

FEDERAL LABOR RELATIONS AUTHORITY
STRATEGIC PLAN 2018-2022





Federal Labor Relations Authority
2018-2022 Strategic Plan

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Federal Labor Relations Authority
2018-2022 Strategic Plan

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Message from the Chairman



This is the 40th anniversary of enactment of the Federal Service Labor-Management Relations Statute. What we refer to simply as “the Statute” was passed in 1978 and implemented the following year. It evolved from President Richard M. Nixon’s 1969 Executive Order on Labor-Management Relations in the federal sector (E.O. No. 11491), and had its genesis in President John F. Kennedy’s 1962 Executive Order on Employee-Management Cooperation in the Federal Service (E.O. 10988).

Anniversaries are important. They present opportunities to appreciate and reflect on what led up to this day. Of equal importance is that anniversaries can remind us to reconnect, recommit, and refocus on what really matters. They help us build on the past and set out a path for the future.

Congress envisioned the Statute as the primary means by which the Federal Labor Relations Authority would protect the rights of, and facilitate the collective-bargaining relationships among federal agencies, labor organizations, and employees. This remains the source of the FLRA’s mission, which is as relevant today as it was on the day that Congress enacted the Statute. More than ever, the FLRA should chart the course of federal-sector labor-management relations through impartial, clear, and timely actions based on the Statute. We can do so by utilizing our unique expertise in federal-sector labor law to effectively resolve labor-management disputes, and doing so in a transparent manner that respects the legitimate interests of key stakeholders.

So, on this 40th anniversary of the Statute, let us reflect and be inspired by that which came before us. Let us also renew our focus on the legislative foundation that enables the FLRA to serve as a responsible leader in this arena. And let us rely on the Statute as the beacon to guide us towards a bright future in which we reconnect, recommit, and refocus on the important mission of this agency. To this, I am firmly committed.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Colleen", written over a light blue horizontal line.

Colleen Duffy Kiko, Chairman
Federal Labor Relations Authority



Executive Summary

The Federal Labor Relations Authority (the FLRA) is an independent administrative agency created by Title VII of the Civil Service Reform Act of 1978. The FLRA has three independent statutory components—the Authority, the Office of the General Counsel, and the Federal Service Impasses Panel—each with unique adjudicative or prosecutorial roles.

The FLRA's mission statement is: *Protecting rights and facilitating stable relationships among federal agencies, labor organizations, and employees while advancing an effective and efficient government through the administration of the Statute.* The FLRA does so by carrying out five primary statutory functions: We resolve complaints of unfair labor practices (ULPs); determine the appropriateness of bargaining units, and supervise or conduct secret-ballot elections for labor-organization representation; adjudicate exceptions to grievance-arbitration awards; adjudicate legal issues relating to the duty to bargain; and resolve impasses during negotiations.

The FLRA's vision, which drives achievement of its mission, is: *Charting the course of federal-sector labor-management relations through impartial, clear, and timely actions by dedicated and accountable employees.*

Three strategic goals, each supported by several strategic objectives, guide the FLRA's pursuit of its vision and achievement of its mission.

The FLRA developed this strategic plan against a canvas of strengths and challenges that can affect overall mission delivery. The source of the FLRA's internal strengths is its skilled workforce guided by the Agency's values of transparency and accountability, along with its increasing focus on the innovative use of information technology (IT) and data-driven analysis. Challenges arise from budget uncertainty and Presidential-appointee vacancies. The goals and objectives in this plan support the FLRA's mission in light of these strengths and challenges.



FLRA Strategic Goals

Strategic Goal #1	Strategic Goal #2	Strategic Goal #3
<p>We will ensure quality, timely, impartial, and consistent investigative and decision-making processes with determinations that are clearly articulated.</p>	<p>We will develop and provide tools and resources to enable the parties to prevent or more effectively and efficiently resolve their labor-relations disputes and improve their labor-management relationships.</p>	<p>We will manage our resources effectively and efficiently, and recognize that our dedicated workforce is critical to the prevention and resolution of labor-relations disputes.</p>

