

Background

This report contains results and analysis of a survey that was issued to labor-management relations (LMR) personnel among all organizations/unions at the U.S. Department of Energy during 2014. The goal of the survey is to assess the overall perceived effectiveness of LMR programs and to find potential target areas for improvement.

The survey is comprised of 19 questions. Of these, 12 are subjective with the multiple choice answers: Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree. 3 questions ask for descriptive answers, such as giving the frequency of LMR meetings during a specific time frame. The final 4 questions are open-ended. With the exception of the open-ended questions, they are all grouped into one of 4 topic areas: Work Unit, General, Grievance Process, or Negotiations.

List of Survey Questions

Work Unit

1. In my work unit, within the last six months, union representatives and management have met to discuss workplace matters.
2. The subjects discussed during formal meetings are important to my work unit.
3. Agendas are typically set out in advance for each formal meeting.
4. I am comfortable voicing opinions or asking questions during the meetings.

General

5. Together labor and management address issues relevant to the organization's business and mission.
6. Joint committees or Local Labor Forums are important decision-making bodies.
7. I have been provided formal training on collaborative labor relations.
8. Management keeps union representatives aware of potential changes to employees' working conditions.
9. Open communication between union representatives and management officials exists in my organization.
10. A sense of fairness is associated with labor-management dealings.

Grievance Process

- 11a. In the last year, how many grievances have been filed in your work unit?
- 11b. In the last year, how many grievances have reached the last step in the grievance process?
- 11c. In the last year, how many grievances have gone to arbitration?
12. In general, both parties work cooperatively during the grievance process.
13. The grievance process is an efficient way to resolve conflicts.

Negotiations

14. Management and union representatives regularly engage in "good faith" negotiations.
15. The process for negotiating a collective bargaining agreement is effective.

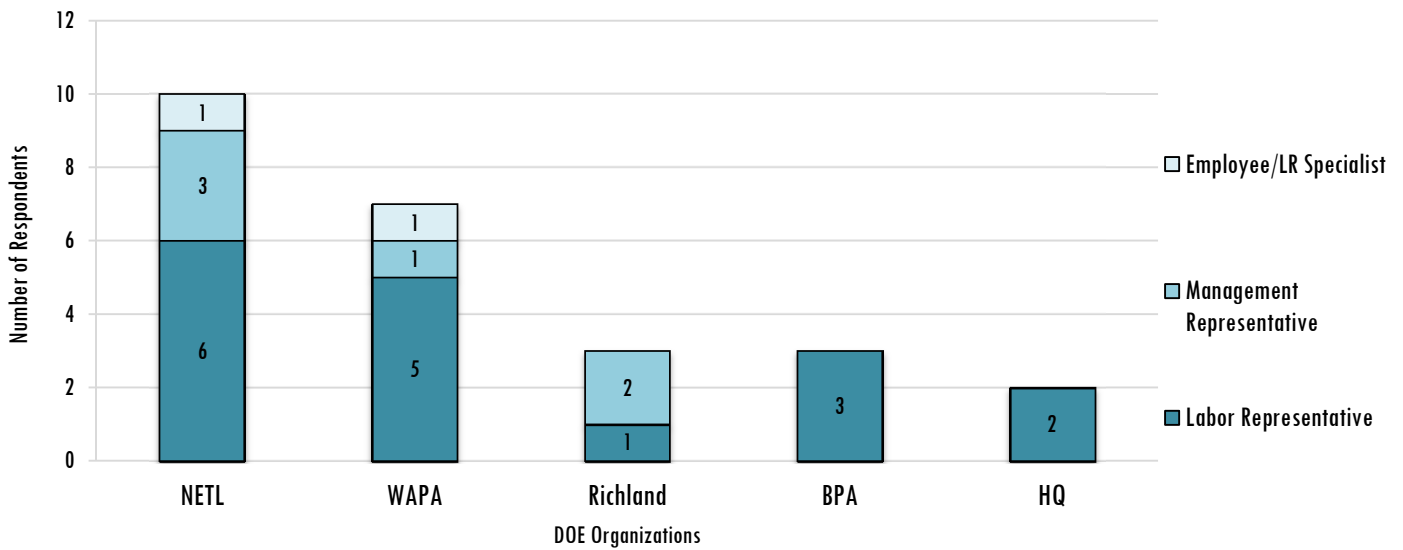
Open-ended

16. In your opinion, what is the current status of labor-management relations?
17. What is working as far as labor-management relations?
18. What is not working as far as labor-management relations?
19. What items do you feel are appropriate topics of discussion at a DOE-wide labor forum?

