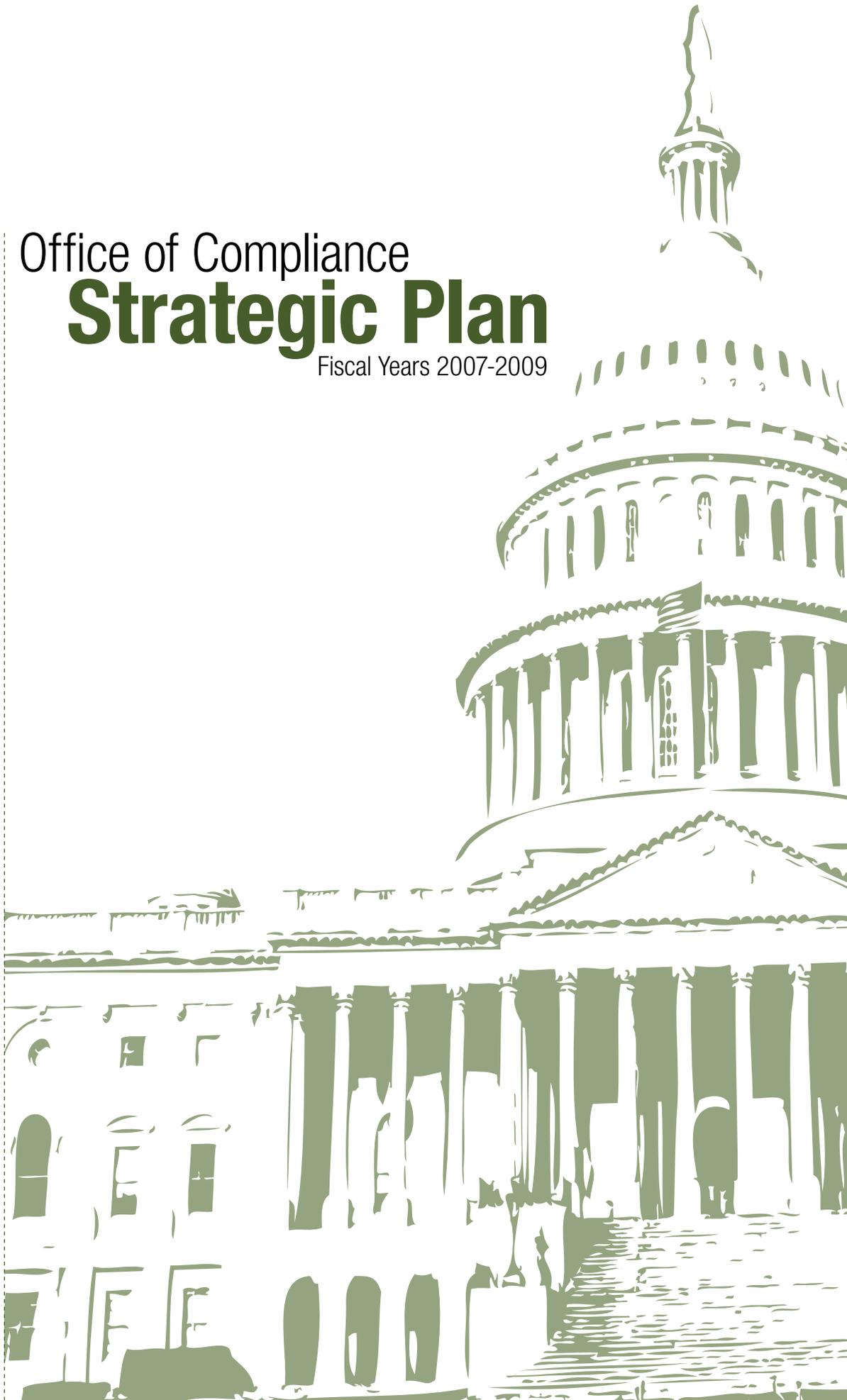


Office of Compliance
Strategic Plan
Fiscal Years 2007-2009



Introduction

This Strategic Plan is established to guide the Office of Compliance (OOC or Office) from Fiscal Year 2007 through Fiscal Year 2009. During this three-year time frame, the plan—as well as staff work assignments related to it—may change based on the changing needs of the Office. The Office intends to review and make modifications to this Plan as necessary in order to respond to the rapidly changing environment in which it operates. The Office will establish employee work plans based upon the elements of this Strategic Plan, and work to further the goals established herein.

This, the Office's second Strategic Plan, sets out four strategic goals and differs from the previous Plan in two significant ways: First, the Alternative Dispute Resolution Program and the Education and Outreach Program, grouped under one goal in the previous Strategic Plan, are presented as two separate goals in this Plan. This change highlights the unique role that each program plays in the administration of the Act. Second, the previous plan reported the Board's responsibility to provide legislative and regulatory recommendations to Congress as a goal. This Plan includes that function not as a goal, but as separate strategies within specific goals to provide context for each initiative.

