

# **USDA LABOR-MANAGEMENT FORUM**

**Guidance for Implementing Metrics  
For Evaluating the Effectiveness of Labor-Management Collaborations  
Under  
Executive Order 13522  
*Creating Labor Management Forums to Improve the Delivery of Government Services***

**(11/10/2010)**

## **I. BACKGROUND**

On December 9, 2009, the President issued Executive Order 13522, *Creating Labor Management Forums to Improve the Delivery of Government Services*. The Executive Order calls for the establishment of forums through which labor and management will collaborate for the purpose of delivering "... the highest quality of services to the American people."

In order to evaluate the effectiveness of labor-management collaborations in improving government efficiency, the Executive Order requires the application of metrics to the work of forums. Under the Executive Order, the National Council on Federal Labor-Management Relations (National Council) has the responsibility for "developing suggested measurements and metrics for the evaluation of the effectiveness of the Council and department or agency labor management forums..." In its recent guidance, the National Council adopted the following three principal metrics categories: Labor-Management Relationship; Employee Satisfaction & Engagement; and Mission & Service Delivery. Further, each metric has been divided into several elements as discussed below.

The USDA Labor-Management Council was established to oversee implementation of the Executive Order within the Department and is made up of senior USDA management officials and representatives of each of the national unions with employee representation in the Department. The USDA Labor-Management Forum approved measurements for metrics that are to be applied to all subordinate forums/committees within the Department. This document constitutes the guidance for implementing those metric requirements.

Applying metrics to the work of labor-management forums is a new undertaking. It is anticipated that this document will change as it is informed by experience. Consequently, the USDA Labor-Management Forum expects to issue updates from time to time. To facility this process, suggestions from forum members throughout the Department on how to better measure the impact of forums are welcomed.

## II. LABOR-MANAGEMENT RELATIONSHIP METRIC

The Labor-Management Relationship metric measures changes in the labor relations climate.

### A. Elements

There are eight (8) elements that divide the Labor-Management Relationship metric into its major areas of activity.

#### 1. **Pre-Decisional Involvement**

The Executive Order requires management to “allow employees and their union representatives to have pre-decisional involvement in all workplace matters to the fullest extent practicable, without regard to whether those matters are negotiable subjects of bargaining under 5 U.S.C. 7106...”

Pre-Decisional Involvement (PDI) concerns the parties’ efforts to jointly develop solutions on workplace issues in advance of management making decisions on those matters. The Executive Order contains no definition of or rules for PDI. However, the purpose of PDI is self-evident in the term itself. Before (pre) management concludes what course of action will be taken (decision), the ideas of employees will be sought and considered (involvement).

Further, unions are to be engaged pre-decisionally on those matters that are bargainable only at the election of the agency, e.g., number, types, and grades and methods and means of performing work. PDI is not bargaining. It occurs before management has made a decision to change conditions of employment. Management is free to accept, reject, or modify employee input. However, the Executive Order imposes an expectation that good faith efforts will be made by forums to resolve issues concerning changes in conditions of employment.

There are different ways that PDI might be accomplished, including but not limited to: employees placed on workgroups; formal solicitations of comments from labor unions by management; placing matters on the agenda of forum/committee meetings for discussion; forums assigning matters to forum subgroups for development of recommendations; etc. Because there is no single approach to PDI, local forum members must decide for themselves what PDI means to them and how it will be conducted. Mutual agreement between the parties on their expectations for PDI is essential for their success in this element. Regardless of how the parties define PDI, they will be measured on how well they actually engage in PDI.

- a. Indicators of Success in this element include, but are not limited to:
  - i. The parties engage in PDI in accordance with their mutual understanding;
  - ii. The parties meet either on a regular or ad hoc basis in accordance with their mutual understanding;
  - iii. PDI results in employees’ ideas being brought forward and actively considered by management before management makes decisions; and
  - iv. Improvement in the quality of management decisions.

## **2. Issue Resolution**

Issue Resolution measures the degree to which the parties engage in efforts to resolve matters outside of statutory, regulatory, contractual, and other formally invoked procedures and the quality of resolutions reached.