Strategic Objectives

<p>a. Establish and attempt to surpass (1) case-processing productivity goals, and (2) timeliness measures that are meaningful to the parties.</p> <p>b. Ensure excellence in investigations and clearly articulated written work products by establishing and surpassing case-processing quality goals that build upon the Agency's longstanding traditions of impartiality and consistent determinations that are effectively enforced.</p>	<p>a. Maintain and expand educational resources on www.flra.gov.</p> <p>b. Identify and offer targeted assistance to parties with significant labor-management challenges.</p> <p>c. Maintain and expand our external training programs to enable the parties to better understand their rights and obligations under the Statute.</p>	<p>a. Ensure that the FLRA's performance-management systems are synchronized with and support the Agency's strategic goals.</p> <p>b. Continue to expand the FLRA's technological capabilities to enable employees to deliver mission results more effectively and efficiently.</p> <p>c. Recruit, retain, and develop a diverse, respected workforce in an environment that fosters employee input and satisfaction and makes the best use of FLRA resources.</p>
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Mission and Responsibilities

The FLRA is an independent administrative federal agency created by Title VII of the Civil Service Reform Act of 1978, also known as the Federal Service Labor-Management Relations Statute (the [Statute](#)), 5 U.S.C. §§ 7101-7135. The purpose of the Statute is to prescribe certain rights and obligations of the employees of the Federal Government and to establish procedures that are designed to meet the special requirements and needs of the Government. The provisions of the Statute are to be interpreted in a manner consistent with the requirement of an effective and efficient Government. *Id.* § 7101(b).

FLRA MISSION: “Protecting rights and facilitating stable relationships among federal agencies, labor organizations, and employees while advancing an effective and efficient government through the administration of the Federal Service Labor-Management Relations Statute.”

The FLRA applies its federal-sector expertise to execute its mission primarily by carrying out the following statutory responsibilities:

1. Conduct hearings and resolve complaints of ULPs under § 7118 of the Statute. *Id.* § 7105(a)(2)(G). The FLRA is responsible for investigating, prosecuting, and adjudicating claims that an agency or a labor organization has failed to uphold its legal obligations under the Statute.
2. Determine the appropriateness of units for labor organization representation under the Statute, and supervise or conduct elections to determine whether a labor organization has been selected as an exclusive representative by a majority of employees in an appropriate unit. *Id.* § 7105(a)(2)(A). The FLRA also resolves disputes about which employees may be included in bargaining units under the Statute. *Id.* § 7105(a)(2)(B).
3. Resolve exceptions to grievance-arbitration awards under § 7122 of the Statute. *Id.* § 7105(a)(2)(H). The FLRA adjudicates appeals – known as exceptions – to arbitration awards that result from grievances filed by employees, labor organizations, or agencies under parties’ negotiated grievance procedures. The FLRA reviews those awards to assess whether they are contrary to any law, rule, or regulation, or are deficient on other grounds similar to those applied by federal courts in private-sector labor-management disputes.
4. Resolve issues relating to the duty to bargain in good faith under § 7117(c) of the Statute. *Id.* § 7105(a)(2)(E). The FLRA resolves negotiability disputes that arise during



bargaining under two circumstances – when an agency claims that a contract proposal is outside the duty to bargain and when an agency head disapproves a negotiated agreement claiming that it contains provisions that are contrary to law, rule, or regulation.

5. Provide assistance in resolving negotiation impasses between federal agencies and exclusive representatives. *Id.* § 7119.

