

MEETING MINUTES

Member Attendees

Rafael Borrás/Under Secretary for Management	Beth Gibson/ICE	Glenn Dockham/NTEU-CBP
Jeff Neal/CHCO	Don Neufeld/USCIS	Yasir Sheikh/NTEU-TSA
John Gage/AFGE National	Jeffery Orner/USCG	Vanessa Newton/NTEU-CBP
Colleen Kelley/NTEU National	Caitlin Durkovich/NPPD	Abdullah Shahbaaz/NTEU-CBP
TJ Bonner/NBPC	Demetrios Stroubakis/AFGE-USCG	Paul Sumbi/ NTEU-CBP
Thomas Winkowski/CBP	David Wright/AFGE-FPS	Ricky McCoy/ AFGE-TSA
Albert Sligh/FEMA	Steve Hardman/AFGE-FEMA	James Fortune/AFGE-USCIS
Connie Patrick/FLETC	Christopher Crane/AFGE-ICE	
	Jose Lamboglia/NTEU-CBP	

Jeff Neal opened the meeting by introducing Rafael Borrás, Under Secretary for Management, who represented Deputy Secretary Jane Holl Lute at the meeting. Borrás spoke about how important labor management is to the Department and how much he values it personally.

Discussion, Approval and Signature of the Charter

The revised charter was approved without additional comments. The charter was revised prior to the meeting with assistance from AFGE and NTEU and was signed by the members in attendance.

(b)(1) Pilot Projects.

Union officials expressed concern over the current scope of (b)(1) pilots, specifically in regards to health and safety issues.

The Forum decided to assemble a working group to develop a proposal on how to implement health and safety (b)(1) bargaining. The proposal will define the intent and scope of “health and safety,” outline a resolution process and establish a timeline. The draft proposal will be ready for review by the Forum’s next meeting.

Next Steps:

- Karen Hilliard will collect names for the working group.

Training Working Group Report

The working group collected information concerning available training for the local labor-management forums and disseminated this information to members and Components prior to the meeting. Director Patrick shared a personal experience of joint training that FLETC and AFGE participated in recently which was conducted by Chris Merchant at the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs. As a result of the training, labor and management at FLETC have agreed to tackle an issue regarding uniforms.

The working group acknowledged that without a central learning management system for the Department, there is a need for coordination on tracking completion of training.

Next Steps:

- The FLRA has developed training for (b)(1), which is available to all Components, particularly those engaging in (b)(1) bargaining during the pilot period.
- The working group will review results from the baseline assessment survey and request periodic reports from the Component forums to determine additional training needs.

Review and Discussion of DHS baseline

Survey results for the baseline assessment were reported by the Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer and high-level results were shared.

The Forum discussed what could be done to improve cooperation and ensure fair redress of grievances. The group agreed on the importance of pushing communications to the front lines, while also setting clear priorities from the high levels of leadership. The Forum also agreed that the work of making improvements to the labor-management process must be pushed down to the Component forums and front lines.

Next Steps:

- OCHCO will provide the Forum with response rates by each group, broken down by Component.
- OCHCO will conduct further analysis by cutting results by Component and analyzing the written comments. OCHCO will also verify the accuracy of results for question 16 on the survey.
- The survey working group will reconvene to build an action plan for how to improve survey results.
- Recommended activities for the action plan: 1) Make formal training an area of DHS focus; and 2) provide Component results to Component-level forums for further analysis and follow up (after initial review by this Forum).

Selection of DHS Labor-Management Issues and Metrics for the Coming year

The National Council on Federal Labor-Management Relations has asked each agency to identify labor-management issues for the coming year. The issue(s) and their metrics must be identified by December 31.

Next Steps:

- OCHCO will draft a memo which reiterates the responsibilities of complying with EO 13522 and encourages participation in activities related to issue identification as well as engaging in pre-decisional involvement in Component labor-management forums. The memo will be signed by the Forum co-chairs.

DHS OIG Investigations- Issues

Union representatives expressed concerns over how some grievances have been handled by the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) and Offices of Professional Responsibility (OPR). Concerns focused on timeliness for resolving grievances, OIG and OPR involvement in issues not within their scope of authority, and violations of employee rights. Union representatives requested that DHS look into whether OIG and OPRs are following the rules, and how grievances can be resolved more quickly.

Next Steps:

- The Department will seek input from the Office of the General Counsel on the extent of authority/oversight DHS has over OPRs. The Department does not have oversight authority over the DHS OIG.

Other Issues

Concerns were raised regarding DHS positions that were changed to exclude overtime without union input.

Next Steps:

- Paperwork on the issue will be provided to the OCHCO for review and follow-up.

Next Meeting: February 9, 2011.