

Remarks
The Honorable Linda Hall Daschle
Deputy Administrator
Federal Aviation Administration
"Salute to Manager" Lunch
June 2, 1994

Good afternoon.

I'm very pleased to be here with you today.

I'm particularly proud and honored to participate in this "Salute to Managers" celebration.

Because I believe that when somebody does something good, you should say "Well done."

And you should say "Thank you."

So I am here to say both "Well done" and "Thank you" to the distinguished men and women that we honor this afternoon.

We meet here just after the fortieth anniversary of the Supreme Court decision on Brown v. Board of Education.

It was a landmark decision which helped to open the door to self-respect and equal opportunity for millions of young children in the schools of America.

Forty eventful years have passed since the Brown decision.

There has been progress, there can be no doubt about that.

Schools and communities throughout the country have torn down longstanding barricades to quality education for all.

African-American, White, Hispanic, Asian-American and Native American children now read the same books, sit in the same classes, eat in the same lunchrooms, ride the same buses, and share the same dreams for a better life.

But the progress, as we all know, has been slow. It has been halting.

We, as a society, have not yet achieved our goals of racial tolerance and equal opportunity.

We, as a society, have not opened the door wide enough, for people of color, for people with disabilities, and for women to grow and prosper, without discrimination, and without anxiety.

So, while we are here today to celebrate success, we all know we have work to do.

Let me share with you a personal story that illustrates this point, something that happened to me only a few months ago.

[Parking Garage Story]

It's a funny story, but it's true.

You have only to look around to see that the FAA, at all its levels, does not look like America.

And we need to change that, and the sooner the better.

There are several reasons why diversity is important to the FAA.

First, and importantly, President Clinton has challenged us to make a serious commitment to increasing diversity in the workplace.

He has said that we need to make the federal government look more like America.

If you look at the makeup of the Cabinet and the appointments he has made throughout the Federal establishment, you can see that this represents a genuine commitment on his part.

And this is a goal to which we are also committed.

Second, we emphasize diversity because the FAA is a very influential actor in the nation's economic life and our clients are a diverse group.

Our activities directly affect the safety and economic well-being of millions of women and men, girls and boys, of all colors in every corner of the U.S., and around the world.

If we are to be more successful in the work that we do, we need to better understand our national and international clients.

The greater our understanding of the diverse cultures, traditions, and languages of our customers, the greater will be our ability to respond, quickly and effectively, to their needs.

Third, diversity is important because solving the kinds of complex problems that FAA addresses every day demands that our work force include the broadest possible pool of skills and talent.

When we restrict the pool of available talent and when we fail to take efforts to involves staff of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds, we deny ourselves the full benefits of the best possible team.

Simply put, we need the highest quality staff to accomplish the work of the FAA. And the highest quality staff is found within the largest and broadest pool of candidates.

And, finally, the FAA becomes much more attractive as an employer, and as a place to work, when its work force mirrors the society at large. FAA will be a more comfortable and friendly place to work if representatives of all groups in our society know they are welcome in the office and on the job.

Studies tell us us by the end of the decade and into the next century, the work force will be made up of an increasing percentage of women and minorities.

If FAA is to be competitive in this environment, we must work now to establish a reputation where women and minorities are welcome and can move up the ladder.

Secretary Peña and FAA Administrator Hinson have spoken out forcefully in support of equal opportunity and diversity.

Their policies, if implemented in good faith (and with a gentle shove from the Deputy Administrator!) should ensure that the numbers will improve, and that FAA's management will become much more representative of our workforce, and the population-at-large.

I am convinced that bringing a diverse group of skilled professionals to the table, to staff meetings, and to the decision-making process will make the FAA a stronger, smarter, and more responsive agency.

When I think of the benefits of diversity, I turn to metaphor. Not the melting pot, but a tossed salad. The kind with four kinds of lettuce, tomatoes, artichokes, red peppers, carrots, croutons, you name it.

Each of these ingredients has its own unique flavor, but when they are all blended together, they create something even more wonderful and special.

And that is what diversity does for America and that's what it will do for the FAA.

In the rapidly changing environment that we find ourselves, how well we carry out our responsibilities as managers is more and more important to the successful mission of the FAA.

We are asked to find new ways, more efficient, and more effective ways to adapt our staff and our operations to the present-day realities of the modern workplace.

The challenges that we now confront in our day-to-day work are much different than those in the office when first we started our careers.

All of us are called on to do much more, with much less, and to do it faster, and to do it better.

We are required to work harder, sometimes longer, and to understand more about the varied and complicated relationships that men and women, and supervisors and staff, have on the job.

We know it is not easy.

And I assure you that the Secretary and the Administrator appreciate the serious efforts that you are making to get the job done.

Here, the Federal Women's Program is playing an important role in the FAA's effort to make it a better place in which to work.