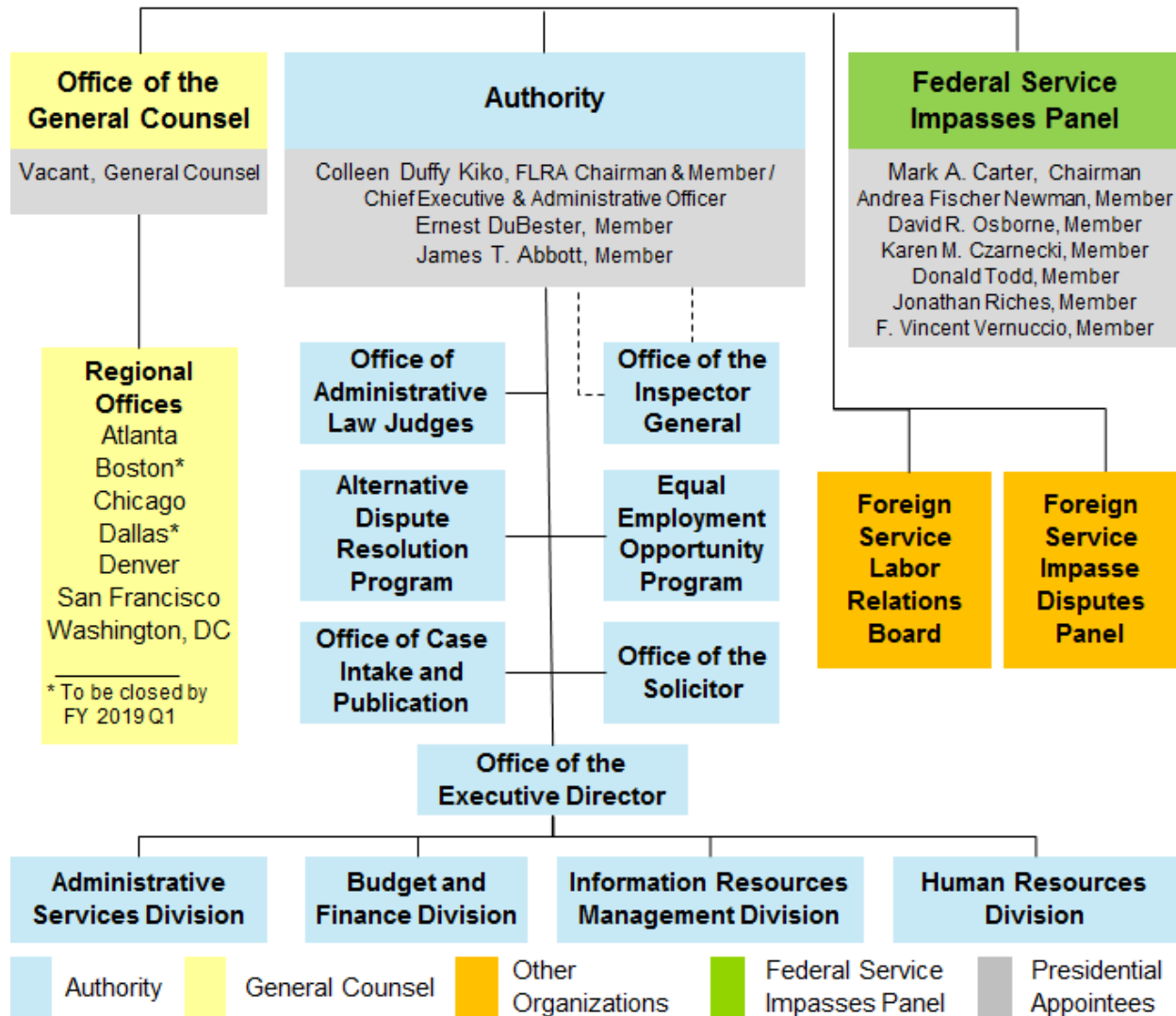
In addition, Congress directed the FLRA to prescribe criteria and resolve issues relating to the granting of national consultation rights under § 7113 of the Statute; prescribe criteria and resolve issues relating to determining compelling need for agency rules or regulations under § 7117(b) of the Statute; prescribe criteria relating to the granting of consultation rights with respect to conditions of employment under § 7117(d) of the Statute; and take such other actions as are necessary and appropriate to effectively administer the provisions of the Statute.

The FLRA is to “provide leadership in establishing policies and guidance” related to matters under the Statute. *Id.* § 7105(a)(1). The FLRA satisfies this directive primarily through its written determinations, but also by offering training and other services. Together, this is how the FLRA plans to achieve its mission.





Organizational Structure



Headquartered in Washington, D.C., the FLRA has three statutory components – the Authority, the Office of the General Counsel, and the Federal Service Impasses Panel (the FSIP) – each with unique adjudicative or prosecutorial roles.

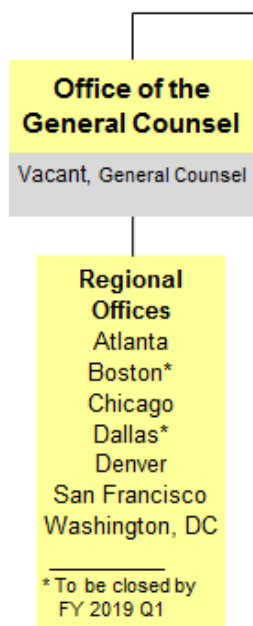
The Authority – the FLRA’s adjudicatory body – is led by three presidentially nominated and Senate-confirmed Members. The Authority is responsible for adjudicating ULP complaints heard by the Office of Administrative Law Judges,¹ exceptions to arbitrators’ grievance-arbitration awards, disputes over the negotiability of collective-bargaining

¹ The Authority has delegated to the Office of Administrative Law Judges its authority under § 7118 of the Statute to determine whether any person has engaged in or is engaging in a ULP. 5 U.S.C. § 7105(e)(2).