Survey Response

Out of 88 surveys issued, there were 25 returned responses (28%).
 Union representatives account for a majority with 17 (68%) of the responses.

	<u>Union Representatives</u>	<u>LMR Managers/Specialists</u>
BPA	3	0
HQ	2	0
NETL	6	4
Richland	1	2
WAPA	5	2



A low response rate may increase the confidence interval of the results. In scoring sections this will be inferred by the margin-of-error, which has been calculated using an alpha of 0.1 (90% accuracy).

Summary of Survey Scores

- This section shows the percentage of positive, neutral, and negative responses per question.
- Only questions requiring a response ranging from *Strongly Agree* to *Strongly Disagree* are included.
- Answers marked "I don't know" are treated the same as an omitted answer.

Work Unit

2) The subjects discussed during formal meetings are important to my work unit.

	Positive		Neutral		Negative		N
Overall	75%	-5	13%	-8	13%	+13	24
Labor Representative	75%	+6	6%	-25	19%	+19	16
Management Representative	67%	-33	33%	+33	0%	0	6
Employee/LR Specialist	100%	0	0%	0	0%	0	2

3) Agendas are typically set out in advance for each formal meeting.

	Positive		Neutral		Negative		N
Overall	48%	-19	32%	+21	20%	-2	25
Labor Representative	59%	-5	18%	+9	24%	-4	17
Management Representative	33%	-33	67%	+67	0%	-33	6
Employee/LR Specialist	0%	-75	50%	+25	50%	+50	2

4) I am comfortable voicing opinions or asking questions during the meetings.

	Positive		Neutral		Negative		N
Overall	79%	-1	13%	+8	8%	-7	24
Labor Representative	81%	+12	13%	+5	6%	-17	16
Management Representative	67%	-33	17%	+17	17%	+17	6
Employee/LR Specialist	100%	0	0%	0	0%	0	2

General

5) Together labor and management address issues relevant to the organization's business and mission.

	Positive		Neutral		Negative		N
Overall	56%	-6	20%	-1	24%	+7	25
Labor Representative	53%	+13	24%	-10	24%	-3	17
Management Representative	83%	-17	0%	0	17%	+17	6
Employee/LR Specialist	0%	-100	50%	+50	50%	+50	2

6) Joint committees or Local Labor Forums are important decision-making bodies.

	Positive		Neutral		Negative		N
Overall	64%	+12	20%	+3	16%	-14	25
Labor Representative	76%	+30	6%	-7	18%	-22	17
Management Representative	33%	-33	67%	+33	0%	0	6
Employee/LR Specialist	50%	-10	0%	-20	50%	+30	2

8) Management keeps union representatives aware of potential changes to employees' working conditions.

	Positive		Neutral		Negative		N
Overall	44%	-2	24%	-1	32%	+3	25
Labor Representative	29%	+9	35%	+2	35%	-11	17
Management Representative	100%	+25	0%	-25	0%	0	6
Employee/LR Specialist	0%	-100	0%	0	100%	+100	2

Summary of Survey Scores (continued...)

General

9) Open communication between union representatives and management officials exists in my organization.

	Positive			Neutral		Negative			N
Overall	44%		-6	32%	+15	24%		-9	25
Labor Representative	35%		+9	35%	+15	29%		-24	17
Management Representative	83%		+8	17%	-8	0%		0	6
Employee/LR Specialist	0%		-100	50%	+50	50%		+50	2

10) A sense of fairness is associated with labor-management dealings.

	Positive			Neutral		Negative			N
Overall	29%		-29	46%	+29	25%		0	24
Labor Representative	25%		-8	44%	+17	31%		-9	16
Management Representative	50%		-50	33%	+33	17%		+17	6
Employee/LR Specialist	0%		-100	100%	+100	0%		0	2

The Grievance Process

12) In general, both parties work cooperatively during the grievance process.

	Positive			Neutral		Negative			N
Overall	33%		-10	33%	+19	33%		-10	24
Labor Representative	44%		+29	25%	+4	31%		-33	16
Management Representative	0%		-100	67%	+67	33%		+33	6
Employee/LR Specialist	50%		-50	0%	0	50%		+50	2

13) The grievance process is an efficient way to resolve conflicts.