Success in some areas of this plan may ultimately be beyond the Office's control, as certain goals are contingent upon budgetary approval and/or successful interaction with outside stakeholders or the covered community. Outside stakeholders include any person or entity sharing an interest in the actions of the Office, and the covered community consists of legislative branch visitors, employing offices, and staff covered by the Congressional Accountability Act (CAA or Act). The Office will foster these relationships and leverage its resources to accomplish the goals set forth in this plan.

Mission

“The Office of Compliance advances safety, health, and workplace rights for employees and employers of the legislative branch as mandated by the Congressional Accountability Act.”

Since the passage of the Congressional Accountability Act in 1995, the OOC has made significant progress toward providing a safe and fair environment for legislative branch employees and visitors. Office of Compliance staff strive each day to further the Office's mission by incorporating the following four strategic goals into everyday work:

- Protect the health and safety of legislative branch employees, assure equal access for individuals with disabilities, and provide for the prompt and fair resolution of labor relations disputes
- Assist employees and employing offices to achieve the model workplace envisioned by the passage of the Congressional Accountability Act by fairly and promptly resolving disputes
- Improve knowledge of rights and responsibilities under the CAA, both on Capitol Hill and in State or District offices throughout the country
- Foster OOC employee satisfaction and employee capability in order to enhance productivity

The Office of Compliance advances these goals with a staff of only 17 full-time equivalent employees, a detailee, contractors, and a part-time Board of Directors. The Office works toward these goals while simultaneously serving the functions of multiple executive branch agencies: the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the Department of Labor (Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), as well as Wage and Hour

divisions), Department of Justice (Disability Rights Section), and the Federal Labor Relations Authority.

The preceding four strategic goals are detailed in the Strategic Plan below:

Goal I

Protect the health and safety of legislative branch employees, assure equal access for individuals with disabilities, and provide for the prompt and fair resolution of labor relations disputes

The Office of the General Counsel (OGC) of the Office of Compliance is responsible for those portions of the CAA that apply the provisions of the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA), the public access provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and the unfair labor practices (ULP) of the Federal Labor Relations Statute to most of the legislative branch employing offices.

The labor relations function is distinct from the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) program administered by the Executive Director. While unfair labor practice charges are fully investigated in order to determine whether a formal complaint is warranted, the General Counsel seeks to resolve these disputes by applying dispute resolution techniques. During the past two years, the General Counsel has successfully resolved over 70% of filed charges.

Enforcement of safety and health and equal access for people with disabilities remains a crucial and expanding aspect of the Office's mission. In 2006, the Office completed a 96% baseline inspection of Washington, DC metropolitan area legislative branch facilities, resulting in the identification of thousands of violations and the issuing of numerous citations. The statutory requirement to perform a complete inspection during each Congress had not been met since the inception of the Office in 1996. To meet this goal, the General Counsel determined that it was necessary to increase the efficiency of the inspection process outlined on the following page and the abatement of identified hazards and to that end sought additional inspectors and other resources.

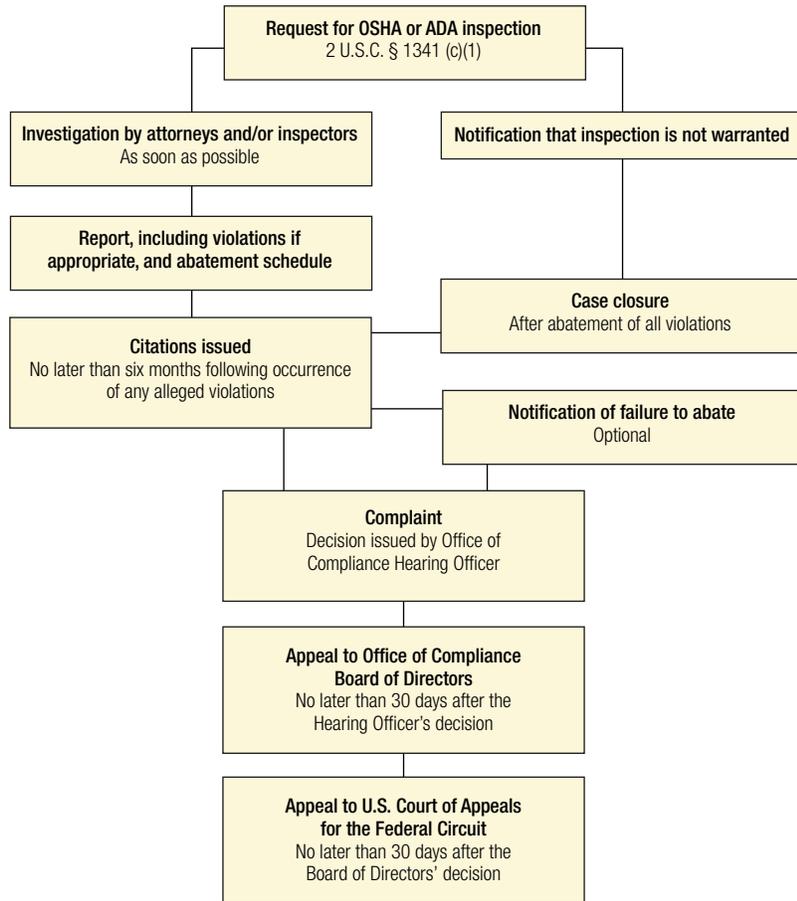
The Office acquired the Facility Management Assistant (FMA) software program in 2005 and fully implemented it as part of the 109th Congressional biennial inspection. The FMA system provides a database for identified safety and health and ADA public access violations and provides reports of violations to employing offices, the status of abatement and interim protective measures, and a variety of management reports. The use of this sophisticated software program enables the OGC to effectively and efficiently manage data regarding the number of violations discovered during the inspections conducted in the 108th and 109th Congress.

