
FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION



FY 2012-2014 Addendum to the Strategic Plan FY 2008-2013

Federal Election Commission

Pursuant to GPRA and GPRA Modernization Act of 2010

12/22/2011

FEC is amending its current Strategic Plan FY 2008 – 2013 to cover FY 2012-2014 pursuant to the GPRA Modernization Act of 2010.

Introduction

Overview of the GPRA Modernization Act of 2010

On January 4, 2011, President Obama signed the *Government Performance and Results Act Modernization Act of 2010* (Modernization Act). The Modernization Act brings up to date the federal government's performance management framework and revises the *Government Performance and Results Act of 1993* (GPRA) in order to take advantage of new technologies and apply lessons learned from nearly two decades of its implementation. The GPRA established multi-year strategic planning, performance planning and reporting as a framework for agencies to communicate progress in achieving their missions. The Modernization Act makes changes to existing planning and reporting requirements and requires agencies to focus on their highest priorities, including cross-cutting federal and agency priority goals, and creates a culture where data and empirical evidence play a greater role in policy, budget and management decisions.

The Modernization Act and related OMB guidance further clarify and update Executive Order 13450, which established roles and responsibilities for the deputy head of the agency, or equivalent, as the Chief Operating Officer and created agency Performance Improvement Officers (PIO) at a senior executive level. The Modernization Act also identifies a role for Chief Human Capital Officers (CHCOs) in the preparation of agency performance plans. Under the Modernization Act, agencies are required to publish an updated strategic plan in February 2012, concurrent with the publication of the FY 2013 Budget, and in February 2014, agencies must issue a new strategic plan. The Modernization Act also requires that the new strategic plan cover a period of no less than four years forward from the fiscal year (FY) in which it is published, which aligns strategic planning activities with presidential terms. The February 2012 updated strategic plan should, at minimum, cover the period through February 2014, when the next strategic plan is due. In addition, agencies are required to make their strategic plan available on the agency website and notify the President and Congress of its availability.

Purpose of this document

In FY 12 and FY 13, the FEC is undertaking a thorough analysis and independent assessment of its operations and revising its strategies accordingly. This Addendum is an addition to the existing FY 2008 – FY 2013 strategic plan, which was written four years ago, to include a new strategic objective that provides a more balanced approach to the agency's strategic planning activities and meet the Modernization Act's requirements. The document is drafted in three parts.

Part I of this Addendum provides a new human capital element for the FEC's Strategic Plan, FY 2008-2013. Part I will be used to align the Commission's resources with the updated FEC strategic plan during fiscal years 2012 -2014 and guide its decision-making to meet agency's strategic objectives. Because employee performance drives organizational performance, the activities of each employee should be clearly linked to the agency's strategic plan. To ensure this linkage, the FEC is making human capital management a strategic priority. The Inspector General's annual assessment of management and performance challenges identified human capital management as a key challenge for the FEC. This Addendum serves as a tool for communicating to agency managers, employees and stakeholders how human capital management critically supports the Commission's mission to administer, enforce and formulate policy with respect to federal campaign finance statutes. It delineates strategies to address human capital management challenges and provides a means to measure progress. As part of this process, the FEC is amending its strategic plan to include new content required by the Modernization Act and is working toward completing a new strategic plan for FY 2014 – 2019 to be published in February 2014.

To the extent that this Addendum conflicts with the *Federal Election Commission Strategic Plan 2008-2013*, those portions of that document are superseded.

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Part II of this Addendum addresses the Modernization Act's requirements for the verification and validation of performance data and describes how the Commission ensures the accuracy and reliability of the data used to measure progress toward its performance goals, including a description of the sources of data and the methods used to collect and verify that data.

Part III of the Addendum describes the FEC's planned efforts in FY 2012 through FY 2014 to ensure the efficient and effective use of Agency resources.

PART I: STRATEGIC HUMAN CAPITAL MANAGEMENT

FEC's Progress toward Implementation of the GPRA Modernization Act

The Commission has made significant progress toward implementing provisions of the Modernization Act. The Staff Director serves as the Chief Operating Officer (COO) and the Deputy Staff Director for Management and Administration serves as the Chief Human Capital Officer (CHCO) and Performance Improvement Officer (PIO). In addition, the Deputy General Counsel also performs as a liaison to the PIO for the Office of General Counsel. The PIO formed a Strategic Steering Team that includes key agency Senior Leaders and managers. This team will direct the strategic planning activities associated with the development of the new FY 2014-2019 strategic plan and have already initiated assessments that are key to identifying the agency's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. In addition, the Commission is conducting quarterly performance reviews and will examine and update its performance measures. Finally, the Commission has highlighted improving the agency's human capital management as a strategic priority objective and is amending its strategic plan to reflect this change.