The FWP is no longer just doing career development programs.

It has moved on to a broader agenda for change in the agency.

It is now doing a strategic plan which includes an analysis to pinpoint the institutional barriers that are preventing women and minorities from moving up the ladder.

I am aware of the FWP's work in this area, and I'm impressed by the scope of its work, and the seriousness by which it is being pursued. I look forward to seeing its report.

But let me say also, that it is not enough anymore just to say that diversity is important and that we must all work together.

It is not enough anymore just to study the problem to death and to make yet more recommendations about how to improve opportunity in the workplace.

We have had action plans.

What we need today, and tomorrow, is ACTION!

We won't solve our problems simply by talking about them.

We will solve our problems by doing something about them.

We must put into place and support the goals of equality and opportunity that just about everybody believes is important.

And this is where you come in.

Everyday, you, as managers, must "walk the walk," not just "talk the talk!"

And today, we salute men and women who have done just that, who have made a difference in the FAA by their commitment to equal employment opportunity and the promotion of diversity in the agency.

They are our friends and colleagues. They represent the best of the FAA.

From the Budget & Financial Management staff, to the Office of Civil Aviation Security Operations.

From the Real Property Office to Air Traffic Management.

From the electronic engineering staff to the Office of Public Affairs.

Today, we salute these individuals and all others who are working hard to make the FAA a more inclusive work environment.

They deserve our respect and our thanks.

[Let's give them a round of applause.]

In closing, let me say again that we all have an opportunity to make the FAA a better place to work.

I am confident that, together, we can move forward, and make our agency a model for others in the Federal government, and in private industry.

I applaud the substantial time and great energy that you have given to this effort, to this agency and to our country.

You are doing important work and millions of women and men, girls and boys, around the country and around the world depend on you. You must never forget that.

Congratulations again to our distinguished honorees.

I salute them for the wonderful work they have done.

Thank you very much.

**The Honorable Linda Hall Daschle
Deputy Administrator
Federal Aviation Administration
National Diversity Workshop
June 7, 1994**

The Challenge of Diversity

Good morning.

I'd like to extend a warm personal welcome to all of you who are here today.

And I want to particularly welcome those of you who have travelled from outside the Beltway to be here with us in Washington.

Spring is a particularly beautiful time of the year to visit the Nation's Capital, so I hope that you will take some time while you are here, to get out, see some of the sights, and experience one of the most beautiful cities in the world.

I'm very pleased to be here today.

This National Diversity Training Workshop should be an exciting time for all of us.

I can see from our agenda that there is great deal of interesting material to cover over the next few days.

And before I begin with my remarks, I'd like to compliment and congratulate the National Diversity Team for working so hard to organize a very dynamic and comprehensive program.

Gwen, Jeri, Michaline, Duke, Alfreda, thank you.

It takes a lot of work to put together a program like this.

Let's give them a hand.

My goal this morning is to help set a tone for our sessions to follow, and, if I can, to sketch out "the big picture," in which this workshop and our individual efforts fit.

As some of you might know, I view the concept of "diversity" as one of the great issues and challenges of our time.

It's an issue that I feel very strongly about, and one which is high on my personal work agenda here at the FAA.

So for a few minutes, I'd like to talk about several aspects of the "diversity" issue. Starting with diversity is important, and why it merits our attention and focus.

Second, I'd like to talk about what will it take to make diversity work in the FAA.

And finally, I'd like to make some general comments about where we go from here.

Afterwards, I'd be pleased to try to answer any questions that you might have.

Why is diversity so important?

Why do we want this agency to look like America?

Although there are many reasons, I'd like to briefly mention five.

First, the President has challenged us to make a serious commitment to increasing diversity in the workplace.

The President of the United States, to his great credit, has made an important commitment and great strides to achieving diversity in the federal workplace. President Clinton has said that it was his goal to make the federal government look like America.

And indeed, look at his Cabinet.

Women lead in the Department of Energy, the Department of Health and Human Services, at the Environmental Protection Agency, and at the United Nations.

African Americans direct the affairs of the Departments of Commerce, Energy, and Veterans Affairs.

And the Departments of Housing and Urban Development and Transportation are superbly led by Secretaries Pena and Cisneros.

But we realize that this is just a beginning.

We have to go far beyond certain high visibility positions in the administration, to a much broader commitment to increasing the participation of women and minorities throughout the civil service, and throughout society.

Every American has a stake in this country's future.

Every American--regardless of his or her national origin, age, sexual orientation, disability, or education level--should have an opportunity to participate in its progress.

Second, we emphasize diversity because the FAA is a very influential actor in the Nation's economic life and our clients are a diverse group.

We need to keep in mind that what we're talking about is a vast, and very powerful industry that affects almost every aspect of our Nation's life.

