EPA
United States
Environmental Protection
Agency

> ## Cross-Cutting Fundamental Strategy
> ## FY 2011 Action Plan Annual Progress Report
> ## Strategy 5: Strengthening EPA's Workforce and Capabilities

Continuously improve EPA's internal management, encourage innovation and creativity in all aspects of our work, and ensure that EPA is an excellent workplace that attracts and retains a topnotch, diverse workforce, positioned to meet and address the environmental challenges of the 21st century.

Executive Summary

Success under Strategy 5 means EPA is One Great Place to Work. In FY 2011, our actions were employee-focused and driven by opportunities to find smarter ways to work, save money, and reduce our environmental footprint. Our continuing goal is to provide a supportive and productive work environment so EPA has the talent, processes, and tools we need to protect human health and the environment effectively and efficiently.

Accomplishment Highlights:

- Reduced Hiring Time: EPA's time-to-hire decreased to 96 days in FY 2011 from 161 days in FY 2010. We expect to continue reducing hiring time at EPA by automating processes and improving hiring tools and practices, including use of standardized recruitment packages.   In FY 2012, we will track use and measure the impact of standardized packages on the hiring timeline.   FY 2011 data indicate that use of our new standard packages saves 15-20 days compared to the non-standard recruit timeline. We plan to release 13 more standard position packages by the end of first quarter FY 2012, which will help us meet our FY 2012 hiring time reduction target of 10% (10 days) to 86 days.

- Increased Telework: In FY 2011, we trained nearly 100% of all EPA managers and supervisors, improving their ability to manage teleworkers effectively.   EPA increased the average number of hours teleworked per pay period by 24% over FY 2010, more than doubling our goal of a 10% increase. In FY 2012, our goal is to increase the number of hours teleworked by 10 percent above the FY 2011 baseline.

- New Employee Orientation: EPA produced well-received New Hire Videos for new EPA employees. The videos, featuring EPA people and places, welcome new employees to the agency and convey a good sense of how they will fit into OneEPA by providing an overview of the EPA mission, programs, and people. We also updated and standardized the on-boarding process, and created external and intranet sites for New Employee Orientation, which help prepare new employees for their first day on the job.

- Reduced Unliquidated Obligations (ULOs):   The Agency exceeded FY 2011 targets for ULO reductions in expired grants and contracts. With an FY 2011 target to reduce unliquidated obligations in expired grants by 15% from the FY 2010 baseline, EPA achieved a reduction of 41%, or $9.9M, for ULOs in expired grants and a reduction of 81%, or $12.2M, for ULOs in expired interagency agreements. The Agency's FY 2011 target for reducing unliquidated obligations in expired contracts was 20%; we achieved a reduction of 71%, or $52.2M.

- Increased Green Conferencing: EPA is increasing the use of green conferencing to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and costs associated with business travel, while taking advantage of new, efficient ways to conduct business, share information, and build partnerships. In October FY 2011, we installed 50 green videoconferencing units across the Agency and began tracking the use of both new and existing units

throughout the fiscal year. This established a baseline to track and measure comparative use in FY 2012, when we plan to install 50 additional green videoconferencing units.

	Total Duration (minutes)
FY 2011 / Q1	217,444
FY 2011 / Q2	404,068
FY 2011 / Q3	496,447
FY 2011 / Q4	493,957
FY 2011 Total	1,611,916

Challenges:

- Continue to Reduce Hiring Time: FY 2011 was a transition year in hiring reform, with federal agencies implementing new requirements and responding to guidance from the federal Office of Personnel Management on how to improve and measure the quality and speed of their hiring processes. Beginning with FY 2011, we have refined the way we measure our hiring process against the 80 day standard to align with other federal agencies. We learned through benchmarking that EPA has been measuring hiring time differently than other federal agencies. EPA was counting every step of the process, while other federal agencies do not start counting until they receive a complete recruitment package. A complete package includes a classified position description, a job analysis, EZhire questions, a Standard Form-52 for processing personnel actions, and budget approval. In EPA, these steps alone averaged about 38 days, almost half of the 80 days.   In FY 2012, we plan to continue to reduce hiring time at EPA by automating processes and improving hiring tools and practices. The EPA's recruitment and hiring process is a cross-Agency partnership, with human resource specialists and hiring officials in each part of the organization playing key roles. The overarching challenge we face is to shorten the timeframe for announcing and making selections for Agency vacancies while continuing to ensure we have the talent in place when needed to meet mission requirements.

- Telework Policy: Developing a new telework policy required dedicated teamwork across senior Agency levels to ultimately resolve and integrate management policy issues and questions, which were linked to key implementation factors such as technology/equipment, employee tenure, and number of telework days allowed per pay period. We anticipate negotiating and implementing the new policy in FY 2012.

As One EPA, success in strengthening the Agency's workforce and capabilities depends on forging and implementing effective partnerships, and will require continued support and participation in strategy initiatives from across the Agency.