	Positive			Neutral		Negative			N
Overall	17%		-22	58%	+37	25%		-14	24
Labor Representative	19%		-15	50%	+23	31%		-9	16
Management Representative	17%		-17	83%	+50	0%		-33	6
Employee/LR Specialist	0%		-60	50%	+50	50%		+10	2

Negotiations

14) Management and union representatives regularly engage in "good faith" negotiations.

	Positive			Neutral		Negative			N
Overall	44%		-8	20%	+3	36%		+6	25
Labor Representative	41%		+1	18%	+4	41%		-5	17
Management Representative	50%		+17	33%	-33	17%		+17	6
Employee/LR Specialist	50%		-50	0%	0	50%		+50	2

15) The process for negotiating a collective bargaining agreement is effective.

	Positive			Neutral		Negative			N
Overall	54%		+9	21%	-14	25%		+5	24
Labor Representative	59%		+9	18%	-11	24%		+2	17
Management Representative	40%		-10	20%	+20	40%		-10	5
Employee/LR Specialist	50%		+25	50%	-25	0%		0	2

Quick Facts

Top 2 Positive Results

79%

I am comfortable voicing opinions or asking questions during the meetings.

75%

The subjects discussed during formal meetings are important to my work unit.

Top 2 Negative Results

36%

Management and union representatives regularly engage in "good faith" negotiations.

33%

In general, both parties work cooperatively during the grievance process.

Top 2 Positive Increases from 2013

+12

Joint committees or Local Labor Forums are important decision-making bodies.

+9

The process for negotiating a collective bargaining agreement is effective.

Top 5 Negative Increases from 2013

+13

The subjects discussed during formal meetings are important to my work unit.

+7

Together labor and management address issues relevant to the organization's business and mission.

Top 2 Positive Decreases from 2013

-29

A sense of fairness is associated with labor-management dealings.

-22

The grievance process is an efficient way to resolve conflicts.

Top 5 Negative Decreases from 2013

-14

Joint committees or Local Labor Forums are important decision-making bodies.

-14

The grievance process is an efficient way to resolve conflicts.

Quick Facts (continued...)

Subjective Ratings

76%

The largest percentage of 'Positive' answers given to a single question. (Q4: I am comfortable voicing opinions or asking questions during the meetings.)

32%

The largest percentage of 'Neutral' answers given to a single question. (Q3: Agendas are typically set out in advance for each formal meeting.)

36%

The largest percentage of 'Negative' answers given to a single question. (Q14: Management and union representatives regularly engage in "good faith" negotiations.)

Training

35%

of union representatives have had formal LMR training within the last 5 years.

38%

of DOE LMR employees have had formal LMR training within the last 5 years.

56%

of all respondents have had no formal LMR training.

Communication & Collaboration

28%

of all respondents claim to have met with their counterparts 7 or more times in the past 6 months.

16%

of all respondents claim to have met with their counterparts 0 times in the past 6 months.

Grievances

2.6

The average number of grievances claimed to have been filed in the last year.

23%

The average percentage of claimed grievances that reached the last step in the process in the last year.

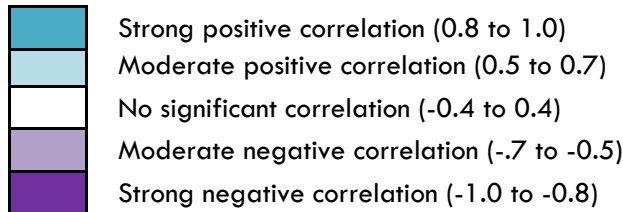
15%

The average percentage of claimed grievances that reached arbitration in the last year.

Correlation Analysis

The colors indicate the degree of positive (1.0) or negative correlation (-1.0).

Correlation refers to the tendency of the answer for one question to have an effect on another. A highly positive correlation may indicate that answering "Strongly Agree" for one particular question appears to lead to the same answer for another question. In contrast, a highly negative correlation indicates the tendency for answers to move in opposite directions. Answering "Strongly Agree" for a question may lead to "Strongly Disagree" for another question.



