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**MEETING MINUTES**

**Member Attendees**

Rafael Borrás/USM	Tae Johnson/ICE	Christopher Crane/AFGE (ICE)
J. David Cox/AFGE National	David Hess/NPPD	Demetrios Stroubakis/AFGE (USCG)
Colleen Kelley/NTEU National	Admiral Mark Butt/USCG	Hydrick Thomas/AFGE (TSA)
Catherine Emerson/CHCO	Leopoldo Vasquez/TSA	Glenn Dockham/NTEU (CBP)
Carla Gammon/FEMA	Steve Hardman/AFGE (FEMA)	John Hiller/NTEU (CBP)
Connie Patrick/FLETC	David Wright/AFGE (FPS)	James Ruoff/NTEU (CBP)
Perry Rhew (USCIS)		

**Welcome by the Co-Chairs**

The Co-Chairs welcomed members and briefly addressed the forum. The Co-Chairs expressed their concerns regarding the impact sequestration will have and called for collaboration.

**Budget Update**

Presenters gave a brief overview of the current fiscal climate and provided an update on the FY 2013 budget. DHS has been functioning under a Continuing Resolution (CR) which expires on March 27, 2013. At present, the House of Representatives is considering a year-long CR to support government operations for the rest of the FY 2013; the proposal leaves in place automatic budget cuts that are required under sequestration. The debt ceiling has been suspended until May 19.

On March 1, the President was required to issue a sequestration order that includes a 5% non-defense discretionary reduction that will affect most of DHS. There is no flexibility in the across-the-board cuts, funds cannot be “moved from different pots” to compensate for cuts. DHS will have to provide a report on its budget operating plan by April 1, but that deadline could be reset if Congress enacts a new FY 2013 appropriations bill. Components have their own internal task forces to manage the situation. Impacts of sequestration on components will be monitored (daily, weekly, and monthly).

Because final FY 2013 funding numbers are not known, the President’s FY 2014 Budget has been delayed and may not be submitted until early April.

**Labor-Management Communication**

Colleen Kelley led a discussion on improving communication between labor unions and DHS. Ms. Kelley requested that management inform labor unions regarding proposed changes and planned communications to employees with enough time for unions to provide input.

A working group was established to recommend a communications strategy. Mr. Levine was nominated as a member of the group, others interested in participating were asked to provide their names to Ms. Emerson.

**Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey**

Pat Curtin (OCHCO) presented on the results of the 2012 FEVS. The Department only held steady on two items. Overall, the HCAAF scores have decreased from the previous year and it was noted that Federal Government as a whole experienced a decrease. The Partnership for Public Service-Best Places score also decreased from 2011 to 2012.

The Forum was asked what methods could be used to improve scores. It was recommended that components consider, and learn from, the practices of others that scored well. FEMA will make a presentation on this subject at the next forum meeting.

### **Metrics Working Group**

Forum members were briefed on the current metrics which include improving telework capability; supporting learning and development programs; using employee feedback to influence policies; and enhancing collaborative efforts to improve labor-management relations. The target for the telework metric was exceeded. The targets for the other three metrics were not met. The next steps are to submit the DHS LMF metrics assessment to OPM and continue find ways to improve metric results.

### **DHS Union Official Time Usage FY2011**

The official time usage rate in 2011 increased from the 2010 levels. The expectation is that there will also be an increase in 2012 because of the addition of the TSA unit.

### **Information for GOV Drivers-Liability Presentation**

A representative from the Office of the Chief Readiness Support Officer presented on the liability associated with operating government vehicles. Labor members expressed the need for more communication, and education regarding employee liability. The NPPD forum member will work with Mr. Wright regarding this subject. In addition, GSA training materials about this subject will be shared with forum members.

### **Earning Academic Credit for Workplace Learning**

AFGE highlighted the benefits of academic credit through workplace learning. Providing academic credit through these programs can benefit employees, management, and academia. Forum members were encouraged to consider applying this information to areas where they foresee, or currently have, difficulty recruiting individuals with specific skill sets.

### **Closing Remarks:**

The USM acknowledged that considering the budget impacts and sequestration there was a lot of work ahead. Forum members were exhorted to collaborate between meetings and were advised they would be provided budget updates between meetings. Calendar availability will be assessed and forum members will be advised of the future meeting date.