



## MLDC Research Areas

Definition of Diversity  
Legal Implications  
Outreach & Recruiting  
Leadership & Training  
Branching & Assignments  
Promotion  
Retention  
Implementation & Accountability  
Metrics  
National Guard & Reserve

This issue paper aims to aid in the deliberations of the MLDC. It does not contain the recommendations of the MLDC.

Military Leadership Diversity Commission  
1851 South Bell Street  
Arlington, VA 22202  
(703) 602-0818

<http://mldc.whs.mil/>

# The Defense Diversity Working Group

## Abstract

The DDWG provides a means for the military Services and OSD to work together to establish goals and procedures to increase diversity in DoD. This background paper provides information on the genesis, structure, and accomplishments of the DDWG.

**T**he Defense Diversity Working Group (DDWG) is the primary collaboration and execution body for diversity management in the Department of Defense (DoD). The DDWG meets quarterly and is led by the Diversity Manager in the Office of Diversity Management and Equal Opportunity (ODMEO) in the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD). The diversity managers of each military Service are the primary representatives to the DDWG.

## Objective

The DDWG's main objective is to act as a forum for the military Services to share best practices. The DDWG synchronizes the efforts of the Services to establish common diversity goals and procedures. The representatives collaborate on DoD workforce diversity matters and make recommendations on the best means for achieving diversity within the military and civilian sectors of DoD. The DDWG keeps the Defense Human Resources Board (DHRB) informed of its discussions, progress, and guidance.

The DDWG believes that the overall DoD diversity roadmap needs to include top leadership commitment, recruitment, training, measurement, accountability, mentoring, outreach, and the linking of diversity to performance and strategic plans. Each of the Services has been tasked with pursuing these goals.

## Background

On May 19, 2005, then-Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld issued a

“snowflake” memorandum on diversity in DoD. He was troubled by the lack of diversity at the senior levels of the department. In his words, “We need to get much more energy into achieving diversity at senior levels.” Specifically, Secretary Rumsfeld was interested in increasing the numbers of women and minorities among flag and general officers.

In August 2005, Colonel James Campbell, ODMEEO, briefed the DHRB on the Secretary's memorandum. At that time, the Services were independently developing their diversity strategies and programs. Colonel Campbell introduced the idea of creating the DDWG in order to synchronize the Services' efforts toward achieving diversity. The DDWG created a forum for the Services to share best practices and coordinate their efforts. The Services' diversity managers were designated the primary representatives to the DDWG.

Through the DDWG, ODMEEO tasked each DoD component to prepare forecasts of personnel entering the senior grades, broken down by race, ethnicity, and gender. The first forecasts, presented to the DHRB on December 14, 2005, covered a ten-year period and indeed showed a lack of diversity among DoD senior staff. As a result, Dr. David S. Chu, Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (USD (P&R)), directed the DHRB to increase the representation of women, minorities, and people with disabilities in senior positions throughout DoD and to establish a strategic approach to diversity management and inclusion. Also at that time, the DDWG became the primary diversity management collaboration and execution body for ODMEEO, USD (P&R), and the DHRB.

## Implementation

The DDWG functions as the single body providing feedback and recommendations to the DHRB on diversity issues. The DDWG holds in-depth discussions on effective practices, exchanges ideas, shares creative strategies, and recognizes components of successful

diversity initiatives. One example of a shared best practice is the Navy's method for increasing accountability in diversity. The Navy created a shell of a report on diversity metrics and sent it to its enterprises. The enterprises sent back the report with their data on diversity metrics. With data in hand, Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Mike Mullen called the heads of the enterprises into his office and asked tough questions about their diversity performance. This effective method of collecting metrics and ensuring accountability was passed on to the other Services at a DDWG meeting.

### **Diversity Directive**

In February 2009, Dr. Chu issued a directive institutionalizing diversity and establishing policies for diversity programs with the intent of keeping the component diversity offices and DoD on the same course (DoD, 2009). Drafted by representatives from the DDWG and ODMEO, the directive identified goals and guidelines for diversity management programs, military equal opportunity programs, USD (P&R), and the heads of the DoD components. The directive legitimized the establishment of military and civilian diversity management programs separate from the existing equal opportunity programs. It defined *diversity* as "the different characteristics and attributes of individuals" (DoD, 2009).

### **Accomplishments and the Way Forward**

The DDWG has accomplished a variety of tasks since its inception in 2005. Through the DHRB, the DDWG assisted in the creation of new diversity offices within the military Services. Previously, the Services had relied solely on their equal opportunity offices to handle diversity issues.

The DDWG developed the concept and plans for a diversity summit in 2007. This summit led directly to ODMEO commissioning the RAND Corporation's National Defense Research Institute to create an outline for a plan to improve diversity within DoD. The 2008 RAND report provided six recommendations to help DoD progress in its diversity efforts (Lim, Cho, & Curry, 2008).

To build on the recommendations of the RAND report, the DDWG contracted with Booz Allen Hamilton to create the DoD Diversity Strategic Planning Framework (Booz Allen Hamilton, 2008). The framework recommended that DoD implement enabling goals to facilitate movement toward the diversity vision and process goals to develop the processes to improve diversity outcomes.

The next step in the roadmap is the Diversity Measures Strategic Plan, currently being constructed by Colonel Kevin Driscoll, ODMEO, and the DDWG. This plan will lead to an implementation and communication plan intended to be the culmination of all the previous diversity initiatives in the roadmap.

### **References**

- Booz Allen Hamilton. (2008). *DoD diversity strategic planning framework*. McLean, VA: Booz Allen Hamilton.
- Lim, N., Cho, M., & Curry, K. (2008). *Planning for diversity: Options and recommendations for DoD leaders [MG-743-OSD]*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation.
- U.S. Department of Defense. (2009, February 5). *Diversity management and equal opportunity (EO) in the Department of Defense [DoD Directive 1020.02]*.