		Question																
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11a	11b	11c	12	13	14	15
Question	1		0.0	0.4	0.3	0.1	0.0	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.1	0.0	-0.3	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.1	-0.1
	2	0.0		0.1	0.1	0.4	0.4	0.0	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.1	-0.2	-0.1	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.1
	3	0.4	0.1		0.2	0.5	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.3	0.1	-0.1	-0.3	-0.1	0.2	0.5	0.0	0.1
	4	0.3	0.1	0.2		0.5	0.4	0.1	0.4	0.4	0.6	-0.2	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.5
	5	0.1	0.4	0.5	0.5		0.3	-0.1	0.7	0.5	0.6	-0.1	-0.1	0.0	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.3
	6	0.0	0.4	0.1	0.4	0.3		-0.3	0.3	0.5	0.4	0.1	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.0	0.5	0.5
	7	0.2	0.0	0.1	0.1	-0.1	-0.3		0.0	-0.1	0.0	-0.3	-0.1	0.1	-0.1	-0.2	0.0	-0.2
	8	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.7	0.3	0.0		0.8	0.8	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.6	0.5	0.6	0.3
	9	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.5	-0.1	0.8		0.7	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.6	0.3	0.6	0.4
	10	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.6	0.6	0.4	0.0	0.8	0.7		0.0	0.3	0.2	0.7	0.3	0.7	0.4
	11a	0.0	0.1	-0.1	-0.2	-0.1	0.1	-0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0				0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1
	11b	-0.3	-0.2	-0.3	0.3	-0.1	0.4	-0.1	0.0	0.1	0.3				0.0	0.1	0.6	0.7
	11c	0.0	-0.1	-0.1	0.3	0.0	0.4	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2				0.0	0.1	0.4	0.4
	12	0.1	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.4	-0.1	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.1	0.0	0.0		0.4	0.6	0.3
	13	0.2	0.3	0.5	0.2	0.4	0.0	-0.2	0.5	0.3	0.3	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.4		0.3	0.2
14	0.1	0.3	0.0	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.0	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.1	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.3		0.6	
15	-0.1	0.1	0.1	0.5	0.3	0.5	-0.2	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.1	0.7	0.4	0.3	0.2	0.6		

These results are inclusive of the accumulative data set that consists of both 2013 and 2014 results.

Strong positive correlation seems to exist between question 8 and questions 9 & 10.

All three questions pertain to general cooperation, fairness, and communication between union and managers.

What Union Representatives Are Saying...

...about the current status of labor-management relations.

"Going downhill rapidly. Local LMF is in jeopardy of failing..." "Acrimonious" "It's a broken process."
"...some [managers] abhor [engaging with the Union]... have no reflexes or appropriate skill sets..."
"...inconsistently implemented." "...major issues and no trust... there needs to be an intervention..."
"...new Director... chooses to ignore the Union." "...PDI is - quite frankly - a joke."
"Relations are the worst in a decade."

60% of union representatives give an overall unfavorable assessment of labor-management relations; the key issues being lack of trust between both parties, lack of motivation and respect from management, and lack of empowerment among management representatives to make decisions when dealing directly with the union.

"Good... Relationships with [management] in general are better than they've been in 15 years."
"...an amiable relationship and are able to communicate about a wide range of subjects."
"...strong, respectful and open, it has a positive effect on the mission."
"The dynamics of the group has changed as we have a new LR."
"I am heartened by... the Secretary's commitment to labor management collaboration."

40% give a favorable assessment. Two responses infer that this is a result of a change in agency leadership or management representatives, however, not all changes are deemed to be effectual. Some groups are abstaining from giving a verdict until more experience is gained with transitioning parties. In one response, new senior leadership with the agency is seen as a step backwards.

...about what is working as far as labor-management relations.

"Not working..." "It's not working." "...not working smoothly." "Not very much." "Not much..."

A majority of union representatives were not able to suggest anything that is working.

"Our Local Labor Management Forum (LMF) works ok, but it is sometimes slow to achieve results."
"When we agree to disagree, there is no resentment." "...communications improved...spotty at best."
"...collaboration by holding monthly [Partnership Council] meetings. New [leadership's] philosophy seems identical to the Secretary's giving us real hope for positive change in the near term."
"Open dialog between Labor and Management at all levels."

Not only was communication mentioned by 30% of union representatives as working, but it was essentially the only thing mentioned as working. The most notable mentions in this regard were forums and councils, or otherwise an effort to meet on a regular basis with a comfortable atmosphere and open dialog. Half of these mentions added caveats suggesting that these efforts, while "working," are not at their full potential.

"Pulling the belt tight, getting your facts as accurate as possible, and push-push-push against management all the while threatening legal action."

What Union Representatives Are Saying...

...about what is not working as far as labor-management relations.

"LMF needs management reps at the table who can make decisions." "LMF operates in a vacuum..."

"...management reps [are not] provided the authority to make decisions..."

"Management representatives cannot make a decision even if it is a simple decision."

