

**Goddard Space Flight Center  
Labor-Management Forum  
Implementation Plan  
August 12, 2011**

**Introduction**

On December 9, 2009, President Obama signed Executive Order (EO) 13522 – Creating Labor-Management Forums [LMF] to establish a collaborative, cooperative and productive form of labor management, to improve Delivery of Government Services. In addition, the intent of the forums is to help identify problems and propose solutions that better serve the public, improve employee work life, morale and labor-management relations. Consistent with the EO, NASA Deputy Administrator Lori Garver has directed Centers to “extend invitations to Labor representatives to attend Center-level management councils and meetings and to share draft new policies or workplace change information with Labor to the maximum extent possible.” Additionally, NASA Headquarters has called for the establishment of Center-Level LMFs. Outlined below are the steps the Goddard Space Flight Center (GSFC or Center) is taking to implement these requirements.

**Background**

The Center recognizes that our civilian employees are the key to supporting NASA’s mission to pioneer the future in space exploration, scientific discovery, and aeronautics research. Approximately half of the civil servant work force is represented by Unions at GSFC, and these employees are covered by collective bargaining agreements between GSFC and the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE), Goddard Engineers, Scientists, and Technicians Association (GESTA), and the Washington Area Metal Trades Council (WAMTC). The Center recognizes that these Unions give voice to their constituent members on significant workplace matters affecting conditions of employment.

Based on the foregoing, the GSFC Implementation Plan is as follows:

**Baseline Assessment of Labor-Management Relations at GSFC**

AFGE representatives meet with the Wallops Flight Facility (WFF) Director and GESTA representatives meet with the Labor Relations Officer (LRO) and the Center Director on a regular basis. The meetings are structured to discuss issues with the intent to resolve them informally. In the past, LMFs (or their equivalent Labor-Management Committee (LMC) meetings) were conducted between GESTA and GSFC-Greenbelt management representatives on a pilot basis. LMC’s have been and are conducted between AFGE and GSFC management representatives as the need arises and pursuant to Article 18 of the AFGE/Management collective bargaining agreement.

In addition to providing Unions notification on proposed policy changes, Goddard has invited the Unions to participate on Center-wide teams, committees and working groups (e.g., the Standing Awards Committee), as Management deemed appropriate. The Center’s implementation of this plan includes engaging our Labor counterparts in workplace matters. As such, organizations/functional offices are encouraged to coordinate with the LRO to identify opportunities to include Labor representatives to participate in Center teams and working groups that have workplace impact. The parties will periodically review the status of the Center’s process for ensuring that the Unions are involved in initiatives affecting the workplace to determine whether adjustments in practices are required.

## **Establishment of LMFs**

Under this implementation plan, the Center establishes a Center-wide LMF involving all three unions as a vehicle to help identify problems and propose solutions to better serve GSFC and the NASA mission. The Center will establish its internal operating procedures consistent with these guidelines, and shall have regularly scheduled meetings in person or by conference call or by other electronic means, at least quarterly, or more frequently as needed.

Topics for discussion may be raised by both Labor and Management. The agenda for each meeting will be coordinated by the LRO and agreed upon by the lead Management and Union officials. The agenda for each meeting will be the culmination of the top one (1) or two (2) Labor and the top one (1) or two (2) Management issues, concerns, and/or topics. The finalized agenda will be sent to both Labor and Management as far in advance as possible, but not later than two (2) business days in advance of the meeting. Last-minute or time-critical issues may be added to the agenda by mutual agreement. Subject matter experts may be brought in from time-to-time to provide specific detail to issues. The length of the meeting may depend on the topics to be discussed but generally, will not exceed one (1) hour unless mutually agreed to by both Labor and Management. In addition to the meetings, either party to the forums will be able to call for an ad hoc meeting in order to discuss how new policies may impact bargaining unit employees, to solicit ideas from the bargaining unit members, and to share information related to these discussions. The Forum minutes will be recorded by the Forum Secretary. The minutes will be provided to Labor and Management for review as soon as possible, but not later than one week after the meeting. Any corrections will be submitted to the secretary no later than two business days prior to the next scheduled meeting for signature of the Chair persons at the next meeting.

Consensuses reached will be documented and recorded in a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA). Signed MOAs shall not require further bargaining between Labor and Management.

When consensus cannot be reached, if the GSFC Center Director chaired the Management Caucus, Management and Labor will revert to standard processes as outlined in 5 U.S.C. and in any negotiated collective bargaining agreements. If the Center Director has delegated his/her Chairmanship, the Labor Caucus can seek redress to the GSFC Center Director on issues where there is serious disagreement between the Caucuses. When a Forum MoA is not possible on a given topic, or there is an impasse, Labor-Management discussions shall revert to the standard processes as outlined in any negotiated collective bargaining agreements, and Management shall not implement any new policy without first completing all notification, consultation, and negotiations obligations under 5 U.S.C.

