

Project Overview

Federal Aviation Administration Labor and Employee Relations Organizational Assessment

Background

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is the largest transportation agency of the U.S. government and regulates all aspects of civilian aviation in the country. The FAA has a large union presence with eight unions currently representing approximately 79% of its entire workforce.

The Office of Human Resource Management, Labor and Employee Relations Directorate (AHL) manages the relationships between the FAA and its unions and collaborates with managers on employee performance and disciplinary matters, supported by 132 employees and a budget of \$23.2 million.



About the National Academy of Public Administration

Chartered by Congress to provide non-partisan expert advice, the Academy is an independent, non-profit, and non-partisan organization established in 1967 to assist government leaders in building more effective, efficient, accountable, and transparent organizations. Learn more at www.napawash.org

Project Description

The Academy's overall objective for this study is to support and advance the FAA AHR's ongoing efforts toward maintaining productive labor-management relations and optimal service delivery with all stakeholders.

In conducting the assessment, the Academy will: (1) develop an understanding of the current state of the FAA's labor and employee relation functions; (2) identify successes and challenges and analyze root causes; and (3) outline actionable recommendations that define future success for the FAA's management of labor and employee relations.

The Academy has appointed a three-member Expert Advisory Group (EAG) to oversee and guide this study. Information on the EAG and Study Team is provided on the next page.

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More About the Study](#)



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Expert Advisory Group

John Palguta,* John Palguta has extensive experience in public sector human resources management gained within government, the non-profit sector, and academia. A constant throughout his career has been his focus on improving federal HR laws, policies, and practices. John's career began in 1970 with the U.S. Civil Service Commission (now the U.S. Office of Personnel Management) where he worked in a variety of capacities involving HR operations, policy, and oversight in both field and headquarters positions. In 1980 he joined the U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB), eventually becoming the Director of its Office of Policy and Evaluation and a career member of the federal Senior Executive Service. As Director, he had overall responsibility for the Board's statutory mission to conduct governmentwide studies of Federal HR policies, programs, and operations with reports of those studies directed to Congress and the President. In 2001, John left government to become the Vice President for Policy at the non-profit, non-partisan Partnership for Public Service where he worked closely with numerous federal agencies. His responsibilities included monitoring the constantly changing HR issues and challenges in the federal government and developing proposed solutions and improvements. John retired from the Partnership in 2016. From 2008 to 2018 John also served as an adjunct professor at Georgetown University's McCourt School of Public Policy. John received a B.A. degree in Sociology from California State University at Northridge and a Master of Public Administration degree from the University of Southern California. He remains active in a number of professional associations and in 2002 was elected as a Fellow of the National Academy of Public Administration. He has received a number of honors over the years including MSPB's highest honor, the Theodore Roosevelt Award.

Robert (Bob) Tobias,* Robert M. Tobias is a fellow at the National Academy of Public Administration. He is a frequent contributor to Federal Times, Government Employees Relations Report, and Government Executive magazine on current federal sector public policy implementation issues. He is currently a Distinguished Practitioner in Residence in American University's School of Public Affairs, Key Executive Leadership Program. He founded the Key Executive Leadership Program in 2002 that currently includes 1700 federal sector leaders. Mr. Tobias was nominated by President Clinton and the Senate confirmed him for a five-year term as a member of the Internal Revenue Service Oversight Board. The Board has broad strategic and budget oversight responsibility for the Internal Revenue Service. Mr. Tobias also consults with a number of private sector and government clients on a broad variety of issues including strategic planning, leadership development, alternative dispute resolution, interest-based problem solving, and training. Prior to his work at American University, Mr. Tobias served for 31 years with the National Treasury Employees Union (NTEU) and from 1983-1999 as its President. Mr. Tobias received his bachelor's degree in pre-legal studies and a master's degree in Business Administration from the University of Michigan. He graduated from the George Washington University Law School where he served as a professor on the adjunct faculty for 22 years. Mr. Tobias resides in the District of Columbia with his wife Susan and has three adult children, Rachel, Christopher, and Lindsay and three grandchildren, Sadie, Nolan, and Charlotte.

Kim Walton,* Kimberly Walton was named TSA's Executive Assistant Administrator for Enterprise Support in June 2018. Walton is responsible for implementing processes that strengthen enterprise support services and driving efficiencies across TSA's human resources, acquisition and procurement, training, logistics, and other critical enterprise support functions. Prior to this role, she served as the Assistant Administrator for the Office of Civil Rights and Liberties, Ombudsman and Traveler Engagement. Prior to joining TSA, Walton served as the Deputy Chief Administrative Officer at the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, where she provided resource management support to the Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and Director of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. Before joining the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, Walton was Director of Civil Rights for the U.S. Department of Commerce. In this role, she advised the Secretary of Commerce and other department senior staff on all equal employment opportunity, diversity and civil rights matters. She also chaired the department's diversity council. Before joining Commerce, Walton was an attorney with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. Walton has received a Department of Homeland Security Secretary's Award for Diversity Management, TSA Silver Medal Award, TSA Core Values Award. Additionally, Walton received the TSA Trailblazer Award in recognition of pioneering efforts toward the advancement of women. While at the U.S. Department of Commerce, Walton received a Silver Medal Award and two Bronze Medals.

PROJECT STAFF

Brenna Isman, *Director of Academy Studies*

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Elise Johnson, *Research Analyst*

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