- a. Indicators of success in this element include, but are not limited to:
  - i. Demonstrated desire by both parties to reach an accommodation;
  - ii. The parties speak freely with one another and have frank but professional discussions on workplace issues;
  - iii. The parties' informal problem-solving efforts result in satisfactory outcomes; and
  - iv. Informal resolutions save time and conserve resources over the available formal dispute resolution options.

## **3. Negotiations**

This element measures the extent to which the parties successfully engage in good faith bargaining.

- a. Indicators of success in this element include, but are not limited to:
  - i. The parties conduct the bargaining process respectfully and professionally;
  - ii. Mutually agreed deadlines are observed;
  - iii. Bargaining sessions are used to explore issues to the extent necessary for a clear understanding of each party's interests;
  - iv. Each party attends bargaining sessions after having conducted appropriate preparations and are fully prepared to engage one another constructively with the goal of reaching agreements;
  - v. Bargaining usually results in agreement without the aid of third parties (e.g., arbitrators, Federal Service Impasses Panel, Federal Labor Relations Authority);
  - vi. Third party interventions are used only for legitimate disputes after the parties' good faith efforts to find accommodations failed; and
  - vii. The bargaining processes are conducted efficiently and are devoid of dilatory tactics.

## **4. Dispute Resolution**

Dispute Resolution is the extent to which the parties' formal disputes (e.g., grievances, arbitrations, unfair labor practices, negotiability appeals, etc.) are resolved in a timely, professional, and good faith manner.

- a. Indicators of success in this element include, but are not limited to:
  - i. The parties engage in resolving formal disputes in a respectful and professional manner;
  - ii. Deadlines are observed by both parties;

- iii. Parties attend meetings held to resolve matters in dispute fully prepared and engage one another constructively with the goal of reaching settlement; and
- iv. Neither party engages in dilatory tactics.

## **5. Productivity of the Relationship**

Productivity of the Relationship measures the quality of the parties' dealings with one another.

- a. Indicators of success in this element include, but are not limited to:
  - i. The parties respect one another's roles and obligations;
  - ii. The parties listen to one another in an effort to understand the other's interests;
  - iii. The parties deal with one another professionally and without hostility;
  - iv. The parties are well prepared in their dealings with one another;
  - v. The parties keep their word to one another and believe that they are treated fairly by the other;
  - vi. Disagreements between the parties are handled quickly, honestly, directly, and in good faith;
  - vii. While respecting legal, regulatory, and negotiated boundaries, challenges are approached with creativity;
  - viii. Communications between the parties are more collaborative than confrontational;
  - ix. Interactions between the parties are focused on problem-solving; and
  - x. The parties produce results that improve employee morale, labor relations, and mission accomplishment.

## **6. Information Sharing**

The Executive Order requires management to "provide adequate information on [pre-decisional] matters expeditiously to union representatives where not prohibited by law..." Information may also be furnished by management to unions under the statute. The Information Sharing element measures the extent to which management discloses information as part of the problem solving process by management.

- a. Indicators of success in this element include, but are not limited to:
  - i. Management voluntarily and timely furnishes adequate disclosable information to the union for the purpose of PDI;
  - ii. When the union requests information under the statute, the requests meet statutory requirements;
  - iii. When information is requested by unions under the statute, management timely provides disclosable, relevant, and necessary information;
  - iv. Information disputes are discussed promptly and resolved voluntarily to the maximum extent possible by the parties while observing confidentiality, security, and privacy requirements; and
  - v. Management denials of requested information are made timely with explanations sufficient for the union to understand the basis for the denial.

## **7. Organizational Support for Labor-Management Relations**

This element measures the scope of the parties' commitment of appropriate resources for the development and maintenance of the labor-management relationship.

- a. Indicators of success in this element include, but are not limited to:
  - i. The parties develop either a charter, operating rules, letter or some other written document that expresses their mutual understandings of how their respective forums will work, including membership, the frequency of meeting, how agendas will be developed, and how meetings will be run;
  - ii. The parties have had all their forum members trained in collaborative problem-solving before September 30, 2011;
  - iii. The parties use facilitators for their meetings upon the request of either party.
  - iv. The parties meet as necessary to satisfy their obligations under the Executive Order, statute, and collective bargaining agreements;
  - v. Management commits appropriate time and resources to labor relations activities including training on interest based problem-solving, meetings, etc;
  - vi. The parties give one another appropriate notifications as established by statute, negotiated agreements, and informal arrangements;
  - vii. Both parties' representatives in the labor-management relationship (stewards, supervisors, managers, executives) are trained in their respective representational responsibilities under the statute, collective bargaining agreements, and the Executive Order; and
  - viii. The parties effectively communicate labor relations activities to employees.

