
MEETING MINUTES

Member Attendees

Rafael Borrás/USM	Marcus Hill/FLETC	David Wright/AFGE (FPS)
J. David Cox/AFGE National	Thomas Homan/ICE	Christopher Crane/AFGE (ICE)
Colleen Kelley/NTEU National	David Hess/NPPD	Demetrios Stroubakis/AFGE (USCG)
Catherine Emerson/CHCO	Annie Nelson/TSA	Hydrick Thomas/AFGE (TSA)
Kevin McAleenan/CBP	Curt Odom/USCG	Glenn Dockham/NTEU (CBP)
Joe Moore/CIS	Ken Palinkas/AFGE (CIS)	John Hiller/NTEU (CBP)
Carla Gammon/FEMA	Steve Hardman/AFGE (FEMA)	James Ruoff/NTEU (CBP)

Budget Update

OCFO provided a financial update for FY 2013, including a summary of actions taken to mitigate the impacts of sequestration. The presentation covered the House's proposed FY 2014 appropriations for DHS. While its total budget is nearly equivalent to the President's request, the House funds different priorities and does not include any funding for the St. Elizabeth's project. The Senate will introduce and consider its DHS budget proposal in the coming weeks. OCFO also discussed other items of interest including DHS budget implications of the Senate's comprehensive immigration reform bill, S. 744, and future budget uncertainties including the potential for another Continuing Resolution and a debt ceiling increase.

Labor Management Relations Survey and FEVS Participation Update

The survey working group reviewed, and made minor adjustments to, the Labor Management Relations Survey. The 2013 survey period is August 14th to 28th. Survey results will be distributed to Components between the 23rd to October 11th.

The unadjusted response rates of the Employee Viewpoint Survey were presented. Final adjusted rates are expected in August. DHS response unadjusted rates were slightly less than the government average.

FEVS Improvements in FEMA

Labor and management representatives from FEMA presented on the changes in their FEVS scores from 2011-2012. FEMA improved on all 3 questions used in the Partnership for Public Service *Best Places to Work* index. Both labor and management encouraged employee participation in FEVS. When results were received a copy was sent to the union. In order to improve scores they focused on training and duty readiness implementing the Employee Readiness Program which is a training session for new employees.

Communications Working Group Update

Attendees were presented with general labor management communication statistics from the past 4 years and the working group recommendations based on their analysis of communications reviewed.

Working Group Recommendations to LMF to Improve Communication with Unions:

- Share all communications concerning conditions of employment with NTEU and AFGE normally no less than 3 days prior to dissemination to employees.
- Share messages sent to a large number of employees in a component(s) regarding conditions of employment with unions normally no less than 3 days prior to dissemination.
- Use the Component labor management forums to address the issue of labor/management communications at the level of recognition.

The DHS LMF adopted the working group recommendations.

DHS Agency Priority Goals

Representatives were briefed on the background and policy behind the need for Department priority goals. These goals are determined every 2 years. Two FY12-FY13 goals were reviewed: TSA's goal to strengthen aviation security counterterrorism capabilities and FEMA's goal to strengthen disaster preparedness and response capabilities.

Pre Decisional Involvement (PDI) Successes at NPPD

Labor and management representatives from NPPD shared PDI success stories with the forum. Policies highlighted included Telework, Law Enforcement Authority and Jurisdiction Policy, and Workspace initiative. Presenters noted that in most instances matters are addressed in PDI eliminating the need for engagement in the bargaining process.

Conducting Virtual DHS LMF Meetings

In light of the future budgetary outlook, the forum members discussed the option of conducting virtual meetings. Some attendees questioned the viability of relying on technology to conduct LMF meetings, by sharing experiences where the technology failed; and/or participants who were not physically present could not fully participate. The majority of attendees supported using virtual methods or teleconferences to hold interim or smaller group meetings. This would also help gather information for a future reassessment of the virtual meeting concept.

Closing Comments and Remarks

Attendees were advised their hand-outs included information regarding the number of DHS Labor Management Forums. NTEU requested to see a breakdown of the information by union.

USM Borrás thanked participants and encouraged components to continue their efforts to improve labor-management relations.

Mr. Wright requested a review of the background concerning the Institute of Medicine study and suggested it might be a topic for the next meeting. Mr. Crane provided a copy of a draft merit promotion policy and requested further information. OCHCO will review the status of these items and share information with LMF members.