Improved staffing levels and technological resources have enabled the Office to complete the baseline inspection ahead of schedule. The inspection results demonstrate that substantial progress has been made and that employing offices are responding to the reports and initiating abatement of many of the identified hazards. However, many hazardous conditions that were identified in previous inspections remain unabated.

The caseload associated with citations that result from inspections as well as requestor-initiated and ADA complaints continues to increase, resulting in a significant backlog of open cases. It is imperative that unresolved cases be addressed promptly in order to effect abatement of the underlying violations. Open cases require monitoring, tracking, and assessment by inspectors, attorneys, and administrative staff. Therefore, implementation of an effective workflow management system is essential to moving cases forward to resolution, abatement, and ultimate closure.

In 2006, the Office completed a 96% baseline inspection of Washington, DC metropolitan area legislative branch facilities, resulting in the identification of thousands of violations and the issuing of numerous citations.

Process of Request for OSHA or ADA Inspection



Goal I will be advanced by means of the following strategic initiatives:

A. *Improve overall case handling effectiveness and monitoring of inspection violations.*

A substantial portion of the Office’s inspection function will continue to be achieved through the use of contractors with expertise in the various safety and health specialties. As discussed above, the Office will optimize use of the FMA for inspection and data storage. In addition, the Office’s efforts to work with employing offices to achieve standardization and consistency in the application of the inspection and abatement processes will be enhanced by the development of an effective case management system.

The Office of the General Counsel will enhance its ability to effect abatement, especially in relation to severe hazards through additional means, including litigation, if necessary. The Office will:

- Monitor its caseload with a new workflow management system for OSHA, ADA public access, ULP-related cases, and court litigation to complement the capabilities of the FMA system. The lack of such a capability has previously hampered the Office’s abatement, and enforcement processes. It has also hindered the Office’s ability to effectively and efficiently manage the workload of its inspection staff, limiting the ability to track employing office responses and promptly resolve requests for inspection.

- Establish appropriate time frames and outcome-related goals in order to achieve greater efficiencies and effectiveness in monitoring and enhancing health and safety, disability access and unfair labor practices compliance.
- Improve monitoring the progress of inspections and abatement, tracking correspondence and document exchange with employing offices, resolving open cases, reducing case backlogs, and facilitating enforcement litigation.
- With the active support of the Board of Directors, request that Congress enact the legislative changes necessary to enable the OGC to secure full and timely inspection and abatement information from employing offices, to issue investigatory subpoenas in connection with inspections and abatement monitoring, and to enforce the disability in public access provisions of the CAA.

The Office will also improve its overall effectiveness by providing improved management tools to assure balanced and equitable work assignments for OGC staff. The Office will:

- Prioritize the acquisition of tools and equipment that are required by OSH inspectors to perform thorough and efficient inspections.
- Review, revise and expand the OGC case-handling manual for OSH, ADA public access and ULP cases, in consultation with employing offices.
- Monitor the application of the OOC's Procedural Rules in order to identify and adopt any necessary amendments to facilitate implementation of the CAA.

B. Maintain and enhance the existing OSHA and ADA violation record-keeping system (FMA), and complete data input/conversion of prior case data.

Applying risk assessment standards to the FMA software system enables the Office to prioritize hazards and monitor abatement progress in subsequent inspections. While the Office will continue to provide immediate notification of the most serious hazards identified, the Office will also:

- Prioritize abatement of the most serious hazards, setting enforcement priorities where timely abatement is not forthcoming by developing new programs to better analyze inspection and abatement data.
- Improve efficiency, reduce costs, and expedite and improve abatement of hazardous conditions by acquiring additional software and personal data assistants (PDAs), and facilitating the timely transfer of initial findings reports and other data to employing offices and responsible offices.
- Make the FMA database more comprehensive by inputting data from prior OSH and ADA inspections, past requestor-initiated inspections, and OSH citations.

C. Expand the scope of the data monitored to improve compliance with safety and health and disability access requirements.

The CAA requires that the General Counsel inspect all covered facilities at least once each Congress. These covered facilities include facilities located in the Washington, DC metropolitan area, as well as offices located in the District or State offices. The Office has never

The CAA requires that the General Counsel inspect all covered facilities at least once each Congress. These covered facilities include facilities located in the Washington, DC metropolitan area, as well as offices located in the Congressional Districts.