## **8. Effectiveness of Bargaining**

The Effectiveness of Bargaining element measures the success of the parties' bargaining efforts.

- a. Indicators of success in this element include, but are not limited to:
  - i. The parties generally have the same understanding of agreements between them;
  - ii. The parties rarely need to litigate disputes concerning the application or interpretation of their agreements;
  - iii. The parties conduct joint labor-management training on major agreements; and
  - iv. The parties hold joint employee briefings on negotiated agreements.

### **B. Measurement Tools**

The USDA Labor-Management Climate Survey will be the primary tool used to measure the Labor-Management Relationship metric. This online survey will be conducted for the first time in the fall of 2010. It was developed by a joint labor-management subcommittee of the USDA Labor-Management Forum. Survey participants include all

labor representatives as well as supervisors, managers, and HR/LR representatives who directly interact with labor representatives. Survey questions were aligned by the USDA Labor-Management Forum with the elements of this metric. Results of the survey will be available by the end of December 2010.

While the USDA Labor-Management Climate Survey will measure the Labor-Management Relationship metric and the metric elements, forums' action plan goals will be measured by the standards mutually agreed upon by the parties. For example, if a forum sets a goal for the Dispute Resolution element of increasing grievance resolutions at step 1 to 50%, the number of step 1 grievances resolved at step 1 versus those appealed to step 2 will be the method of measuring whether the parties succeeded in meeting their goal for that element. However, whether success with that goal alone will be enough to cause a change in the either the Dispute Resolution element or the overall Labor-Management Relationship metric will be determined by the Fall 2011 USDA Labor-Management Climate Survey.

C. Baselines

The performance baseline for each element of this metric will be determined by the scores the parties receive on the 2010 USDA Labor-Management Climate Survey discussed above.

D. Applying the Metrics

All forums will select one or more elements under the Labor-Management Relationship metric (e.g., Issue resolution, Dispute Resolution, Negotiations, etc.) from which they will take their baselines, set goals, develop plans, and work to improve.<sup>1</sup> For example, a forum could elect to set a goal of improving the "Dispute Resolution" element by developing a plan that seeks to resolve at least 50% of formal grievances at the front line supervisor level. Alternatively, the parties might agree to set a goal for improving the "Effectiveness of Bargaining" element by developing and implementing a joint communication plan for briefing employees on negotiated agreements by a date certain. Or under the "Pre-Decisional Involvement" element, a forum could set as a goal the development of their mutual expectations as to the meaning and application of PDI by a date certain.

After the parties select the element(s) they wish to work to improve, determine their goal(s) and the activities they will engage in to achieve their goal(s), they will work over the course of the next year to improve their performance in that (those) area(s). In the fall of 2011, forums' progress will be measured through the re-administration of the USDA Labor-Management Climate Survey.

---

<sup>1</sup> Although not required, the USDA Labor-Management Forum recommends the parties consider using the action plan template format provided as part of the Employee Viewpoint Survey to develop their improvement plans. A sample of the template is provided as Attachment 1.

### III. EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION & ENGAGEMENT METRIC

The Employee Satisfaction & Engagement measures employees' perceptions of whether and to what extent conditions that characterizes successful organizations are present in their agencies.

#### A. Elements

There are seven (7) elements for this metric. They are taken from the Office of Personnel Management's (OPM's) Employee Viewpoint Survey (EVS). The elements divide the Employee Satisfaction & Engagement metric in to its major areas of activity.

#### **1. Personal Work Experience**

Personal Work Experience measures the employee's satisfaction with their individual work circumstances on a range of issues covered by EVS questions 1-19.