FY 2011 Performance Summary Strategy 5: Strengthening EPA's Workforce and Capabilities	
FY 2011 Action Plan Activity	**Status/Explanation** ✓ = Activity complete
1. **Reform EPA's hiring process to make it easier for applicants to apply for jobs, increase the pool of qualified candidates, and reduce hiring time. New hires report increased satisfaction with the hiring process, and EPA hiring officials report increased satisfaction with the quality and number of candidates referred for consideration (Supports Principle 1).**	FY 2011 was a transition year in hiring reform, with federal agencies implementing new requirements and responding to direction and guidance from the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) on how to improve and measure the quality and speed of their hiring processes. In May 2010, President Obama directed federal agencies to measure the quality and speed of their hiring process as part of an initiative to reform recruiting and hiring so we can bring the best and brightest into the federal workforce. The OPM set a target of 80 calendar days on average for agencies to complete the end-to-end hiring process. EPA, along with all agencies, is reporting our results to OPM on a quarterly basis. **Hiring Time** EPA's time-to-hire decreased to 96 days (FY 2011) from 161 days (FY 2010). We expect to continue reducing hiring time at EPA through improved hiring tools and practices, including use of standardized recruitment packages. **New Hires** • New Hire Survey Results "Overall I was satisfied with the Agency's hiring process" FY 2010: 82% FY 2011: TBD (Results expected by Dec. 1) **Hiring Officials** • Management Hiring Satisfaction Survey Results "Overall satisfaction with the hiring process" FY 2010: 40% Q3 FY 2011: 54% FY 2011: TBD (results expected by Dec. 1, 2011) OPM's survey data has EPA at 7.3 on a 10-point scale (Q3 FY 2011) regarding *"Overall satisfaction with the hiring process."* The government-wide average is 7.2.

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FY 2011 Action Plan Activity	**Status/Explanation** ✓ = Activity complete
• Convene cross-Agency taskforce to provide advice regarding performance of EPA's Human Resources Shared Service Centers (by November 2010).	✓
• Complete standardized recruitment packages for 10 occupations for customer use (by December 2010).	✓
2. Attract a diverse pool of applicants for EPA jobs, including increased representation from minority, veteran, women, and disabled populations (Supports Principle 1).	
• Launch the Diversity Dashboard, an internal database capable of providing snapshots of EPA employment data (by December 2010).	✓
• Conduct training for hiring officials in all EPA regions and program offices on targeted outreach strategies and the use of social media tools to attract qualified, diverse applicants (by March 2011).	EPA will conduct this activity in FY 2012.
3. Enhance the capability of telework-eligible EPA employees to work remotely and increase the number of EPA employees who telework and/or the number of hours teleworked by 10 percent (Supports Principle 2).	✓ In FY 2011, EPA increased the number of hours teleworked by 24% over FY 2010.
• Use results from the EPA Telework Study (includes regional approaches, best practices, and technology options) to inform the EPA policy approach to telework (by December 2010).	EPA used results from a study of telework approaches, best practices, and technology options to draft a new telework policy. We anticipate negotiating and implementing the new policy by the end of FY 2012.
• Train 100 percent of managers and supervisors in the training course, "Telework: A Manager's Perspective" (by March 2011).	✓

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FY 2011 Action Plan Activity	**Status/Explanation** ✓ = Activity complete
• Launch the enhanced Employee Portal to support employee remote access to specific EPA applications and systems. Track usage to build baseline data for measuring usage rates in future years (by April 2011).	✓ In September 2011, One EPA Workplace (http://workplace.epa.gov/) was launched as EPA's intranet homepage with a single address for employee access internally and remotely. The site provides: streamlined navigation to employee tools and information; more comprehensive search capabilities; single sign-on for selected applications; and, access to EPA's web conferencing tool. Implementing One EPA Workplace was the first phase in improvements to employee information access, including enhanced remote access to enable expanded telework.
4. Improve the on-boarding experience for new hires, expand opportunities for management and staff for ongoing development, and foster increased collaboration as One EPA (Supports Principles 1 and 2).	
• Identify and implement on-boarding "best practices," including integration of technologies such as social networking. Achieve improved employee satisfaction scores on the FY 2011 federal Employee Viewpoint Survey.	✓
• Investigate and prepare options for expanding the Leadership Development and Professional Rotational Program to include potential rotations/details to employees in the "professional-technical" career track (by March 2011).	The 2012 program will include both leadership and technical professional detail opportunities, offering employees more opportunities to broaden technical and specialized skills/experiences (i.e., attorneys, engineers, scientists).
5. Practice outstanding resource stewardship and ensure maximum use of Agency funds by reducing unliquidated obligations in expired grants and contracts. Reduce unliquidated obligations in expired grants by 15 percent and in expired contracts by 20 percent by the end of FY 2011 * (Supports Principle 3).	
• Review 100 percent of unliquidated obligations recorded on or before March 31, 2011 by June 30, 2011 or per EPA guidance.	✓

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FY 2011 Action Plan Activity	**Status/Explanation** ✓ = Activity complete
6. Utilize existing and emerging tools to support the President's focus on Open Government and provide a way for the diverse community of scientists, researchers, and professionals to connect, communicate, and share ideas (Supports Principle 4).	
• Launch EPA's internal professional networking and collaboration site for EPA employees (by September 2011).	In FY 2011, EPA identified 3 potential professional collaboration and networking solutions and began a series of pilots to assess capabilities offered and whether they match employee needs. A tool will be fully deployed to selected users and a decision made about Agency-wide usage in FY 2012.
7. Increase use of Green Conferencing and Green Meeting practices (Supports Principle 5).	
• Measure the use of video conference equipment to establish an FY 2011 baseline against which to track future usage (by September 2011).	✓ We installed 50 green videoconferencing units across the Agency and began tracking the use of both new and existing units throughout the fiscal year. Total Duration (minutes) FY 2011 / Q1 217,444 FY 2011 / Q2 404,068 FY 2011 / Q3 496,447 FY 2011 / Q4 493,957 FY 2011 Total 1,611,916