The Office intends to provide increased outreach services to employing offices in order to enhance voluntary compliance with the Act, and therefore increase the level of health and safety and ADA public access on Capitol Hill.

been provided adequate funding to conduct comprehensive OSH and ADA inspections of State or District offices, notwithstanding the CAA mandate to do so.

Even though injury rate and lost-time data is one of the primary barometers used throughout the private sector and the remainder of the federal government to gauge the effectiveness of safety and health programs, most employing offices continue to refuse to provide the OOC with their injury and illness rates and lost-time figures.

Therefore, to the extent resources are available, a major initiative during this strategic planning period is to increase the scope of OGC investigations. To meet this initiative, the Office will:

- Analyze safety and health plans and programs of the regulated community for requirements met, determining whether plans meet OSHA requirements, including training requirements and overall viability of the plans.
- Obtain and analyze employing office occupational injury and illness rates and lost-time data from employing offices that maintain such records. Seek legislative change through the Board of Directors' 102(b) Report that would require all employing offices to maintain such records and to provide them to the OOC.
- Ascertain, through surveys or other means, the status of health and safety conditions in State or District offices and assure that the appropriate responsible party correct any hazards identified.
- Working with appropriate stakeholders, develop an educational program to inform employing offices of OSHA requirements to ensure a safe and healthy work environment for their employees.

D. Provide increased safety and health and ADA technical assistance, focusing on the service needs of the regulated community.

The ultimate responsibility for assuring equal access for members of the public with a disability and a safe and healthy work environment for legislative branch employees rests with the employing offices. The Office has conducted biennial legislative branch-wide health and safety conferences and periodic meetings in order to assist employing offices with their responsibilities under the Act.

Per a GAO audit recommendation that the OOC become “more collaborative and partnerial” with stakeholders and the covered community (See GAO-04-400, p. 32), the Office intends to provide increased outreach services to employing offices in order to enhance voluntary compliance with the Act, and therefore increase the level of health and safety and ADA public access on Capitol Hill. More specifically, the Office will:

- Conduct biennial legislative branch-wide conferences regarding health and safety and ADA access; conduct quarterly briefings and health and safety conferences on subjects of common interest to the health and safety community.
- Develop and enhance relationships with leading organizations and experts in occupational safety and health to establish the Office as a repository of information and technical guidance in all disability access and health and safety categories covered by the CAA.

Measuring Success

The outcome of Goal I is to make the legislative branch workplace safer, healthier and more accessible. Toward this end, the Office carries out a program of inspections, generating reports, monitoring and enforcement of abatement efforts. This includes both complete inspection of all covered facilities in the Washington, DC area each Congress, and requestor-initiated inspections conducted at the request of employees and employing offices. The agency's education program is also largely targeted to effect this goal. Finally, many of the recommendations the Board of Directors makes to Congress are also designed to achieve this end.

Measures:

- Enforce the abatement of 90% of all Risk Assessment Code (RAC) 1 (highest risk) violations identified during the 110th Congress biennial OSH inspections within 30 days of the date of the issuance of the OGC's hazards finding report. Abate 90% of RAC 2 violations within 90 days of the date of the issuance of the report.
- Effect a reduction in the number of OSH and ADA violations identified during the 110th Congress biennial inspections by 10% from the 109th Congress biennial inspections.

The standards applied in the conduct of inspections and abatement monitoring during the 110th Congress to ensure that they are thorough and comprehensive will not be any less stringent than the standards applied during the biennial inspections conducted during the 109th Congress. Sufficient quality control measures will be built into the process to ensure a true comparison.

External Factors:

There are several other key players who have roles in achieving these measures. Principal among them is the Architect of the Capitol (AOC), who manages construction and abatement projects throughout legislative branch facilities. The Office of Compliance works with the AOC in a collegial, advisory, and—less frequently—an enforcement capacity to assist in performing these functions. The OOC neither controls the amount of funding the AOC receives to abate and prevent violations, nor does it control how the AOC prioritizes its projects, programs, and training.

In addition, although the Office has recently received an increase in funding to conduct comprehensive biennial inspections during the 109th Congress, it will be seeking sufficient resources that it does not yet have to enable it to cover the increased costs of monitoring the abatement of thousands of violations found.

Until the 110th Congress inspections are completed, the Office will measure success in Goal I in the following ways:

- By the end of FY 2007, reduce by 25% the number of OSH and ADA requestor-initiated cases and citations that are open for 12 months or more from the FY 2006 total, and resolve (through abatement, closure, dismissal or other dispositive action) all such backlogged cases and citations by the end of FY 2009.
- In FY 2007, reduce the average time between the inspection and the delivery of the OGC charts tabulating the inspection findings to the responsible employing office by 30% over FY 2006.

The Office works with the covered community to administer a fair and effective alternative dispute resolution (ADR) program whereby individual rights conferred by the CAA can be addressed and promptly resolved.

- By the end of FY 2007, ascertain the abatement status of all RAC 1 and RAC 2 violations identified during the 109th Congress biennial inspections.
- During the 110th Congress biennial inspections, ascertain the abatement status of all RAC 1 violations identified during the 110th Congress biennial inspections within 30 days of the date of the OGC's hazard findings report, and all RAC 2 violations within 90 days of the report.