- a. Indicators of success in this element include, but are not limited to:
  - i. Employees receive training and skill enhancement opportunities;
  - ii. Employees have adequate information and job-related resources;
  - iii. Employees are encouraged to be innovative;
  - iv. Employees are properly recognized for their performance;
  - v. Employees are held accountable for their performance;
  - vi. Employees' overall workload is reasonable;
  - vii. Employees' talents are put to the best use by management;
  - viii. Employees' physical work environment is conducive to high performance;
  - ix. Employees understand the connection between their work and their agency's mission;
  - x. Employees believe they are performance appraisals are fair; and
  - xi. Employees believe they can bring a violation or inefficiency to management's attention without fear of reprisal;

#### **2. My Work Unit**

My Work Unit measures employees' experience regarding their work unit headed by their immediate supervisor on issues covered by EVS questions 20-28.

- a. Indicators of success in this element include, but are not limited to:
  - i. Unit employees cooperate with one another to get the job done;
  - ii. Unit employees are recruited into the unit with the right skills;
  - iii. Unit promotions are based on merit;
  - iv. Poor performers in the unit are dealt with appropriately;
  - v. Different levels of performance in the unit are properly recognized;
  - vi. Awards in the unit are given based on job performance;
  - vii. Unit employees share their job knowledge with one another;
  - viii. Unit employees' skills are improving; and
  - ix. The quality of the unit's work is high.

### **3. My Agency**

My Agency measures employees' experience regarding their agency's performance on issues covered by EVS questions 29-41.

- a. Indicators of success in this element include, but are not limited to:
  - i. Agency employees have relevant job-related knowledge and skills;
  - ii. Agency employees feel empowered to get their jobs done;
  - iii. Agency employees are appropriately rewarded for innovative, creative, and high performance;
  - iv. Agency policies promote diversity;
  - v. Agency employees are protected from avoidable hazards at work;
  - vi. Agency employees are not subjected to personal favoritism;
  - vii. Agency employees are not subjected to illegal discrimination;
  - viii. Agency successfully accomplishes its mission; and
  - x. Employees recommend their agency as a good place to work.

### **4. My Supervisor/Team Leader**

My Supervisor/Team Leader measures employees' experience with their immediate supervision on issues covered by EVS questions 42-52.

- a. Indicators of success in this element include, but are not limited to:
  - i. Immediate supervision supports work/life balance;
  - ii. Immediate supervision provides employees with leadership opportunities;
  - iii. Immediate supervision engages employees in productive discussions about their performance;
  - iv. Immediate supervision does not discriminate against employees;
  - v. Immediate supervision provides employees with helpful suggestions to employees for their performance improvement;
  - vi. Immediate supervision supports employee training for skills enhancement; and
  - vii. Immediate supervision listens to ideas from employees and treats them with respect.

### **5. Leadership**

Leadership measures employees' experience with their leadership cadre on issues covered by EVS questions 53-62.

- a. Indicators of success in this element include, but are not limited to:
  - i. Leaders motivate employees to commit to the agency's mission;
  - ii. Leaders have high standards of honesty and integrity;
  - iii. Leaders work well with a diverse workforce;
  - iv. Leaders communicate agency goals to employees;
  - v. Leaders promote communication;
  - vi. Leaders promote collaboration; and
  - vii. Leaders support work/life balance and programs.

## **6. My Satisfaction**

My Satisfaction measures employees' experience regarding their personal level of approval with a range of issues covered by EVS questions 63-71.

- a. Indicators of success in this element include, but are not limited to:
  - i. Employees are involved in decisions affecting their work;
  - ii. Employees receive information from management regarding happenings in their organizations;
  - iii. Employees are recognized for their work;
  - iv. Employees have training and promotion opportunities in their organizations; and
  - v. Employees are encouraged to do a better job.

## **7. Work/Life**

Work/Life measures the availability of benefits and alternative work programs to employees that that could improve their work experience.

- a. Indicators of success in this element included, but are not limited to:
  - i. The availability of telework to employees;
  - ii. The availability of alternative work schedules (AWS) to employees;
  - iii. The availability of health and wellness programs at work; and
  - iv. The availability of child and elder care programs to employees.