"[No empowerment] by the Senior Executives in our organization to allow lower level managers who have been appointed to our local LMF to make decisions which bind the agency."

There is significant frustration towards management reps who are unable to make official decisions in formal settings. It's also indicated very strongly that their inability to make decisions is by design from the senior leadership. This seems to undermine some of the potential of the Labor Management Forums.

"Pre-decisional matters." "No effort by upper management to build relationships or engage in PDI."

"Lack of transparency/trust/collaboration. We are not working together." "Lack of trust...fear of retaliation."

"...not all managers are aware of the established rules..." "...us versus them..." "Threatening legal action..."

"...it seems like from management's side they tend to make it up as they go... if they think they can lie to stay out of trouble they will at a moment's notice..."

"Management gets extremely defensive and protective whenever charges are formally filed, despite extensive and pervasive attempts by the Union to resolve these problems informally."

Significant frustration exists with labor-management relationships that are adversarial, rather than collaborative. Efforts often require either side to "fight" for what they want instead of working in tandem towards either compromise or "what is right."

"Too often new folks want to make an immediate impression rather than sit back and see what has worked in the past... Just because an idea is new doesn't make it good. They often undermine progress that took years to build."

"...outside interference in the way Labor and Management has worked together in the past, which has a negative effect on a positive and mutually respectful relationship that has taken years to nurture."

"We ask for items which we've always been given in the past but now we butt heads with LR until I dig up proof and send it to them."

A common theme throughout these results, changes in organization leadership and other members of management teams has created some avoidable problems, ruining what was otherwise an already presumably a solid working relationship.

What DOE Management & LMR Specialists Are Saying...

...about the current status of labor-management relations.

"Strained currently. Building of trust a factor as well as constantly retraining new managers."
"In flux... the new director has yet to meet union officials... causing irritation." "...challenging."
"Strained at present due to multiple emerging issues." "Deteriorating."
"...substantial change in senior management... has brought about different ideas/ways for operating.
People resist change... leading to escalating differences between the unions and management."
"Management seems to think that the 'business and mission' of our organization is not the union's concern."

The majority of management representatives and specialist gave very unfavorable responses. In some cases, they were critical of their own management and leadership in causing non-functioning relations with the unions.

"Fair." "Could be better, could be worse."

These two quotes were the only responses from either management reps or LR specialists that could be even slightly construed as positive.

...about what is working as far as labor-management relations.

"The LMF is still meeting regularly." "Open communication and willingness to entertain differing ideas."
"Willingness to meet and discuss." "Communicating and meeting more often has helped."
"Management and the unions meet frequently to discuss PDI... workplace conditions, policy, etc."

...about what is not working as far as labor-management relations.

"...a lack of senior management engagement." "Rehashing unresolved issues, that they will not address."
"Lack of participation by higher management makes LMF much less effective..."
"...unions are very resistant to changes in how our new senior management would like to operate..."
"...we waste a lot of time discussing trivial issues to the exclusion of addressing more substantive issues."

Once again, the lack of cooperation by senior management is cited as a major impediment.

On Appropriate Topics of Discussion at DOE-wide Labor Forums...

Labor-Management Issues	Mentions by Union	Mentions by Management & Staff
Pre-decisional Involvement (PDI)	6	1
DOE Orders/Policies/Memorandums/Directives	4	2
Improving Communication (regular meetings, respect, etc.)	4	1
Labor-Management Forums	2	1
Labor-Management Training	2	1
Cooperative Problem Solving Methods	1	0
Sharing Issues Across Organizations	0	1
Clear Rules of Engagement Between Unions & Management	0	1
Grievance Process	0	1
Standard Record-Keeping (grievance forms, tracking logs, etc.)	0	1
Labor Issues	Mentions by Union	Mentions by Management & Staff
DOE Orders/Policies/Memorandums/Directives	4	2
Performance Management	3	0
Working Conditions	2	1
Employee Recognition/Awards	3	0
Work/Life Programs (telework, AWS, etc.)	3	0
Topics Submitted via Anonymous Employee Emails	2	0
Position Audits & Grade Reductions	2	0
Training & Career Progression	1	0
Leave	1	0
RIF Policies	1	0
Identifying Concerns Indicated by Employee Viewpoint Survey	1	0
Federal Staff vs. Contractors (undervaluing feds, right mix, etc.)	1	0
Succession Planning	1	0
Fairness in HR Coding and Timekeeping (equal rigor across DOE)	1	0