

2013 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission

Accomplishing the mission of the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission (“OSHRC”) depends on getting the right people in the right place, doing the right work, with the right qualifications and skills, at the right time. A major part of these efforts is reaching out to OSHRC’s employees and gathering feedback, and responding to the concerns and needs of OSHRC staff. OSHRC’s success depends on the talent and motivation of its workforce.

Interpretation of Results: OSHRC scored especially high on the items that measure Work/Life. In fact, while there was a smaller pool of respondents for these questions, 92% of the respondents are Very Satisfied/Satisfied with OSHRC’s Alternate Work Schedules (AWS) programs. In addition, 90% are Very Satisfied/Satisfied with the Health and Wellness Programs that OSHRC provides to its employees, and 91% are Very Satisfied/Satisfied with OSHRC’s telework program.

OSHRC also scored well on items in the “Personal Work Experience” category. Specifically, 100% of the respondents Strongly Agree/Agree that when needed they are willing to put in the extra effort to get a job done. In addition, 98% of the respondents Strongly Agree/Agree that they are constantly looking for ways to do their job better; 98% Strongly Agree/Agree they know how their work relates to the agency’s goals and priorities; 95% rate the overall quality of work done by their work unit as Very Good/Good; 93% Strongly Agree/Agree they are held accountable for achieving results; 92% Strongly Agree/Agree the work they do is important; and 90% Strongly Agree/Agree that in their most recent performance appraisal they understood what they had to do to be rated at different performance levels (for example, Fully Successful, Outstanding).

In the “Agency” category, 95% of the respondents Strongly Agree/Agree the workforce has the job-relevant knowledge and skills necessary to accomplish organizational goals. In addition, 95% Strongly Agree/Agree that employees are protected from health and safety hazards on the job, and 90% Strongly Agree/Agree that OSHRC is successful at accomplishing its mission.

Questions that scored low in the “Personal Work Experience” category include the following: 31% of respondents Disagree/Strongly Disagree that their training needs are assessed; 25% Disagree/Strongly Disagree that promotions in their work unit are based on merit; 25% Disagree/Strongly Disagree that in their work unit, differences in performance are recognized in a meaningful way; and 24% Disagree/Strongly Disagree that awards in their work unit depend on how well employees perform their jobs.

Questions that scored low in the “Agency” category include: 32% Disagree/Strongly Disagree creativity and innovation are rewarded; 32% Disagree/Strongly Disagree pay raises depend on how well employees perform their jobs; 25% Disagree/Strongly Disagree

employees have a feeling of personal empowerment with respect to work processes; and 24% Disagree/Strongly Disagree arbitrary action, personal favoritism and coercion for partisan political purposes are not tolerated. Lastly, the following two questions in the “Satisfaction” category scored relatively low: 27% of the respondents are Dissatisfied/Very Dissatisfied with their pay and 30% are Dissatisfied/Very Dissatisfied with the training they receive for their present job.

Challenges identified through this year’s survey include the need to address employee performance, promotions, and provide training options where possible. OSHRC is a small Federal agency with a workforce of only 65 full-time equivalent positions. Opportunities for pay increases and promotions are limited due to the small size of OSHRC and because a majority of the positions require specialized experience and specific education requirements. Furthermore, pay levels have been frozen for several years due to the statutory pay freeze. In addition, spending on training, promotions and internal advancement opportunities, and performance awards and recognition are often limited due to budgetary constraints such as sequestration and funding through Continuing Resolutions. In fact, consistent with the policy set forth in the Guidance on Awards for Fiscal Years 2011 and 2012, jointly issued by the Office of Personnel Management and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) on June 20, 2011, OSHRC reduced its spending on performance awards for non-SES employees and for members of the Senior Executive Service (SES) in fiscal years 2011 and 2012. Further, the OMB Memorandum 13-05, dated April 4, 2013, directed that discretionary monetary awards should not be issued while sequestration is in place. Therefore, spending on awards was eliminated during FY 2013.

Overall, the results garnered from the 2013 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) are favorable considering the comparison with government wide averages of other small agencies and the numerous strengths reported. OSHRC performed particularly well in terms of Work/Life programs and providing meaningful work related to the agency’s mission. Further, the results continue to show that our employees believe that they do important work and understand how their work supports the goals and mission of our agency. Employees responded most positively (strongly agree/agree or very satisfied/satisfied) to questions concerning the importance of their jobs, their willingness to put in the extra effort, and their commitment to excellence and continual improvement. The FEVS provides an opportunity for the agency to identify potential challenges, which can lead to the implementation of appropriate corrective measures.

How the survey was conducted: The 2013 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey was conducted by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM). OPM distributed survey invitations to OSHRC employees by individual electronic mail messages. The survey administration period began on April 23, 2013 and ended on June 7, 2013. The Office of the Executive Director informed employees about the survey invitation and encouraged them to participate. Survey results were collected by OPM and forwarded to OSHRC for evaluation.

Description of sample: The survey was distributed to 49 employees and 42 responded. This number included all full time, permanent employees.

Survey items and response choices: The 2013 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey included eighty four (84) items that measure Federal employee's perceptions about how effectively OSHRC manages their workforce. Specifically, the survey was grouped into the following seven topic areas: 1) Personal Work Experiences; 2) Work Unit; 3) Agency; 4) Supervisor/Team Leader; 5) Leadership; 6) Satisfaction; and 7) Work/Life Programs.

Number of employees surveyed, number responded, and representativeness: The survey was distributed to 49 employees and 42 responded. The 2013 employee response rate is 85.7% in comparison to 82% in 2012. The survey pool is representative of the agency population and includes non-supervisors, supervisors, managers, and executives.