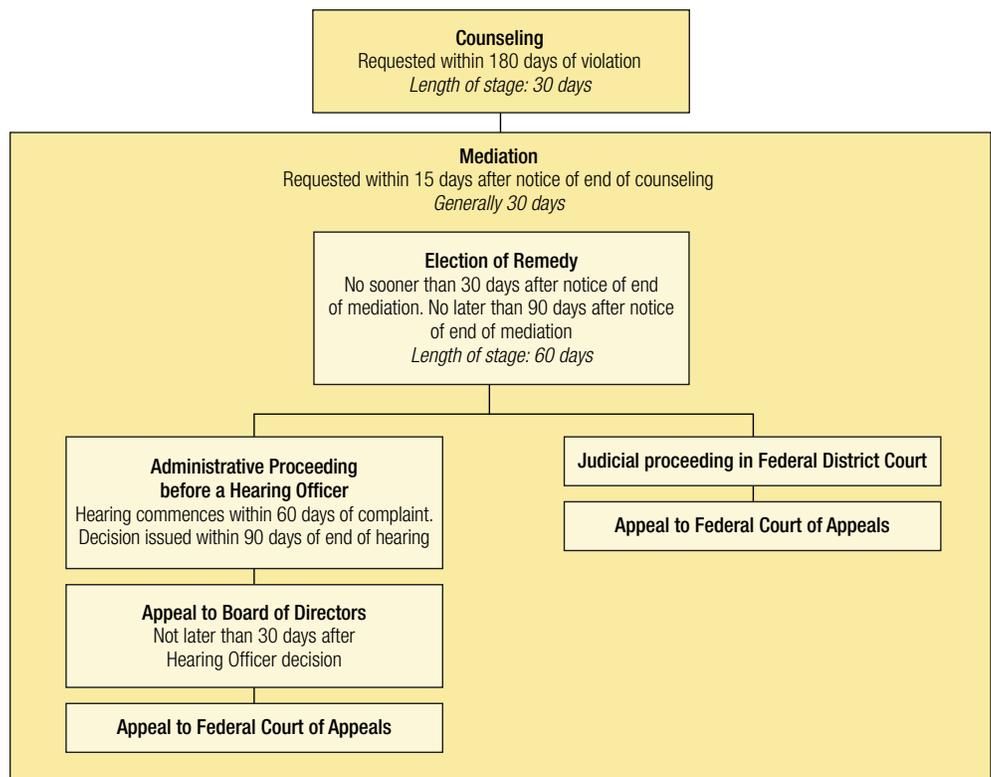
Goal II

Assist employees and employing offices to achieve the model workplace envisioned by the passage of the Congressional Accountability Act by fairly and promptly resolving disputes

Under the direction of the Executive Director, the Office of Compliance administers the alternative dispute resolution (ADR) program established by the Congressional Accountability Act. The Office works with the covered community to administer a fair and effective ADR program whereby individual rights conferred by the CAA can be addressed and promptly resolved. Disputes mandated to go through the ADR process include allegations of violations of the CAA under the anti-discrimination provisions, the Family and Medical Leave Act, Fair Labor Standards Act, Polygraph Protection, protections in the event of a mass layoff, veteran's employment rights, and prohibition of intimidation or reprisal.

The dispute resolution process includes counseling, mediation, hearings, and appeals in a confidential setting. The process adheres to strict time lines, resulting in the efficient processing of complaints without creating a backlog of unresolved disputes. By encouraging

Process of Civil Rights Dispute Resolution



the use of alternative dispute resolution methods—such as mediation—the Office has seen an increase in the number of disputes resolved by agreement between parties.

The OOC strives to administer the alternative dispute resolution program in the most effective and cost-efficient manner possible. Since the establishment of the Office, we have continually reviewed our case handling procedures. In 2002 the Office revised its standard forms and in 2004 the Procedural Rules were amended. The Office continues to revise the forms and correspondence utilized in case processing. In 2005 it was determined that a new case tracking system was needed for the program. Following that determination, a needs assessment was conducted, case tracking systems were identified and demonstrated, and procurement of a new software system planned. The new system will be more user-friendly and will allow for a more streamlined workflow, normalizing data and reducing the opportunity for user error. In addition, the new system will allow OOC staff to more readily obtain statistical data on the use of the Office, and identify areas of need within the covered community.

The Office continues to survey its mediation participants—parties and mediators—to obtain information on their experiences with the program so that we may evaluate our effectiveness. The survey results are assessed to obtain information that will help the Office target its limited resources in the most effective manner possible.

Goal II will be advanced by means of the following strategic initiatives:

A. Utilize the new dispute resolution case tracking system to increase case-processing efficiency and better direct resources.

The new case tracking system will allow the Office to monitor the effectiveness of program spending and enable it to make appropriate fiscal decisions utilizing data maintained in the system. Accordingly, the Office will:

- Maximize efficiency in the administration of the ADR program by updating software functionalities to include tools that will streamline workflow.
- Utilize updated case tracking system to spot subject matter trends within the covered community allowing the Office to better target educational resources.

