Department of Labor to increase minority and female utilization in crafts of the construction industry in a specified geographical area pursuant to E.O. 11246, as amended, and taking the form of either a “Hometown” or an “Imposed” Plan.

(1) *Hometown Plan* means a voluntary areawide agreement usually developed by representatives of labor unions, minority organizations, and contractors, and approved by the OFCCP for the purpose of implementing the equal employment opportunity requirements pursuant to E.O. 11246, as amended;

(2) *Imposed Plan* means mandatory affirmative action requirements for a specified geographical area issued by OFCCP and, in some areas, by the courts;

(e) *Compliance Specialist* means a Federal or State employee regularly employed and experienced in civil rights policies, practices, procedures, and equal opportunity compliance review and evaluation functions;

(f) *Consolidated Compliance Review* means a review and evaluation of all significant construction employment in a specific geographical (target) area;

(g) *Construction* shall have the meanings set forth in 41 CFR 60–1.3(e) and 23 U.S.C. 101(a). References in both definitions to expenses or functions incidental to construction shall include preliminary engineering work in project development or engineering services performed by or for a SHA;

(h) *Corrective Action Plan* means a contractor’s unequivocal written and

signed commitment outlining actions taken or proposed, with time limits and goals, where appropriate to correct, compensate for, and remedy each violation of the equal opportunity requirements as specified in a list of deficiencies. (Sometimes called a conciliation agreement or a letter of commitment.);

(i) *Contractor* means, any person, corporation, partnership, or unincorporated association that holds a FHWA direct or federally assisted construction contract or subcontract regardless of tier;

(j) *Days* shall mean calendar days;

(k) *Discrimination* means a distinction in treatment based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin;

(l) *Equal Employment Opportunity* means the absence of partiality or distinction in employment treatment, so that the right of all persons to work and advance on the basis of merit, ability, and potential is maintained;

(m) *Equal Opportunity Compliance Review* means an evaluation and determination of a nonexempt direct Federal or Federal-aid contractor’s or subcontractor’s compliance with equal opportunity requirements based on:

(1) Project work force—employees at the physical location of the construction activity;

(2) Area work force—employees at all Federal-aid, Federal, and non-Federal projects in a specific geographical area as determined under § 230.409 (b)(9); or

(3) Home office work force—employees at the physical location of the corporate, company, or other ownership headquarters or regional managerial, offices, including “white collar” personnel (managers, professionals, technicians, and clericals) and any maintenance or service personnel connected thereto;

(n) *Equal Opportunity Requirements* is a general term used throughout this document to mean all contract provisions relative to equal employment opportunity (EEO), subcontracting, and training;

(o) *Good Faith Effort* means affirmative action measures designed to implement the established objectives of an Affirmative Action Plan;

(p) *Show Cause Notice* means a written notification to a contractor based

on the determination of the reviewer (or in appropriate cases by higher level authority) to be in noncompliance with the equal opportunity requirements. The notice informs the contractor of the specific basis for the determination and provides the opportunity, within 30 days from receipt, to present an explanation why sanctions should not be imposed;

(q) *State highway agency* (SHA) means that department, commission, board, or official of any State charged by its laws with the responsibility for highway construction. The term *State* should be considered equivalent to *State highway agency*. With regard to direct Federal contracts, references herein to SHA's shall be considered to refer to FHWA regional offices, as appropriate.

§ 230.409 Contract compliance review procedures.

(a) *General*. A compliance review consists of the following elements:

(1) Review Scheduling (Actions R-1 and R-2).

(2) Contractor Notification (Action R-3).

(3) Preliminary Analysis (Phase I) (Action R-4).

(4) Onsite Verification and Interviews (Phase II) (Action R-5).

(5) Exit Conference (Action R-6).

(6) Compliance Determination and Formal Notification (Actions R-8, R-9, R-10, R-11, R-12).

The compliance review procedure, as described herein and in appendix D provides for continual monitoring of the employment process. Monitoring officials at all levels shall analyze submissions from field offices to ensure proper completion of procedural requirements and to ascertain the effectiveness of program implementation.

(b) *Review scheduling*. (Actions R-1 and R-2). Because construction work forces are not constant, particular attention should be paid to the proper scheduling of equal opportunity compliance reviews. Priority in scheduling equal opportunity compliance reviews shall be given to reviewing those contractor's work forces:

(1) Which hold the greatest potential for employment and promotion of mi-

norities and women (particularly in higher skilled crafts or occupations);

(2) Working in areas which have significant minority and female labor forces within a reasonable recruitment area;

(3) Working on projects that include special training provisions; and

(4) Where compliance with equal opportunity requirements is questionable. (Based on previous PR-1391's (23 CFR part 230, subpart A, appendix C) Review Reports and Hometown Plan Reports).

In addition, the following considerations shall apply:

(5) Reviews specifically requested by the Washington Headquarters shall receive priority scheduling;

(6) Compliance Reviews in geographical areas covered by areawide plans would normally be reviewed under the Consolidated Compliance Review Procedures set forth in § 230.415.

(7) Reviews shall be conducted prior to or during peak employment periods.

(8) No compliance review shall be conducted that is based on a home office work force of less than 15 employees unless requested or approved by Washington Headquarters; and

(9) For compliance reviews based on an area work force (outside of areawide plan coverage), the Compliance Specialist shall define the applicable geographical area by considering:

(i) Union geographical boundaries;

(ii) The geographical area from which the contractor recruits employees, i.e. reasonable recruitment area;

(iii) Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area (SMSA) or census tracts; and

(iv) The county in which the Federal or Federal-aid project(s) is located and adjacent counties.

(c) *Contractor notification* (Action R-3).

(1) The Compliance Specialist should usually provide written notification to the contractor of the pending compliance review at least 2 weeks prior to the onsite verification and interviews. This notification shall include the scheduled date(s), an outline of the mechanics and basis of the review, requisite interviews, and documents required.

(2) The contractor shall be requested to provide a meeting place on the day