## **B. Measurement Tools**

The annual results of OPM's Employee Viewpoint Survey (EVS) will be used to measure changes in the Employee Satisfaction & Engagement metric. Those forums that are at the agency or staff office level for which there are no EVS breakout data may either adopt the data for the "All other USDA" EVS category<sup>2</sup>, conduct the EVS themselves (if permitted by OPM), or use other data approved by the USDA Labor-Management Forum. Forums below the agency/staff office level for which there are no EVS breakout data may use the "All other [agency]" EVS category, conduct the EVS themselves (if permitted by OPM), or use other data approved by the USDA Labor-Management Forum.

While the EVS will measure the overall Employee Satisfaction & Engagement metric and the metric elements, action plan goals will be measured by the standards mutually agreed upon by the parties. For example, if a forum sets a goal for the "Satisfaction" element of increasing the number of employees with Individual Development Plans (IDPs) to 50%, the total number of employees in the targeted group versus those with IDPs will be the method of measuring whether the parties succeeded in meeting their goal for that element. However, whether success with that goal alone will be enough to cause a change in the either the "Satisfaction" element or the overall Employee Satisfaction & Engagement metric will be determined by the next applicable EVS.

---

<sup>2</sup> The "All Other USDA" EVS data is provided as Attachment 2.

### C. Baselines

The performance baseline for each element of this metric will be determined by the scores the USDA 2010 EVS survey results published in July 2010. These results may be obtained from the appropriate labor or management representative on the USDA Labor-Management Forum.

### D. Applying the Metrics

All forums will select one or more elements under the Employee Satisfaction & Engagement metric (e.g., Work/Life, Leadership, My Agency, etc.) from which they will take their baselines, set goals, develop plans, and work to improve.<sup>3</sup> For example, a Labor-Management Forum might elect to set as a goal improving the “My Work Experience” element by developing a plan to acquire college credit for certain in-service training by a date certain. Another example of goal setting within this metric could be improving the “Satisfaction” element by developing a plan to enhance employee training and promotion opportunities by a 50% increase of Individual Development Plans (IDPs) for a targeted group of employees. Or a forum might set a goal of improving the “Work/Life” element by developing a plan to increase the number of teleworking agreements approved during the annual reporting period by 20% or by developing and implementing employee recognition program by a date certain.

## IV. MISSION & SERVICE DELIVERY METRIC

The Mission & Service Delivery metric measures changes in the quality and efficiency of services provided by USDA on behalf of taxpayers.

The USDA FY 2010-2015 Strategic Plan<sup>4</sup> was adopted by the USDA Forum as the basis for the Mission & Service Delivery metric. The USDA FY 2010-2015 Strategic Plan (Strategic Plan) is USDA’s statement of its mission and service delivery outcomes for the next five years. The Strategic Plan establishes four broad goals supported by 14 objectives. Each objective has one or more *performance measures* associated with it. Each *performance measure* is linked to one or more *strategies and means*. *Performance measures* track progress in attaining the Department’s objectives, while the *strategies and means* identify specific actions designed to effectuate improvements in each of the Strategic Plan’s *performance measures*.

Each of the Department’s organizational components performs a vital role in delivering a portion of one or more of the goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan. Consequently, one or more of the Strategic Plan’s *performance measures* are, in part or in total, the responsibility of an individual organizational component of the USDA.

---

<sup>3</sup> See Note 1.

<sup>4</sup> The USDA FY 2010-2015 Strategic Plan is provided as Attachment 3.

A. Elements

The following are the elements of the Mission & Service Delivery metric:

- General Outcomes
- Process/Cycle Time
- Error Rate/Quality
- Public Responsiveness/Problem Resolution/Customer Satisfaction
- Internal Resource Management
- Cost Savings/Return on Investment
- Revenue Collected
- Agility
- Other

B. Measuring Tools

Forums will use instruments already in use by agencies to track work on the Strategic Plan or mutually agree on other measuring tools.

C. Baselines

Baselines for each element of this metric are those for the applicable performance measures as determined by the strategy & means the parties mutually agree that will engage in as part of their action plan explained in the next section.<sup>5</sup>

D. Applying the Metrics - Aligning Elements with the Strategic Plan

Using the instructions below, USDA forums/committees will align their Strategic Plan improvement activities with the most appropriate Mission & Service Delivery metric element. A matrix is provided at the end of this Guidance that presents examples for aligning strategies & means with the Mission & Service Delivery metric elements. .