OBJECTIVE D: MANAGE HUMAN CAPITAL STRATEGICALLY AND EFFECTIVELY -

Foster a results-oriented organizational culture that supports the agency as it carries out its mission to administer, enforce and formulate policy with respect to federal campaign finance statutes.

Strategic Activity D1: Strengthen Performance Management

- Conduct an analysis of the workforce in order to ensure the right number of people, with the right skills, are engaged in the right places
- Align individuals' performances to the agency's strategic goals and initiatives

Strategic Activity D2: Improve Labor Management Relations

- Implement improvements as identified in Labor Management Forum
- Establish and maintain a complete labor management agreement (LMA)

Strategic Activity D3: Leadership and Knowledge Management

- Retain stability in key leadership positions
- Develop and implement succession plans

OBJECTIVE D: MANAGE HUMAN CAPITAL STRATEGICALLY AND EFFECTIVELY –

Foster a results-oriented organizational culture that supports the agency as it carries out its mission to administer, enforce and formulate policy with respect to federal campaign finance statutes.

Overview

In 2009, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) conducted an evaluation of the FEC's human capital strategies and practices and identified a number of areas where the Commission can make improvements in managing its human capital resources. In addition, the FEC's Inspector General identified human capital management as an area of performance challenge for the agency. The Commission is taking a number of actions to address this challenge, including making strategic human capital management a strategic priority objective. As the Inspector General notes in her report on the FEC's management challenges, dated October 14, 2011, over the past three years, the FEC has been challenged by a high number of vacancies in key leadership positions, including the Staff Director, General Counsel and Deputy Staff Director for Management and Administration. However, in FY 2011 the Commission filled each of these positions and, with new leadership in place, has taken steps to enhance its governance framework and address its human capital challenges. For example, in FY 2011 the FEC made significant progress in responding to the recommendations stemming from OPM's audit of the FEC's human capital practices, including drafting a Strategic Human Capital Management Plan and undertaking an analysis of the FEC's Office of Human Resources to identify and mitigate competency gaps. The agency is amending its strategic plan to include the following Strategic Activities that will enhance the Commission's human capital management.

Strategic Activity D1: Strengthen Performance Management

Overview

The Commission recognizes the need for consistency in conducting performance evaluations, making meaningful distinctions in performance management and building a culture of excellence. Accordingly, the FEC is taking steps to address performance management issues, including aligning performance measures with the FEC Strategic Plan. First, the agency is working to automate its human resources processes and functions, including the creation in FY 2011 of an automated performance appraisal tickler system that notifies managers and employees of employees' performance cycles in advance of the end of the cycle. In addition, the FEC's Office of Human Resources is conducting briefings for managers to educate them on performance management requirements and best practices. The FEC is also conducting a comprehensive evaluation of its performance appraisal system to ensure it meets requirements and obligations imposed by applicable laws, regulations and Executive Orders and to improve the system's overall effectiveness. Finally, the agency has embarked on a two-phase human capital project to be completed in 2012. In the first phase, the agency will conduct a Workforce Analysis that will help the FEC anticipate what the size and skills of its workforce should be three to five years into the future and plot a course to ensure that the Agency is well placed to succeed under future conditions. With nearly one fifth of the FEC's workforce eligible for retirement in five years, succession planning is of particular importance. The plan will provide guidance concerning best practices in recruiting talented and skilled workers. It will also support the retention of highly talented employees by establishing a method for educating managers in how to create meaningful benchmarks for employee performance, improve the work of low-performing employees and reward high achievers. In the second phase, the FEC will develop a Human Capital Accountability System that will address OPM's five Human Capital Accountability and Assessment Framework dimensions, including Strategic Alignment, Leadership/Knowledge Management, Results-Oriented Performance Culture, Talent Management, and Accountability. The FEC's leadership is committed and focused on the future of its workforce. Through this strategic activity the Commission creates a path to lead the Agency successfully through changes and helps to maintain a healthy and productive work environment to fulfill the FEC's mission.

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Key Outcome

This multi-pronged approach to addressing performance management issues is to assist the agency in achieving its performance goals

Means and Strategies

- Conduct a workforce analysis for filling potential competency gaps and “right sizing” divisions
- Align individuals' performances to the agency's strategic goals and initiatives

Strategic Activity D2: Improve Labor Management Relations

Overview

The FEC is committed to building an effective and collaborative relationship with the National Treasury Employees Union (NTEU), which is the exclusive representative of FEC bargaining unit employees. The current LMA between the FEC and NTEU Local Chapter 204 expired on May 6, 2010. LMA term negotiations were initiated on February 2, 2010, and are continuing.

