

AFMC/AFGE Council 214 Partnership Council Meeting Minutes

29 June 2011

Wright-Patterson AFB OH

The HQ AFMC/AFGE Council 214 Partnership Council (PC) conducted its 33rd meeting on 29 June 2011. The meeting was hosted at Wright-Patterson AFB, OH. Copies of the action items, agenda, and list of attendees are attached.

1. Opening Remarks/Acknowledgements

Dr. Butler opened the meeting and provided opening remarks. He thanked Mr. Sciabica for hosting the meeting at one of the new Air Force Research Lab (AFRL) buildings. He then asked Mr. Sciabica to make opening remarks. Mr. Sciabica said the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) move was going well, was on target, and would continue through the summer. He said construction is ahead of schedule and under budget and he looked forward to giving the members a tour of the AFRL Sensors Directorate. Dr. Butler and Mr. Blanch recognized Mr. Marshall, the newest member to the Partnership Council, with a membership certificate signed by Gen Hoffman. Mr. Marshall said he was excited to be on the Council and was already working with the union at Tinker AFB. Dr. Butler proceeded to talk about the Joint National Labor-Management meeting, which was held the previous day. He said we had a good session yesterday and spoke about the four action items that Gen Hoffman recorded in the session. The four action items were to: allow selected union members to attend the New Beginnings meetings, explore how long it takes to obtain a Common Access Card (CAC) at AFMC bases, explore the appropriate level for Labor-Management Forums (as directed by Executive Order 13522), and have more updates on telework. Mr. Blanch said we have "toyed" with security clearance lead times for years and there has been no progress. Mr. Tingey said it can take one year for new employees on the F22 and F35 projects to receive security clearances. Dr. Butler said there is a new computerized system and the wait time is down to six months. Mr. Marshall suggested the council look at lead times. Mr. Steenbock said Air Force is looking at this problem corporately. Dr. Butler finished his opening remarks and asked Mr. Blanch if he had any comments. Mr. Blanch thanked Mr. Sciabica for hosting the meeting and said AFRL was an interesting place to visit.

2. Federal Wage System Career Path – Ms. Maggie Grace, HQ AFMC/A1D

Ms. Grace gave a briefing on training, education, and career path information for the Federal Wage System (FWS) workforce. Recently, Ms. Grace had the opportunity to speak at the Civilian Development Panel. To prepare for the Civilian Development Panel, Ms. Grace did a deep-dive into development of FWS employees. There are approximately 35,000 FWS employees across AFMC, which represents 56% of the AF total. A large majority of FWS employees have previous military experience and 25% are retired military. There are over 160 FWS job series. Ms. Grace spoke about development programs and the challenges of these programs. There are several voluntary development and leadership programs being done at the Air Logistics Center (ALC's). Half of the completions in these programs are from FWS employees. Mr. Marshall suggested identifying all of the leadership programs in the ALC's. Ms. Grace agreed and said we need a standard program. One major challenge of development programs for FWS employees is the way the current programs are offered, which is web-based. Due to the nature of their jobs, most of the FWS employees do not have a computer and have to rely on using kiosks. The employees do not have time to spend hours sitting at a kiosk and there is usually a wait to get to the kiosks. Other challenges include marketing and culture issues. Dr. Butler said the Civilian Leadership Development Continuum does not fit the FWS workforce and that our FWS employees really need skills and leadership training. He suggested the Non Commissioned Officer (NCO) Academy seemed to be a good fit to offer skills and leadership training to FWS employees. Mr. Berard said supervision and leadership skills are often not taught until an employee becomes a supervisor and that is a big flaw in our current programs. Ms. Grace said many FWS employees feel the only way to leave the maintenance line is to become a supervisor. Dr. Butler said there is an education gap and the key to crossing the FWS to General Schedule (GS) barrier, is a college degree. Dr. Butler said the NCO Academy seems like a good option, but did not think it would be widely supported in the military ranks and funding could also be an issue. Ms. Grace said her team is reviewing programs across the Command and will continue to explore options for education and development of the FWS workforce.