1. USDA forums must select at least one performance measure from the Strategic Plan to satisfy the requirement for the Mission & Service Delivery metric. The Strategic Plan presents baselines for each of its performance measures from which changes/improvements will be measured.
2. USDA forums must select at least one of the USDA Strategic Plan's listed strategies & means to attain changes/improvements in the associated performance measure, **or** forums may mutually agree to devise their own so long as they are intended to produce positive impacts on the performance measures to which they are attached.
3. The strategies & means that forums select will determine the Mission & Service Delivery metric element to which it is most appropriately aligned. When strategies & means they express compound activities, forums will use their judgment to select the most appropriate metric element.
4. If the local parties cannot agree on which metric element is the appropriate one for a strategy & means, they will timely refer the matter to the next level forum for resolution and the next higher level forum will issue a timely decision.

---

<sup>5</sup> See Note 1.

## V. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

### A. Initial Reports

Each forums/committees will report the following information to the USDA Forum by January 31, 2011:

- Names and positions of Forum participants;
- Issue(s) for each metric (i.e., Labor-Management Relationship, Employee Satisfaction & Engagement, and Mission & Service Delivery) the parties agreed to work to improve;
- The goal(s) for each issue;
- The applicable metric element for each issue; and
- The baseline for each metric element.

### B. Progress Reports

Each forums/committees will submit a written narrative report on their progress toward achieving their goal(s) in each metric to the USDA Forum in April 2011 on the prior 3 months. Thereafter, progress reports will be made in October and April on the prior 6-months' accomplishments.

## VI. MEASURING FORUM EFFECTIVENESS

### A. Labor-Management Relationship Metric

The Department will re-survey the labor-management community electronically during the first quarter of 2012 and annually thereafter to measure changes in the Labor-Management Relationship metric against the appropriate baseline established by the USDA Labor-Management Climate Survey – Fall 2010.

### B. Employee Satisfaction & Engagement Metric

OPM's annual Employee Viewpoint Survey (EVS) will be used to measure changes in the Employee Satisfaction & Engagement Metric against the appropriate USDA breakout data in the 2010 EVS.

### C. Mission & Service Delivery Metric

The appropriate Strategic Plan performance measure(s) selected by the forums will be used to measure changes in the Mission & Service Delivery metric.

## VII. CONTACTS

As of November 2010, the members of the USDA Labor Management Forum and the organizations they represent are:

### **FOR LABOR**

**Ronald Thatcher**

National Federation of Federal Employees

**Melisa Bowman**

National Federation of Federal Employees

**Charles Stanley Painter**

American Federation of Government Employees

**Sharon Cooney-Smith**

American Federation of Government Employees

**Bryan Knowles**

National Treasury Employees Union

**Patricia Maggi**

National Treasury Employees Union

**Sarah Rehberg**

National Association of Agriculture Employees

**Henry Schmick**

American Foreign Service Association

**Sharon Church**

National Association of Plant Protection  
and Quarantine Office Support Employees

**Debra Arnold**

American Federation of State,  
County and Municipal Employees

**Carl Goldman**

American Federation of State,  
County and Municipal Employees

### **FOR MANAGEMENT**

**William P. Milton, Jr.**

Departmental Management

**Anthony Thompson**

Food Safety and Inspection Service

**Philip G. Short**

Farm & Foreign Agricultural Service

**Marcus Brownrigg**

Food, Nutrition & Consumer Services

**Joann Munno**

Marketing & Regulatory Programs

**Chuck Myers**

National Resources & Environment

**Eloris D. Speight**

National Resources & Environment

**Clyde Thompson**

Rural Development

**James Bradley**

Research, Education & Economics

**Steven Placek**

National Appeals Division

**Frederick Pfaeffle**

Office of General Counsel

**Ronald James**

Office of Human Resources Management

The following staff members of the USDA Labor Relations Program, Office of Human Resources Management, are also available to assist parties: Daniel Kline - [Dan.Kline@dm.usda.org](mailto:Dan.Kline@dm.usda.org) or (202) 570-8610; and Paula Lucak - [Paula.Lucak@dm.usda.org](mailto:Paula.Lucak@dm.usda.org) or (202) 205-3202.

