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**DEPARTMENT-WIDE FEDERAL LABOR-MANAGEMENT FORUM** 

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JEFF EAGAN Jeff Eagan President National Treasury Employees Union Chapter 213 John Kutrowski

Connie Whitlow



Official Title: The title of the organization shall be "Federal Labor-Management Forum"

**Purpose:** The purpose of the Forum shall be to design, implement, and maintain within the Department of Energy a cooperative, constructive, and collaborative working relationship between the various Federal employee unions of the Department and Departmental management.

## **Goal/Mission Statement:**

Federal Labor-Management Forum members will build and maintain a collaborative relationship to meet Agency challenges and develop joint solutions that will enhance workplace safety, productivity, and employee quality of life to better accomplish the Department's mission.

## **Authority of Forum:**

- The authority of the Forum is established under the E.O. 13522 and this Charter.
- The DOE Secretary, shall, to the extent practicable and permitted by law, provide to the Forum such assistance, information, and advice as the Forum may require for the purposes of carrying
- The Forum is authorized to make decisions as they relate to the internal functioning of the Forum, including the issues it chooses to address. In all other respects, the deliberations of the Forum will be in the form of recommendations, which will be forwarded to the appropriate Agency
- All Forum decisions and deliberations shall be reached by consensus to the maximum extent practical. The Forum shall consider the need to develop procedures, including amendments of this Charter, to address situations in which consensus is not reached.

**Scope:** The DOE Federal Labor-Management Forum may:

- Discuss, in a pre-decisional context, Department-wide practices and working conditions, as well as any other issues that impact mission accomplishment, efficiency/effectiveness of operations, and the quality of employee work life. Such engagements will help foster a cooperative and collective interest-based approach to identifying problems and finding the best solutions early.
  Serve as a model for local Labor-Management Forums by effectively demonstrating the value of
- labor-management collaboration and pre-decisional involvement. This includes providing encouragement and guidance to local Labor Management Forums by publicizing and promoting principles, processes, and techniques for carrying out such activities.
- Discuss any issue with Department-wide relevance, as identified by the Forum or referred by local management and labor at the level of recognition, and issue recommendations, provided that the Forum agrees, by consensus, to address the issue.

This Forum does not replace or override the authority of management and labor at the local level of recognition. Specifically, the Forum's actions cannot override local collective bargaining agreements or other locallynegotiated agreements, including partnership/forum agreements, where they either exist or may be revised or established.

Official to whom the Forum Reports: The Forum shall report to the Secretary of Energy or his/her designee.

**Membership:** The Forum shall be made up of two representatives from each recognized bargaining unit Local, Chapter, or Forum (as appropriate) with corresponding representation from management. In addition, the Chief Human Capital Officer, as a representative from the Secretary's Office, shall have permanent membership on the Forum with full, active participation.

Amendments to Charter: Amendments to the Charter are permitted at any time. Proposed amendments may be raised by any Forum member. Amendments will be ratified by consensus of the Forum members and will be in writing.

## Training:

- The Forum may undergo training opportunities in areas such as:
  - Overcoming the Barriers to Partnership
  - Team Building
  - Group Problem Solving Techniques
  - Alternative Dispute Resolution
  - Interest Based Bargaining
  - Other training
- Subject to the availability of funds, local Departmental management will pay the costs of Forum training for members from its own organization/administration.
- Training should, to the maximum extent possible, draw upon low cost or no cost resources of the Federal Labor Relations Authority, the Office of Personnel Management, the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, the Department of Labor, and other organizations and agencies as appropriate.

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**Evaluation:** The Forum shall:

- Evaluate the Forum process and the effect of the Forum partnership on the Department, including labor-management relationships, employee quality of life, and productivity.
- Determine the method or methods to be used in conducting the evaluation (i.e., metrics).
- Prepare annually, a written report of findings and submit it to the Forum for approval by consensus.
- The Forum will submit the approved report to the Secretary and other appropriate officials as determined necessary.

**Communication:** The Forum shall:

• Publish meeting minutes, outcomes, and accomplishments on the DOE external web site

**Ground Rules:** The following will guide the functioning of the Forum:

- Each member will be treated with respect.
- Each member will have equal standing.
- Each member will make a commitment to the collaborative process.
- The Forum shall have Co-Chairpersons (one union and one management official) who shall be elected by the full Forum and serve for a period of one year. There are no term limits.

  • The Forum shall establish a slate of candidates for the positions of Co-Chairpersons and refer
- the Forum shall establish a state of canadates for the position this listing to the full Forum prior to an election.
  Elections for the Co-Chair position shall occur at the in-person meeting.
  The Forum may appoint a Steering Committee to assist the Co-Chairs.
- The Forum may appoint subcommittees and/or task forces as needed.
- The Forum will determine and vote on the frequency, location, and timing of its meetings and the
- subsequent timing of candidates for the position of Co-Chairpersons and refer this listing to the full Forum prior to an election.
- The Forum may receive input from the Secretary's Office and other Departmental
- Elements and Labor Unions on items or issues for consideration by the full Forum.

   There will be at least three (3) teleconference meetings and one (1) in-person meeting annually at a site determined by the Co-Chairs with the possibility of rotating the locations among the DOE complexes. Travel and other expenses will be funded locally by each organization/ administration for its own members.
- Perform other duties as required.

**Operations:** Operations of the Forum will be managed by the Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer or the Secretary of Energy's designee. The following will guide the operation of the Forum:

- Ad-hoc meetings may be called by the Co-Chairs for time-sensitive, critical issues.
- Arrange for a scribe, recorder, and an external (to DOE) trained facilitator, when practicable and available, for meetings of the full Forum.
- At the end of each Forum meeting, 10-15 minutes will be allocated to advocate agenda items for the next meeting. In addition, Forum members may email the Co-Chairpersons with suggestions
- Prepare reports, position statements, and recommendations for consideration by the full Forum. • Establish the agenda for the full Forum and send the agenda materials to each Forum member
- within 10 business days prior to the Forum meeting.

   Submit reports, position statements, and recommendations approved by the Forum to the Secretary
- and other high-level management officials of the Department as determined to be appropriate. • Local management will pay for time, travel, and per diem costs of their own Forum members to
- attend authorized Forum functions, subject to availability of funds. • Union representatives shall be on official time while attending authorized training and meetings
- of the Forum and subcommittees. This time for these purposes shall not be considered as part of, or counted against, any other official time authorized by local collective bargaining agreements.

## Things for the Forum to address:

- (1) Subcommittees
- (2) Note taker/IT specialist to monitor the e-room
- (3) Consider whether to add workplace safety as a metric due to the difficulty in tracking the Forum's impact on workplace safety issues
- (4) Need for and make up of "Steering Committee"

April 27,2014

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IBEW Local 1959 Business Manager and Delegate to GCC-1