B. Assist disputants in successfully resolving workplace disputes at the earliest possible step in the ADR process. Early resolution reduces stress on the disputants, eases tension in the workplace, and saves tax-payer dollars.

The Office seeks to utilize its resources to assist employees and employing offices to resolve workplace disputes whenever possible to prevent them from escalating. The Office provides advice, information, and education to the covered community on their rights and responsibilities under the CAA to encourage compliance with the model workplace envisioned by the framers of the CAA. As a result, the Office has seen a reduction in counseling requests filed, and a steady increase in negotiated settlements during the mediation phase. To further this initiative, the Office will:

- Continue to promote the use of alternative dispute resolution at the earliest possible point, evaluating opportunities for resolution at the intake and counseling stages. This includes advising callers on the application of the CAA, talking over their concerns thoroughly, examining optional solutions, and negotiating resolutions to disputes during the counseling phase where appropriate.

The Office hopes to build upon the trend toward early dispute resolution to further increase its productivity and effectiveness.

- Provide a safe and level playing field for disputants to fully process their concerns, explore all settlement options including equitable and/or monetary relief, and obtain mediated settlements. The Office does this by utilizing highly trained and experienced mediators in a confidential setting.
- Encourage negotiated settlements at the hearing stage before a decision by the hearing officer is rendered.

C. Continue to survey the stakeholders who have participated in the ADR process to obtain information on the administration of the dispute resolution program.

Direct feedback from program participants is the most quantifiable information available to gauge success of the dispute resolution process. The Office will use this valuable information to:

- Cull data that may identify barriers to the successful resolution of disputes in the mediation phase. Where surveys denote process deficiencies, use the information to improve the way mediation services are delivered.
- Evaluate the application of resources and determine how financial and human capital resources can be better focused to obtain enhanced results. If sufficient data is provided to support and guide critical decisions, consider utilizing surveys for all areas of the alternative dispute resolution program, such as counseling, hearings, appeals, and administration.

D. Endorse and enhance the alternative dispute resolution program to support the recent increase in mediated settlement agreements.

The Office hopes to build upon the trend toward early dispute resolution to further increase its productivity and effectiveness. The OOC therefore intends to:

- Educate the covered community on the benefits and opportunities that result from an interactive dispute resolution process, such as mediation and negotiation. As recommended by the Government Accountability Office in its 2004 Recommendations, assist with the development and implementation of conferences, develop educational materials, and consult with process participants on the effective use of alternative dispute resolution.
- Continue the dialogue and exchange of ideas with all stakeholders in the covered community on options and methods to prevent or resolve workplace issues.

E. Realize the Board of Directors' rulemaking authority by monitoring its existing procedural rules and recommending substantive regulations for approval by Congress.

The Congressional Accountability Act requires the Board of Directors of the Office of Compliance to report to Congress on the application and administration of the CAA, and to recommend substantive and regulatory changes to the Act that would enhance its applicability within the legislative branch. To fulfill this statutory requirement, the Office will:

- Pursue the implementation of the Board's existing recommendations to Congress.
- Monitor legislation that may impact workplace rights and responsibilities within the covered community on a continuing basis.

- Set forth new recommendations on an on-going basis, as well as through the Board of Directors' 102(b) Report issued once each Congress.
- Recommend that Congress approve the substantive regulations issued by the Board of Directors to implement the Veterans' Employment Opportunities Act (VEOA) and the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) provisions of the CAA.
- Develop, adopt, and recommend that Congress approve the substantive regulations to implement the provisions of the Uniform Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) as applied by the CAA.
- Monitor the application of the Office's Procedural Rules, and adopt amendments to the Rules when needed to optimally implement the provisions of the CAA.

Measuring Success

Counseling, mediation, and hearings are conducted on a timely basis, as defined by the Congressional Accountability Act. The success of the Office of Compliance's dispute resolution process will ultimately be manifested in an outcome of resolving disputes fairly and efficiently. This measure will therefore focus on the fairness and effectiveness of the process, the effectiveness of which is largely incumbent upon the willingness of its covered community to make optimal use of the process. It is reasonable to conclude that if mediation, a required component of the dispute resolution process, is considered fair and equitable, more disputes will be resolved by means of the valuable and cost-effective process envisioned by Congress and set forth in the Congressional Accountability Act.

In FY 2005, the Office implemented a survey of mediation participants to measure the participants' satisfaction with—and the effectiveness of—the Office's mediation program. In FY 2006, the survey mechanism was improved to yield more quantifiable data, and it was redesigned to make it faster and easier to use. In spite of these measures, the return rate on completed surveys remained low. To increase the rate of response, the Office made the form more visually appealing in FY 2006, and distributed it prior to and during mediation. More recently, the Office opted to follow-up with participants when the surveys are not returned. The Office will persist in its attempts to obtain feedback from participants on the effectiveness of this program over the term of this Plan.

Measure:

- Increase by 10% the number of participants who report the mediation to be very fair or fair in FY 2008, as measured against the FY 2007 respondents. Continue to increase the percentage in FY 2009.