## Examples of USDA's FY 2010-2015 Strategic Plan Alignment with Mission & Service Delivery Metric Elements

<b>Selected Strategic Plan Strategy &amp; Means</b> <i>(USDA forums may select from the Plan's listed strategies &amp; means or they may develop their own.)</i>	<b>Associated USDA Strategic Plan Performance Measure</b> <i>(USDA forums must select at least one to satisfy the Mission &amp; Service Delivery Metric requirement)</i>	<b>Alignment with National Council Metric Elements</b> <i>(The strategies &amp; means forums select will determine the National Council metric element to which it is most appropriately aligned. )</i>	<b>Discussion</b>
Use Child Nutrition Reauthorization to improve program access and expand eligibility for children in need.	4.1.1 Number of U.S. households with very low food security among children, as measured annually with USDA's Food Security Supplement to the Current Population Survey	General Outcomes	This <i>strategy &amp; means</i> falls into the General Outcome category, because it is a broad statement of what will be done with no detailed requirements that makes it inappropriate for any of the other <i>metric elements</i> .
Accelerate the delivery of financial and technical assistance to farmers, ranchers, forest landowners, and producers to implement conservation measures and management strategies that benefit water quality and availability, improve water management, enhance water conservation, and protect and restore watershed health.	2.3.4 Acres on which high impact targeted (HIT) practices are implemented on National Forest and private working lands in priority landscapes to accelerate the protection of clean, abundant water resources	Process/Cycle Time	This <i>strategy &amp; means</i> falls under the Process/Cycle Time <i>metric element</i> , because it focuses on the acceleration of a specific process: the delivery of financial and technical assistance.
Target additional Food Safety Assessments (FSAs) in poor-performing establishments to analyze an establishment's control of <i>Salmonella</i> and the design and implementation of an establishment's food safety system.	4.3.2 Total number of <i>Salmonella</i> , <i>Listeria monocytogenes</i> , and <i>E. coli</i> O157:H7 illnesses from products regulated by USDA's Food Safety Inspection Service	Error Rate/Quality	This <i>strategy &amp; means</i> is most closely connected with the Error Rate/Quality <i>metric element</i> in that it describes a specific action (target additional FSAs) whose outcome is expected to improve food quality.
Increase participation rates in nutrition assistance programs through aggressive and creative outreach, customer service improvements, earned media activities, demonstration projects, and research and analysis to identify reasons for and potential solutions to participation gaps.	4.1.1 Number of U.S. households with very low food security among children, as measured annually with USDA's Food Security Supplement to the Current Population Survey	Public Responsiveness/ Problem Resolution/ Customer Satisfaction	Although this is a compound <i>strategy &amp; mean</i> , it could fall into the Public Responsiveness/ Problem Resolution/Customer Satisfaction <i>metric element</i> , because it calls for improved customer service.

Selected Strategic Plan Strategy & Means	Associated USDA Strategic Plan Performance Measure	Alignment with National Council Metric Elements	Discussion
Increase the capability of the enterprise-wide information technology infrastructure to support risk management solutions and farm program delivery.	1.3.5 Annual normalized value of risk protection provided to agricultural producers through the Federal Crop Insurance program	Internal Resource Management	This <i>strategy &amp; means</i> focuses on internal IT resources.
Strategically focus investments in watershed improvement projects and conservation practices that will have the highest impact based on specific conservation needs within a given landscape.	2.3.1 Acres of National Forest System watersheds at or near natural condition.	Cost Savings/Return on Investment	This <i>strategy &amp; means</i> directly relates to USDA return on investment, calling for investments to be made for improvements for the most "bang for the buck."
Provide recreational opportunities in National Forests that offer healthy activity and generate revenue from tourism;	1.1.5 Annual economic contribution of recreation on National Forests and Grasslands	Revenue Collected	This <i>strategy &amp; means</i> is directly related to revenue collections from USDA generated activities.
Improve the Department's ability to respond to international crises involving food and agriculture;	3.1.1 Annual number of women and children assisted under McGovern-Dole International Food for Education Program	Agility	This <i>strategy &amp; means</i> speaks directly to the Department's ability to respond quickly to circumstances.