



Farm and Foreign
Agricultural Services
Human Resources Division

HUMAN RESOURCES DIVISION NEWSLETTER

From the Office of the Director

April 2, 2010

HRD ANNOUNCES ITS TRANSFORMATION!

Effective March 28, 2010, the FFAS Human Resources Division (HRD) transitioned to a new organizational structure and a new way of doing business. Our restructuring was specifically designed to provide better, faster and more strategic service to our customers; to decrease the cost of doing business through streamlined and business process reengineering; to increase the value of HR services to our customers; and to ensure a healthy and more rewarding work environment. Thus, we have functionally realigned our operations and we have more strategically allocated our staff to provide better and more efficient customer service and high-quality products.

In our new structure, we created an **Associate Director** in the Washington, D. C. national office to focus on building and developing HRD's capacity to perform such strategic human capital activities as workforce planning and analysis; policy formulation and compliance; and leadership and employee development. The specific Branches reporting to the Associate Director and a description of their functions are as follows:

- The **Human Capital Strategic Planning and Initiatives Branch** will focus on strategic human capital planning and analysis; workforce planning and strategic recruitment; organizational analysis and consultation; and it will support the human capital initiatives of the FFAS leadership.
- The **Policy and Accountability Branch** will focus on developing, formulating, promulgating and publishing human resources policy and implementing guidance that meets the needs of the FFAS agencies. It will conduct compliance reviews, audits and program evaluations. It will also provide policy guidance and oversight to State and County offices and operational branches. This Branch will also be responsible for monitoring, tracking and reporting on HRD performance metrics.
- The **Leadership and Employee Development Branch** will focus on leadership development and adopting a more corporate-wide approach to employee development to ensure continuity of leadership and mission-critical competencies.
- The **Human Resources Information Systems Branch** will continue to focus on human resources data integrity and security, developing and deploying automated systems and tools, supporting those systems and tools, and the HRD website. This Branch will also be responsible for systems-related customer support.

- The **Foreign Agricultural Services Branch** will provide the unique and specialized employment services required by the Foreign Agricultural Services, and it will also support other human capital functions.

Our new structure also creates an **Operations Chief** in Kansas City, Missouri to oversee all operations including employment services, employee benefits, labor and employee relations and performance management. The Operations Chief will be a key factor in helping HRD develop and leverage technical expertise and reengineer, standardize, and automate as much of our transactional work as is practical. The specific Branches reporting to the Operations Chief and a description of their functions are as follows:

- The **Talent Acquisition Branch** will centralize employment services such as classification and position management, the delegated examining section, and supporting the state and county offices. This Branch has been organized around lines of business and/or client groups to provide one-stop service and to develop and leverage expertise.
- The **Employee and Labor Relations and Benefits Branch** will have two sections: an Employee and Labor Relations Section to provide consultation and representation; and the Benefits and Performance Management Section will be responsible for employee benefits counseling and administration; worklife programs; safety and wellness programs; and the Agency's performance management system.

An **Executive Services Staff** and an **Administrative Hearings and Conflict Management Staff**, both reporting to the Director, were created to provide high-level focus on these specialized areas.

This restructuring represents the foundation of our transformational process towards becoming a more strategic corporate asset to the FFAS mission area. While our complete transformation will take time, we nonetheless expect our customers to notice an immediate improvement in our customer service attitude and in the quality and timeliness of our work. Indeed, in an effort to ensure that any customer service complaints are resolved more expeditiously, we have established Customer Service Advocates for our operational units. HRD employees and their assigned functions are listed in our Directory of Services at the following link <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/hrdapp?area=home&subject=landing&topic=landing>

Finally, we have established a variety of Transition Teams to reengineer some of our work processes and we will keep you advised of our progress as those details emerge. Indeed, we may seek your input or active participation in some of these efforts as we transition.

We plan to communicate with you, our HRD customers, on a regular and ongoing basis to keep you apprised of our transformation progress and to ensure that you are aware of our HRD products and services; that you know how to access them and in the event your needs are not met, you know where to turn to get the problem resolved. To help us keep this promise, we will issue monthly e-Newsletters and we urge you to be on the lookout for them.

Thank you for your support and continuing patience as we begin this period of transformation. We are excited about this opportunity to become more strategic, more customer-focused, more accountable, and more valuable to the FFAS mission area.