The current rate of return in terms of surveys completed is too low to yield a meaningful statistical sample. Therefore, as an interim measure, the Office will measure success in this critical area in the following way:

- In FY 2007, the Office will increase by 25% the number of responses to the mediation survey over the 2006 baseline response.

External Factors:

Several factors may prevent the Office from achieving this measure. Among them are the ability or willingness of participants to voluntarily resolve disputes, and the willingness of participants to complete and return mediation survey forms.

The Office is recognized as a valuable source of information across the legislative branch.

Goal III

Improve knowledge of rights and responsibilities under the CAA, both on Capitol Hill and in State or District offices throughout the country

The Office of Compliance has made great strides in recent years to increase the effectiveness of its communication with, and education of, stakeholders. All material—from the web site to printed publications—has undergone significant redesign and focus in order to increase readability and familiarity. Material subject matter is more current, and material is more targeted to a specific audience. Office of Compliance technical experts are also increasingly invited to provide subject matter expertise to assist Congress and the covered community in the development of public policy. As a result of this increased presence, the Office is recognized as a valuable source of information across the legislative branch.

Looking forward, the OOC hopes to strengthen awareness of the Congressional Accountability Act and increase visibility of the OOC in order to encourage early resolution of disputes, as well as the prevention of potential disputes. The Office also plans to strengthen current relationships and foster relationships where none currently exist. Efforts will be guided by a baseline survey that will demonstrate where the Office is, shape where it is going, and guide efforts through this strategic planning period and beyond.

Goal III will be advanced by means of the following strategic initiatives:

A. Complete and implement Phase I of a baseline survey to gauge the needs of stakeholders and shape future education and outreach efforts.

For Goal III initiatives to be most effective, the Office must first be aware of the climate in which the initiatives will be implemented. The OOC therefore plans to conduct a phased baseline study of its covered community to determine the level of awareness of the OOC and the CAA, the level of awareness of rights and responsibilities under the Act, and the general level of satisfaction with the congressional work environment as it relates to the CAA. The Office's objective is to:

- Use the findings from the survey to assess our overall performance in meeting our mission and identifying needs and ways to improve our performance in the future.
- Use similar questionnaires, interviews, and web site materials to determine the extent of knowledge of OSH and ADA public access requirements.

B. Increase the overall visibility of the Office of Compliance.

With the baseline survey results as a guide, the Office will attempt to make more stakeholders aware of the work of the Office. The OOC will:

- Enhance, expand, and promote “www.compliance.gov” as the most exhaustive source of information related to the CAA and the OOC.
- Explore the possibility of design and production of new publications and educational materials.
- Enlist assistance from congressional staff to acquire intranet access.
- Foster and nurture relationships with issue-specific groups, organizations and federal agencies in an effort to reach specific stakeholders. The OOC will leverage these relationships to target groups unfamiliar with the Office.

- Develop protocols between the OOC and covered legislative branch stakeholders to clarify expectations, define process issues, and foster productive working relationships that will enhance administration of the Congressional Accountability Act.

C. Prioritize communication and outreach to all State or District offices.

Although the CAA mandates communication with the entire covered community, the OOC has lacked necessary resources to specifically reach those employed in the State or District offices. Therefore, in an attempt to more fully comply with the Act, the Office will:

- Assess the specific educational needs of State or District offices.
- Expand the web site to include a section specifically for State or District office staff.
- Explore means by which the Office may become more accessible to those outside the Capitol Hill complex.

Measuring Success

Upon completion of the Office of Compliance’s phased baseline survey, the Office will have definitive data against which to measure the effectiveness of the education and outreach services provided to the legislative branch. The outcome of this initial survey instrument will likely be an incremental increase in stakeholders’ awareness of the Congressional Accountability Act and the Office of Compliance. The Office will then be able to track—and ultimately measure—its covered community’s understanding of the CAA, as well as the effectiveness of the Office of Compliance’s education and outreach program.

Measure:

- Increase the percent of respondents from each employing office whose knowledge of their rights and responsibilities under the CAA is measured at the highest or near-highest point by 10% over the previous survey period. Because of the scope of this project, the survey period may extend beyond this three-year Strategic Plan.

The measures below represent interim education and outreach measures. The Office of Compliance recognizes that statistics related to our web site are outputs as opposed to outcomes, and are only a small piece of the education and outreach program. However, the web site statistics are currently the only quantifiable statistics available to measure in this area.

Until the Office has achieved the critical goal of culling and analyzing meaningful data about our covered community’s knowledge of their rights and responsibilities, the Office will measure success in this critical area in the following ways:

- Increase by 5% from the previous fiscal year the number of hits to our web site.
- Increase by 5% from the previous fiscal year the number of “Fast Fact” downloads from our web site.

External Factors:

The Office of Compliance is currently without access to the House, Senate, or other employing office intranet systems, nor does it have a familiar Capitol Hill telephone prefix

Although the CAA mandates communication with the Office’s entire covered community, the OOC has lacked necessary resources to specifically reach those employed in the State or District offices.