In accordance with Executive Order 13522, *Creating Labor-Management Forums to Improve Delivery of Governmental Services*, 74 Fed. Reg. 66203 (December 14, 2009), the FEC and the NTEU have established the FEC Labor-Management Forum (Forum). The Forum is intended to promote improvements in overall FEC efficiency and effectiveness, improve employee satisfaction, assist in the development of cooperative and productive labor-management relations, and encourage the involvement of employees in workplace issues through their union representatives.

The Forum, established on July 12, 2010, consists of ten (10) members: five (5) from management and five (5) from labor. The 2010 Employee Viewpoint Survey showed employee dissatisfaction with promotions, management of poor performers, meaningful recognition of performance differences, and linking pay raises to performance. The recent FY 2011 OPM Employees Viewpoint Survey indicates that these challenges are shared across all agencies. Using the 2010 survey results and input from the FEC and NTEU, the Forum has developed a table of issues, timelines for resolutions, metrics, and targets to be addressed during 2012.

To improve employee satisfaction and FEC productivity and performance, the Forum will work together to address telework management, analyze results in the employee satisfaction survey in order to find ways to increase satisfaction, revise the performance evaluation system, increase agency performance, and maintain institutional knowledge.

Key Outcome

Improved employees satisfaction is an essential component of the Commission’s human capital goal of attracting, retaining and developing a skilled workforce.

Means and Strategies

- Implement improvements as identified in Labor Management Forum
- Establish and maintain a complete labor management agreement

Strategic Activity D3: Leadership and Knowledge Management

Overview

About 17% of FEC employees are eligible for retirement in the next five years. Despite recent hiring activities, the risk of significant turnover in the leadership ranks remains high, and the FEC is faced with the potential for some loss of institutional knowledge. To mitigate this loss, the agency is working to solidify its leadership and knowledge management programs and practices. First, in the summer of 2009, the FEC implemented a leadership development program in an effort to strengthen the FEC's leadership corps. The program was implemented as a pilot designed to equip FEC managers and supervisors with the skills and knowledge necessary to meet current and future challenges. The pilot participants completed the program successfully. As a result, plans are under way to engage the original pilot participants, evaluate the program, and possibly make it a permanent part of the agency's leadership development program. In addition, the agency plans to draft a training and development policy that will incorporate results from the 2012 workforce analysis to determine what additional training and development activities are needed. In FY 2011, the Office of Human Resources and Equal Employment Opportunity Office also collaborated to provide training on merit system principles to inform employees of their whistleblower rights and other personnel protections, including training on the NO FEAR Act. Finally, as part of the FEC's knowledge management initiatives, the agency launched an enterprise content management system for sharing and storing documents in a way that fosters collaboration between FEC offices, maximizes efficiency, and supports compliance with agency document policies and records management.

Key Outcome

Retaining stability in key leadership positions and developing the agency's future leaders

Means and Strategies

- Develop and implement succession plans.
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PERFORMANCE MEASURES FOR OBJECTIVE D

- Filled competency gaps
- Individuals' performance plans linked to the Strategic Plan
- Labor Management Forum met its performance goals
- Key leadership positions filled

PART II: SUPPLEMENT TO FEC'S *FY 2011 PERFORMANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT*

Verification and Validation of Performance Data

OMB Circular A-136, as revised, and the Modernization Act require each agency to describe the accuracy and reliability of the data used to measure progress toward its performance goals, including an

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identification of the means used to verify and validate the measured values and the source for the data. Agencies are encouraged to determine the appropriate frequency of data validation and verification needed for the intended use and should allocate appropriate resources to carry out validation and verification on an appropriately periodic basis. In connection with its *FY 2011 Performance and Accountability Report*, the FEC conducted an Agency-wide survey of its data validation and verification systems, as described below. Most of the FEC's performance measures set goals for the timely completion of tasks that are either internally generated or triggered through reports or complaints filed with the Commission. As a result, the universe of data the FEC must collect and verify to support its performance information is generally small, centrally located and easily verified. While the FEC believes that its current methods for verifying and validating performance data are appropriate and cost effective, it is also undertaking a broad review of these methods and systems as part of its overall assessment of its strategic and performance plans.

