



AMERICAN FEDERATION OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES, AFL-CIO

John Gage
National President

J. David Cox, Sr.
National Secretary-Treasurer
March 16, 2007

Andrea E. Brooks
National Vice President for
Women and Fair Practices

Rob Stamerra
Senior Labor Relations Policy Advisor
Chief Human Capital Office
Department of Homeland Security
1201 New York Ave NW, # PH
Washington, D.C. 20528
BY MAIL and e-mail to Robert.stamerra@dhs.gov

Dear Mr. Stamerra:

President Gage has asked my office to respond on behalf of AFGE. We were surprised and disappointed to receive your letter dated March 7, 2007 regarding your proposal to extend coverage under Subpart D of 5 C.F.R. Part 9701 (Performance Management) to all bargaining unit members. During our meeting with Marta Perez on February 13, 2007, it was indicated that DHS was planning to move forward with a new performance management system, but we were not given any indication that a National Consultation Rights ("NCR") notice was imminent. On the contrary, DHS seemed to welcome a cooperative approach in which we would work together to develop and implement a good performance management system.

At the February meeting, Marta Perez asked National President John Gage for help in communicating better in the future with bargaining unit employees. The proposed notice attached to the letter is an example of the wrong way to communicate. It gives very little useful information, and it appears that its major effect will be to cause panic and confusion in a workforce already ranked at the bottom in employee morale in the federal sector. The notice does not say when bargaining units will be affected, which bargaining units will be affected, which levels of the organization and management officials will be affected; it merely states that a performance management system, formerly known as Max HR, is coming to our bargaining units.

The notice does not even contain the management directive or other document that spells out the details of the system. It refers only to subpart D of 5 C.F.R. Part 9701, which has very little detail itself, but states that the Secretary will develop a performance management system.

I thought that our February meeting went well and anticipated a good working relationship with the Department in the future. The March 7, 2007 letter and its enclosed notice were unexpected and disheartening. I hope that you will put any further plans on hold while we meet to discuss the performance management system and its potential implementation further.

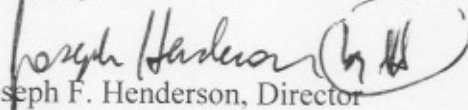
Specifically, we expected a more meaningful notice and opportunity to digest the full implications of such proposed broad personnel transformations. Under our National Consultation Rights, AFGE must be provided with a complete set of documents and relevant materials first, followed by an opportunity for a briefing. Next, a meeting should be held for

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follow-up questions, and a process established for future discussion. I hope we can begin at this point with just such a process.

I look forward to setting up a prompt schedule. Please call me at your earliest convenience at 202 639-6482.

Sincerely,


Joseph F. Henderson, Director
Field Services Department

cc: Marta Perez