3. AFMC Resiliency Program – Mr. Dave Taylor, HQ AFMC/A1R

Mr. Taylor provided a briefing on resiliency. The AF definition of resiliency is “the ability to withstand, recover and/or grow in the face of stressors and changing demands.” Key to the AFMC strategy is the first line supervisor. There are a number of organizations and programs in place that help to aid in resiliency efforts including: Community Action & Information Board (CAIB), Wellness & Safety Campaign (WASC), Integrated Delivery System (IDS), Organizational Consulting Office (OCO), CheckMATE, and First Term Airman Center (FTAC) Resiliency Training. Mr. Taylor said resiliency is a new AF term and AFMC has been working well-being issues for a while. Mr. Berard said there was a recent suicide at Edwards AFB and the employee was working in a remote location without daily supervision. He asked how we are supposed to monitor employees when they do not have daily supervision. Further, Mr. Steenbock said we also need to consider teleworkers and how they will be monitored for signs of possible suicide. Dr. Butler said the last few suicides at AFMC were individuals where signs were noticed and management was fully engaged, but unfortunately, the end result was the same. Dr. Simpson said they looked at a few recent suicides at Eglin AFB and there was a lot of agonizing after the fact. Mr. Taylor said supervisors need to be fully trained ahead of time. Mr. Steenbock asked if any research had been done on the computer based training (CBT) and retention of the information learned in the CBT. Mr. Taylor acknowledged that CBT is nothing like looking at real world examples and having dialogue and discussion. Mr. Tingey said the problem is wingman advocates often violate confidentiality and then the employee is placed on administrative leave. Dr. Butler said first-line supervisors are often ill-equipped to handle these situations. Mr. Tingey asked if the supervisor was the right person to handle these situations and asked if the data supported a particular approach. Dr. Butler said the data is inconclusive. Mr. Steenbock said the RAND study on suicides showed that the common denominators were home and work problems. Mr. Blanch said the union is hesitant to refer employees to counseling and said a classic example is a sign in a break room at Hill AFB that says, “We’re here to help you”, but the fine print says anything employees tell us about drugs, alcohol, violence, violent thoughts, or sexual assault is legally required to be reported to the appropriate authorities. Mr. Blanch said statements such as that incite fear. Dr. Butler said we need to strike a delicate balance and training our supervisors is an ongoing issue. Mr. Blanch said supervisors are advised by Personnel and asked what their role was. Mr. Steenbock said Personnel recognizes they are not the most qualified source on suicide information so they recommend utilizing professionals such as the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). Dr. Butler said we would take an action to look at the big picture of first line supervisor training – what are we doing, where are the gaps, etc.? An action item was recorded.

4. AFMC Services Update – Mr. John Steenbock, HQ AFMC/A1

As a follow-up to an action item from the PC meeting held in January, Mr. Steenbock provided a briefing on food services across AFMC. Mr. Steenbock said there are three categories of services. The first category is one where there is no opportunity to make money (e.g. Fitness Centers). The second category is where there is some opportunity to make money (e.g. Child Development Centers (CDC)). The third category is a self-sustaining service (e.g. Club, Golf Course, Bowling Alleys). Mr. Steenbock said six AFMC bases have a Civilian Welfare Fund (CWF), which is a Nonappropriated Fund Instrumentality (NAFI) that uses money received from restaurants and/or vending machines to subsidize activities for civilian employees. Across AFMC, vending operations have traditionally been more profitable than base restaurants. At Wright-Patterson, the State Licensing Agency (SLA) took over vending in 2010, which eliminates the profit received from vending. Mr. Steenbock gave an overview of services at each base and showed the financials for food sales by base. There was an overall concern about other SLA’s taking over vending at other bases – especially at Hill AFB where vending provides the biggest profit. Mr. Steenbock said AFMC is continuing to look for ways to improve food services and increase profits across the Command.

5. Master Labor Agreement (MLA) Update – Mr. Scott Blanch, President, AFGE Council 214 & Mr. John Steenbock, HQ AFMC/A1

Mr. Blanch and Mr. Steenbock gave an update on the Master Labor Agreement (MLA) negotiations that took place on Monday, 27 June 2011. The parties reconvened to discuss the eight outstanding articles that were not approved by the Civilian Personnel Management Service (CPMS). The parties re-bargained the eight articles and came to an agreement on all issues. The next step in the process would be re-ratification by the bargaining unit employees. Once the contract is ratified, CPMS will need review and approve the revised contract. Dr. Butler asked if CPMS should be at the bargaining table in future bargaining sessions. Mr. Blanch and Mr. Steenbock both said no – they felt they would be an obstacle, rather than a help to the process.

6. Local Partnership Councils

At a previous PC meeting in 2010, Dr. Butler asked to review the status of local PC's at all AFMC bases. Information was collected from each base. All AFMC bases, with the exception of Hill AFB and Eglin AFB, have a local PC. Hill AFB has a similar council, but it is geared around the Voluntary Participation Program (VPP). Dr. Butler reminded the members that the expectation was to have a PC or Labor-Management forum at all bases. Mr. Robinson said it is good to have established PCs at bases where there is rapid turnover in local union leadership. A general discussion occurred around training and how to train local bases to stand-up an effective PC. Dr. Butler said there are things that need to be updated in our CONOPS based on the 2009 Executive Order signed by President Obama on creating Labor-Management Forums. Dr. Butler said we need to make sure AFMC and Council 214 are involved in the AF Labor-Management Forum. An action item was recorded. Mr. Robinson said we have covered most of the items outlined in the Executive Order except for pre-decisional involvement. Mr. Berard said it is hard to tell when pre-decisional involvement is appropriate. Mr. Blanch said the process has been to let AFMC/A1 review changes in working conditions and tell Council 214 when they need to be involved. An action item was recorded to review training on Labor-Management Forums provided by the Federal Labor Relations Authority (FLRA) and to look at the PC between management and union officials at the Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) for examples of successful partnerships.