We're talking about more than 30 million flights, each year.

And that's just at the FAA-towered airports.

We're talking about more than 500 million passengers, each year--more than one-half BILLION passengers--on commercial flights in the United States.

And that number is growing rapidly.

We're talking about a national industry that, in 1991, was estimated to have had more than 8.5 million employees, direct and indirect.

Those employees earned more than \$206 BILLION dollars in wages and salaries.

And the annual economic impact of aviation was estimated at more than \$690 BILLION dollars.

That's big money, and that's a tremendous impact.

Our activities directly affect the safety and economic well-being of millions of women and men, girls and boys, in every corner of the United States, and around the world.

From Mississippi to Montana, from California to Connecticut, people's lives and their livelihood critically depend upon what we're doing, and how we do our jobs.

Our customers are these millions of white people, black people, red people, yellow people, and brown people.

Seniors and kids, mothers and fathers, brothers and sisters.

Americans with disabilities, Americans with different abilities.

People who speak Spanish, Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, Polish, Russian, Sioux, Navaho, and more.

If we are to respond quickly and efficiently to the changing market, if we are to respond adequately to our customer's demands, we must be sensitive, we must be intelligent, and we must be creative.

We must recognize that meeting our customer's needs requires that we understand our customer's needs.

We can do this effectively and efficiently only if our work force mirrors our client base.

Third, diversity is important because solving the kinds of complex problems that FAA addresses everyday demands that our work force includes the broadest possible pool of skills and talent.

As aviation becomes more complex, more competitive, more international, we must ensure that we have access to, and that we can draw upon, the broadest possible and most diverse employee base.

To be sure, simply increasing the number of our employees will not ensure that we secure the professional skills we need for problem-solving.

Quality, not quantity, is the watchword here.

However, when we, by whatever means, restrict the pool of available talent, when we fail to take efforts to involve staff of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds, we deny ourselves the full benefits of the best possible team.

Simply put, we need the highest quality staff to accomplish the work of the FAA.

And the highest quality staff is found within the largest and broadest possible pool of candidates.

When people bring different experiences and viewpoints to the table, there is greater creativity in problem-solving. Diversity in the workplace provides a broader plead of perspectives and opens new doors and angles for examining tasks.

Fourth, we are more productive when we can draw on the talents of a diverse team.

I believe that when certain tasks are not balanced by process, productivity in the workplace suffers.

Everybody is affected by a problem-solving or service-delivery process that is narrow, biased, and exclusionary.

It's just not natural, and it takes its toll on the participants.

And it takes its toll on the work product.

If we want a good product, we must ensure that the process used to produce it is open, honest, and fair.

And finally, the FAA becomes much more attractive as an employer, and as a place to work, when its work force mirrors the society at large.

Some people have talked about America as being a kind of "melting pot."

While I understand what they mean, I have never really liked that particular metaphor.

The melting pot concept suggests to me a society and culture, where everything is mixed in and blended together, and simmered to the point where it all looks the same, smells the same, and tastes the same.

In the melting pot, you can't recognize colors and flavors, the essential nature of the original ingredients.

You see a steaming, bubbling slop that looks like, well, a steaming, bubbling slop.

This "melting pot" metaphor, I believe, underestimates and plays down the valuable cultural, ethnic, and religious differences that distinguish American society from many other national communities around the world.

If you believe that this country has achieved its greatness because of the contributions of its many different groups, speaking many different languages, and drawing on the customs and traditions of their heritage, then the melting pot notion seems a bit inadequate.

An increasingly popular metaphor, I've heard, is that America is more like a mixed --salad, you know, the kind with four kinds of lettuce, tomato, artichoke, red peppers, croutons, carrots. Each ingredient has its own unique flavors, but when blended together the flavors create something even more wonderful and special.

I admit that maybe "salad" doesn't have the rhetorical power of "the melting pot," but it does seem to better capture the multicultural nature of America.

A salad, made with the best ingredients that this country has to offer.

Each community lending its particular flavor and spice.

The finished dish, being much more than the sum of its parts.

I don't mean to trivialize the important subjects that we are here to examine.

Rather, my goal is to bring home the idea that we are a stronger Nation, and a more successful Nation, because of the breadth of culture that is our hallmark, and the substantial resources that we are able to draw on.

FAA, for its part, is stronger and more successful to the extent that it has the quality and quantity of human resources needed to achieve our mission.

FAA will be a more comfortable and friendlier place to work if all groups are welcome in the office and on the job.

The demographics are changing.

By the end of the decade and into the next century, the work force will be made up of an increasing percentage of women and minorities.

If FAA is to be competitive in this environment, it must work to establish a reputation as an agency where women and minorities are welcome and can move up the ladder.

These considerations, I believe, are among the most important reasons why we need to focus our continued and careful attention on diversity issues.