The FEC tracks data to support its performance measures through its internal databases and with spreadsheets maintained by program managers. In cases where performance is measured based on the timeframe for completing a decision, matter or inquiry, the universe of data to be measured and the dates on which performance milestones are reached are tracked electronically. Data provided by the Agency's litigation, policy, enforcement and compliance offices are reported at least quarterly to the Commission, providing regular opportunities for the accuracy of the data to be verified. Data regarding enforcement and compliance matters are subject to human error in the process of entering information into the system; however, the risk of such error is low given the small number of cases tracked (generally from 10 to 200 cases involved in determining any single performance result) and the frequent review of the data. The Agency expects 100 percent accuracy in performance data collected by litigation, policy, enforcement and compliance offices.

The FEC's public outreach offices track performance based on the timeliness of press releases and participant scores on evaluation forms distributed at conferences, seminars and outreach workshops. Press releases are internally generated and tracked manually. This method of collecting and verifying data is both cost effective and consistent with the limited number of press releases made available during the fiscal year. Participants' written responses to conferences, seminars and workshops are collected at the conclusion of each outreach program, entered into a spreadsheet and distributed to the conference presenters who were rated on the evaluation. Although this data is subject to human error in data entry, the possibility for error is mitigated when the presenters review the results. For both timeliness of press releases and satisfaction with outreach programs, the Agency expects 100 percent accuracy in the performance data collected.

The FEC also tracks its performance in making campaign finance information available to the public. Reports filed with the FEC represent the largest universe of data the Agency must consider in determining its performance. For example, in FY 2011 the FEC received 77,588 documents. The FEC sets as a performance goal processing 95% of these reports through its data and coding system within 30 days, and the entry and completion dates for each report are retrievable through the FEC's electronic systems. The FEC expects 100 percent accuracy with regard to this performance data. The FEC also rates its performance in meeting its statutory obligation to make reports and statements filed on paper available to the public within 48 hours of receipt. The Agency does not currently have an electronic method for isolating the time differential between the date stamp representing the physical arrival of a report in the FEC's mailroom and its appearance on the FEC website. Any failure to meet the 48-hour deadline is tracked manually. Given the large number of paper filed reports and the physical limitations of the FEC's systems, the Agency accepts 90 percent accuracy in the collection of data to support this measure.

PART III: EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS

Efficiency and Effective Use of Agency Resources

The FEC is continually reviewing its operations and processes for opportunities to enact cost-saving measures while increasing the effectiveness of its programs and the productivity and safety of its employees. For example, over the past several years, the FEC has moved its focus away from the printing and manual distribution of its educational materials and instead looked for ways to leverage available technologies to create and disseminate dynamic and up-to-date educational materials through the FEC website. While the Commission continues to make available printed copies of its educational brochures and publications, transitioning to primarily web-based media has already allowed the agency to reduce significantly its printing and mailing costs and use of resources while at the same time encouraging new and expanded ways of communicating with the public via the website. Similarly, the agency is moving from printing and mailing political committees Requests for Additional Information (RFAI) to a process where these notices are distributed electronically, resulting in a significant cost savings. The FEC estimates a 40 percent reduction in printing costs.

Another example of the FEC's efforts to increase effectiveness is its educational outreach program. In support of its strategic objective to promote compliance with the *Federal Election Campaign Act* (the Act), the FEC conducts educational conferences and maintains an E-Learning Program. In FY 2012, the agency expanded its distance learning opportunities to include live, interactive webinars. The webinars will supplement, rather than replace the vital face-to-face instruction provided at the agency's regional conferences. Because they provide representatives from campaigns, parties, PACs, corporations, labor organizations, trade associations, the election bar, the business community and the general public an opportunity to speak directly with FEC Commissioners outside of Washington, D.C., these regional conferences offer a unique benefit to the regulated community that cannot be supplanted by technological advances. In the last four years, the Commission consistently met its strategic performance target for achieving a mean satisfaction rate of 4.0 and 5.0 scale for 100 percent of the conferences and round table workshops that it hosts. In FY 2012, the Commission will assess the effectiveness of its use of webinar technology.

In addition, the FEC implemented its telework policy in FY 2011 and will be assessing its effectiveness in the following fiscal years to continuously improve the program and increase the Agency's productivity.

Summary

This Addendum outlines the FEC's priorities for FY 2012 through FY 2014, in addition to the mission related priorities outlined in the FEC's current strategic plan. These additional priorities are focused in 1) three areas of human capital improvement; 2) strategic assessment and planning; and 3) increased effectiveness and efficiencies. In FY 2012, the FEC will complete its workforce analysis and will move forward with implementation of a Human Capital Accountability and Assessment Framework. In FY 2012 and FY 2013, the FEC will assess its programs, processes and policies via internal and external stakeholders' feedback and, consequently, will develop new strategies and performance targets that will be made public in February 2014. In addition, continuing to improve processes and find means to increase the Agency's efficiency remain the Commission's high priorities.