7. Closing Remarks

The members discussed the next PC meeting and decided it would be held on 4 & 5 Oct 11 at Kirtland AFB. Dr. Butler and Mr. Blanch thanked the members for attending the meeting and said it was a good meeting. The meeting was adjourned. A tour of the AFRL Sensors Directorate took place after the meeting adjourned.

Carry-Over Action Items from Edwards Meeting 28-29 Sep 10

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|----------|---|--|--------------|--|------|
| 10-03-02 | Provide copies of AFMC/CC's policy letter on Energy Star appliances | | A1 | Review AFMCI 65-601 with Council 214 prior to publication. | OPEN |
| 10-03-05 | Show progress of transfer of injury compensation workload to AFPC | | A1 | Continue to monitor the transfer of injury compensation and provide regular updates. | OPEN |
| 10-03-07 | Track progress of New Beginnings performance management team | | AFGE C214/A1 | Continue to monitor the progress of the New Beginnings team and provide regular updates. | OPEN |

Carry-Over Action Items from Hill Meeting 25-26 Jan 11

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| 11-01-02 | Evaluate Civilian Academic Programs to see if CADP money can be used for undergraduate degrees | | A1 | | OPEN |
| 11-01-03 | Provide definitions of on-call, standby, and call-back to the field | | A1 | | OPEN |
| 11-01-05 | Review MSPB decision on limited removals after security clearance revocation and issue guidance to the field | | A1 | | OPEN |
| 11-01-06 | Continue to explore solutions to gate access problems | | A1 | | OPEN |

Action Items from Wright-Patterson Meeting 29 Jun 11

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| 11-06-01 | Review big picture of first-line supervisor training – what are we doing, where are the gaps, etc. | | A1 | | OPEN |
| 11-06-02 | Review suicide training – is there something we need to revamp or rethink? | | A1 | | OPEN |
| 11-06-03 | Review trend data on suicides to see if we are improving | | A1 | | OPEN |
| 11-06-04 | Review training on Labor-Management Forums – look at VA and FLRA | | A1 | | OPEN |

**AIR FORCE MATERIEL COMMAND
AND
AMERICAN FEDERATION OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES COUNCIL 214**

**PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL MEETING
29 JUNE 2011**

AGENDA

TUESDAY, 28 JUNE

Joint National Meeting

WEDNESDAY, 29 JUNE

| <u>TIME</u> | <u>TOPIC/PRESENTER(S)</u> |
|--------------------|--|
| 0715 | <i>Surrey Pick-Up</i> |
| 0715 – 0730 | <i>Travel to Building 600, Global Hawk A Conference Room</i> |
| 0730 – 0800 | <i>Continental Breakfast</i> |
| 0800 – 0815 | <i>Welcome/Opening – Administrative Remarks/Agenda Review Mr. Joe Sciabica, AFRL/CA & Ms. Jamie Schoening, HQ AFMC/AIKL</i> |
| 0815 – 0820 | <i>Recognition of New Member, Mr. Ross Marshall, OC-ALC/CA Dr. Steven Butler, AFMC/CA & Mr. Scott Blanch, President, AFGE Council 214</i> |
| 0820 – 0845 | <i>Federal Wage System Career Path Briefing Ms. Maggie Grace, HQ AFMC/AID</i> |
| 0845 – 0915 | <i>Resiliency Program Mr. Taylor, HQ AFMC/AIR</i> |
| 0915 – 0945 | <i>AFMC Services Update Mr. John Steenbock, HQ AFMC/AIS</i> |
| 0945 – 1000 | <i>MLA Update Mr. John Steenbock, HQ AFMC/AI</i> |
| 1000 – 1015 | <i>Break</i> |
| 1015 – 1045 | <i>Table Talk, Local Partnership Council Review, Injury Compensation Update, Telework, Planning for Next Partnership Council Meeting All Members</i> |
| 1100 – 1200 | <i>Tour of AFRL Sensors Area</i> |
| 1200 | <i>Meeting Adjourned</i> |
| 1300 | <i>MLA Working Group Session (if needed)</i> |

PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL MEMBERS (As of: Jun 11)

| Management Members | Union Members |
|---|--|
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