I hope that you will keep them in mind as you attend the workshop sessions and talk among yourselves about the various problems and solutions that you have experienced on the job.

What will it take to make diversity work in the FAA?

In the FAA, like most large organizations, diversity issues need more than a manager's attention.

They need his or her commitment.

We must look at diversity, not in the abstract, not as a buzzword, not as just training sessions and workshops--although these are important.

We must view diversity as a long-term change process that permeates the organization at every level, in every activity.

A change process that must be woven carefully and delicately into the tapestry of the FAA.

I have spoken before of the need to go beyond the frequent, traditional studies of the problem, and the need to have more than an "Action Plan."

We have action plans.

What we need now is action!

It's time to stop paying lip service to the goals of diversity and equal opportunity in the workplace.

It's time to stand up and do something!

We can't just "talk the talk," we have to "walk the walk."

To make diversity work, we must get line management to lead; and we must hold managers accountable.

If there was ever an area where leadership is critical, it is here, involving the sensitive issues of diversity.

Because we are talking about new ways of behaving, and new ways of thinking about our work and about ourselves.

In some cases, we're trying to change the habits and practices of many years.

Managers must engage employees at every level of the organization to understand that diversity is more than equal employment opportunity, affirmative action, and demographics.

Employees must also make a personal commitment to encouraging and supporting a diverse workplace.

There will be small victories, but there will be no quick results

I think all of us recognize that changing attitudes takes work, and it takes time.

Your work in this area will be supported by committed leadership all along the line.

The President, the Secretary, the Administrator, and I are all strongly behind this agency's effort to improve diversity.

As you know, the Administrator has given this issue top priority.

In his recent statement on FAA's diversity policy, he has said that we will be selecting employees who reflect the diverse makeup of our Nation and who will make substantial contributions to the FAA mission.

He has also said that our leadership positions will be filled with people who value the contributions that employees of diverse backgrounds can bring to the workplace.

We can not and will not let this important concern go by the wayside in the face of streamlining and downsizing.

The Federal Aviation Administration has made some progress in this area.

We have a diversity plan for FAA and it declares our vision to provide the "finest aviation service in the world through the teamwork of our diverse work force."

You are, no doubt, familiar with its goals:

All FAA employees should have a common understanding of diversity.

FAA Managers will attract, retain, develop, and manage a diverse work force that mirrors the population at large.

FAA will have an employee-friendly workplace where a diverse work force freely expresses their varied talents and where racism, sexism, and sexual harassment do not exist.

FAA will identify and remove barriers which impede the growth and contributions of its diverse work force.

In this regard, I would like to acknowledge the good work that the Federal Women's Program is doing to identify the institutional barriers that are preventing greater progress in diversity.

I am familiar with their project and look forward to reading their conclusions and recommendations.

We should embrace, with enthusiasm, this agenda for change as well as the four phase approach to create and manage diversity here in FAA.

I support a comprehensive approach to diversity issues.

I know that former administrations have, from time to time, addressed the challenges of diversity, but never, from the President on down, has diversity been given such an urgent mandate.

The Secretary, the Administrator and I share fully in this mandate and are committed to ensuring that FAA, at all levels, make diversity an integral part of the FAA mission and culture.

We are committed to do that.

We must ensure that plans of resources are in place to guarantee that our short and long-term goals to have a more diverse workplace and work force are achieved.

And finally, we can make our diversity agenda a workable and successful one if we let people know, both inside and outside FAA, what our success stories are.

If we do good, let's tell the world!

Let's trumpet our achievements and educate each other about the progress that can be made in this important area.

We do somethings very well.

We're not as good as we can be in publicizing it.

Just a few days ago, we saluted FAA managers at headquarters who had made a difference in promoting opportunities for women and minorities.

I was genuinely proud of the time and energy that some of our colleagues have given to make the FAA a better place to work.

Those are stories that need to be told, and we will do a better job of telling them in the future.

In conclusion, let me just underscore that these are critically important issues, and ones which deserve our utmost attention.

Our success in the future is directly linked to our ability to foster greater involvement and participation by women and minorities.

We have a responsibility to make the modern workplace, a better place.

We can, and we must, make the workplace a nurturing, caring, friendly environment in which to work.

There's untapped talent in this organization, and we have to take advantage of it.

So, if you know of new and creative ways to do old tasks, tell us about them.

If you have suggestions from church, your temple, your school, your friends, tell us about them

Let us lead the way, not follow behind.

Let us pool all of our ideas, all of our energies, and all of our resources to move ahead. We will have to work at it everyday.

It's not easy, we all know that, and we have to work hard.

But the payoff is considerable, and we will all be better off for the effort.

Thank you very much for having me here today.

I look forward to working with you closely in the future.

Thanks again.