This Implementation Plan does not affect statutory rights and obligations of the Agency, Center or Unions.

## **Composition of GSFC LMF**

GSFC will establish a Center-wide LMF that will be comprised of twelve (12) permanent members, evenly divided between NASA GSFC Management and the Labor unions. The senior management official or his/her designee will co-chair the meetings with a union official. AFGE, GESTA and WAMTC will jointly designate who the Labor co-chair will be. The teams of the forum will be comprised of the following:

### **Management Team:**

- One member from Codes: 100, 200, 500, 600, 700, and 800 (typically the Deputy or Deputy Director for Planning and Business Management or equivalent) and

- LRO or designee (non-voting)

**GESTA/AFGE/WAMTC Team:**

- Two members each from GESTA, AFGE, and WAMTC, and/or his/her respective union designee(s).

Each party will provide the names and contact information, to include e-mail addresses and phone numbers of its permanent members to the Forum Secretary. The Forum Secretary will not count towards the twelve (12) permanent members. The LRO, or his/her designee, serves as labor relations advisor and Forum Secretary for LMFs. Any changes to the permanent membership will also be sent to the Forum Secretary. The Forum Secretary will compile the membership list and provide it to each permanent member.

**Resources**

GSFC will allocate the time of Management representatives to the Committee, as well as provide the necessary meeting space, IT, or other support for successful accomplishment of the objectives of this implementation plan. GSFC will also provide relevant training for employees on the Committee (Labor and/or Management), as needed. This participation will require official time above and beyond any official time accorded for local union duties (typically 25%).

**Pre-decisional Involvement (PDI)**

In order to ensure constructive Labor involvement in pre-decisional policy discussions, GSFC Management will routinely invite Union officials or their designated representatives to attend Monthly Status Reviews (MSR), Management Systems Committee (MSC) meetings, Diversity & Inclusion Committee meetings (previously known as Diversity Council), and to other advisory panels as Management deems appropriate. Management believes the Labor representatives' involvement at this stage could facilitate early buy-in of proposed workplace changes and expedite implementation of any changes.

Under the EO, PDI is expected to:

- Allow employees and unions pre-decisional involvement in all workplace matters affecting bargaining unit employees to the fullest extent practicable, without regard to whether subjects are negotiable under the statute.
- Proactively and expeditiously provide unions with adequate information on such matters where not prohibited by law and provide an initial response to specific requests for pre-decisional information within 10 workdays of any request (or provide a justification for any refusal within that deadline) with reasonable requests for extensions accorded.
- Mutual understanding of what information must be held in confidence.

**Conclusion of PDI**

- Consensus reached:
  - Execute/Sign Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) and proceed to implementation without further bargaining.
  - Management must communicate the agreement and any necessary implementation directives to all appropriate officials-in-charge, parties, and employees (as appropriate).

**Developing Metrics for Monitoring Improvements**

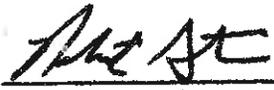
The parties agree to work together to implement appropriate metrics developed by the Agency LMF to measure the success of this initiative. Factors the Agency LMF are considering include:

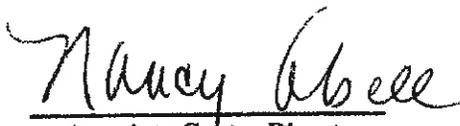
- Number of suggestions offered
- Agenda items resolved by MOA
- Number of formal agency-wide consultations or local negotiations avoided
- Number of impasses declared
- Participation and positive changes
- Leadership and Union relationship improvement
- Guidance provided by the national council

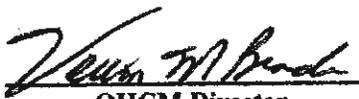
GSFC LMFs may agree to additional center-unique metrics as the parties deem appropriate. The Center forums will determine which metrics should be reviewed regularly. The intent is for the metrics to be outcome based versus activity based as this will allow for a more complete and holistic understanding of how well the Forum is performing and if it is having a positive impact on the Center and Agency.

**Signatures**

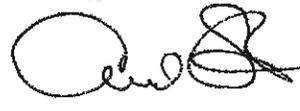
**For Management**

  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Center Director

  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Associate Center Director

  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 OHCM Director

**For Unions**

 8/12/2011  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 GESTA Senior Official

 8/15/11  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 AFGE Senior Official

\_\_\_\_\_  
 WAMTC Senior Official