The Office recognizes that our employees are the most valuable resource of this agency.

number. These factors isolate the Office from its legislative branch stakeholders, rendering communication less effective and ultimately more costly. Sustaining awareness requires multiple educational strategies, including intranet, Internet, traditional mailings, Hill visits, District visits, and targeted outreach to employee groups such as office managers and office emergency personnel.

Further, although we feel that response to the baseline survey will be a test of increased cooperative efforts with the covered community on Capitol Hill, we will achieve a great degree of success if we are able to widely disseminate the survey and follow up via intranet email. Operating within a system of limited access to delivery, communication, information systems, and space may hamper our ability to obtain a valid response rate. Recurring funding will be required to complete the baseline for the entire campus.

In addition, new educational initiatives require sustained additional funding. The Office has recently been very successful at hosting conferences, workshops and briefings. These events require increased coordination, planning and ongoing funding.

Goal IV

Foster employee satisfaction and employee capability in order to enhance productivity

The final goal of this Strategic Plan is to create a model office to ensure that the principles that are advocated in the CAA are readily apparent in the internal policies and day-to-day operations of the OOC. The Office recognizes that our employees are the most valuable resource of this agency. As such, they are the heart of all efforts to create a model workplace and achieve organizational excellence. Management, therefore, commits to promoting employee empowerment by nurturing an interpersonal climate of respect, facilitating the regular sharing of information, staying alert to emerging mission demands, and maintaining a line of sight between the Office's Strategic Plan and our Human Capital Plan.

Goal IV will be advanced by means of the following strategic initiatives:

A. Develop and implement a clearly defined Human Capital Plan.

Based on the results of the Office's contracted human capital study begun in 2006, the Office will:

- Develop and implement a clearly defined pay plan and evaluation system that consistently communicates performance expectations and rates, and rewards and holds employees accountable for the results that contribute to the success of the OOC's strategic objectives.
- Incorporate funding to support the pay plan into annual appropriations request.
- "Right size" the office staff by requesting appropriate additional full-time equivalent positions to effect the staffing configuration that is optimally efficient, focusing on identified needs in information technology (IT), human resources, safety and health, and congressional relations.

B. Enhance organizational efficiency and effectiveness through the acquisition of technological equipment and tools required to enhance the Office of Compliance's competitive edge as an employer and the efficiency of its day-to-day operations.

GAO notes that "investing in" and "enhancing the value of employees" is demonstrated by "providing resources and incentives that support new ways of working to encourage employees

to attain agency goals and objectives and invest in tools to maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of administrative processes.” (GAO-02-373SP A Model of Strategic Human Capital Management March 2002, pp. 24-25) In an attempt to meet this recommended objective, the Office will:

- Transition to Microsoft Word to facilitate communications with stakeholders.
- Ensure that the acquisition of IT and technological equipment considers the reasonable expectations of individual employees and maximizes their performance.
- Provide desktop Internet access to all employees.

C. Maximize employees’ capabilities through training, development, and opportunities to facilitate upward mobility.

The Office recognizes that various factors contribute to employee health, wellness, and job satisfaction. In an attempt to meet these needs, the OOC will:

- Seek legislative change—through the Board of Directors’ Biennial 102(b) Report and other efforts—to the CAA’s Section 302(d) to allow current OOC staff to be considered for appointed positions within the OOC. The potential for upward mobility will allow the Office to retain staff that have shown excellence in the administration of the Act, as well as allow for greater continuity of service by retaining both historical perspective and institutional expertise.
- Create individual plans to provide developmental and skills-enhancement training on an on-going basis for all OOC employees. Annual budget requests will include requests for adequate funding to allow reasonable amounts of training for each employee.
- Encourage skills development and work assignments that broaden employees’ experience base and enhance their career development.
- Develop an orientation and initial training plan to facilitate the orientation of new employees during their first year of employment including the policies, procedures, and mission of the OOC, as well as in the structure and organization of the legislative branch.

D. Enhance the working environment of the Office of Compliance to maximize organizational efficiency and effectiveness and employee satisfaction:

Just as management demonstrates the value of employees by providing the tools that are needed to perform their work effectively, the agency’s ability to operate efficiently and meet the needs of the covered community is enhanced by providing a work environment that maximizes productivity. Management recognizes that during the eleven years of its existence, few resources have been devoted to enhancing the Office’s work environment of its employees. Therefore, to grant priority to this effort, the Office will:

- Ensure that employees are provided information regarding and access to the full scope of employee benefits such as the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and access to legislative branch fitness facilities.

- Prioritize and pursue the acquisition of space that allows for the placement of new employees and that enhances the quality of employees' work environment.
- Prioritize the acquisition of ergonomic and functional furniture that enhances employees' work environment.

E. Develop and implement the use of telework and alternative work schedule arrangements.

GAO suggests that high performing organizations adapt to the changing dynamics of an evolving workforce by evaluating new initiatives to determine if they support the agency's efforts to achieve its program results. (GAO-02-373SP A Model of Strategic Human Capital Management, March 2002, p. 10)

- Study the application of flexible work schedule and telework programs and develop and implement appropriate policies and guidelines for employees.