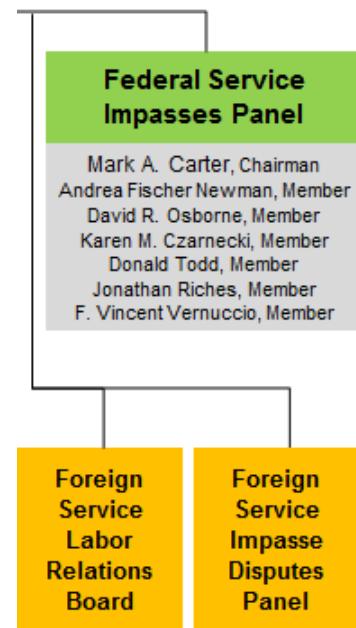
language, and disputes concerning bargaining-unit determinations.² Pursuant to § 7104(b) of the Statute, the President designates one Member to serve as Chairman of the FLRA. The Chairman is the Agency’s chief executive and administrative officer.

Other programs and offices under the jurisdiction of the Chairman include the Office of the Solicitor, the Office of Case Intake and Publication, and the Alternative Dispute Resolution and Equal Employment Opportunity Programs. Standing as an independent entity within the Authority is the Office of Inspector General.



The Office of the General Counsel (OGC) is led by a presidentially appointed and Senate-confirmed General Counsel. *Id.* § 7104(f)(1), (2), and (3). The General Counsel has direct authority over, and responsibility for, all employees in the OGC, including the FLRA’s Regional Offices. The OGC investigates ULP charges, files and prosecutes ULP complaints, determines representation matters,³ and provides training, as appropriate.

The FSIP provides assistance in resolving negotiation impasses between federal agencies and exclusive representatives under § 7119 of the Statute)and under the Federal Employees Flexible and Compressed Work Schedules Act, 5 U.S.C. § 6131(c)(2)(A), (c)(3)(B) and (C). The FSIP is composed of a Chairman and



at least six other members, who are appointed by the President. *Id.* § 7119(c)(2).

Pursuant to the Foreign Service Act of 1980, 22 U.S.C. §§ 4101-4118, the FLRA also provides full program and staff support to two additional bodies. The Foreign Service Labor Relations Board oversees the labor-management relations program for Foreign Service employees of the Broadcasting Board of Governors, the U.S. Agency for International Development, and the Departments of State, Agriculture, and Commerce. The Foreign Service Impasse Disputes Panel assists in resolving bargaining impasses arising in the course of collective bargaining between the exclusive representative and those same Foreign Service agencies.

² The Authority has delegated to the regional directors its authority to determine whether a group of employees is an appropriate unit; to conduct investigations and to provide for hearings; to determine whether a question of representation exists and to direct an election; and to supervise or conduct secret-ballot elections and certify the results thereof. 5 U.S.C. § 7105(e)(1).

³ The Authority has delegated these duties to the regional directors. *See* n.2.



Stakeholder Engagement

The FLRA enlisted the ideas, expertise, and assistance of both internal and external stakeholders when developing this strategic plan.

FLRA staff from every Agency component, every region of the country, and every level, actively participated in developing all substantive elements of this strategic plan. As a result, more than one-third of the FLRA workforce played an active role in developing and drafting the new mission statement, vision and value statements, strategic goals and objectives, strategies, and performance goals. When the new FLRA mission statement was unveiled to Agency staff, ninety percent (90%) responded in a survey saying, “Yes, the work I do on a daily basis helps achieve this mission.” Strategic plan reviewers and editors were careful to preserve stakeholder input to the maximum extent possible.

The FLRA obtained input from more than 450 external stakeholders during the development of this strategic plan. A draft of the entire *Strategic Goals* section of this document was posted online for external stakeholders to review and assess. About three-quarters of the participating external stakeholders self-identified as federal employees and offered input that could be tabulated. Just over half of the federal-employee respondents were labor-organization representatives and about one-third were management representatives. Other stakeholder respondents included those who filed cases with the FLRA, former federal employees, former union representatives, and attorneys.

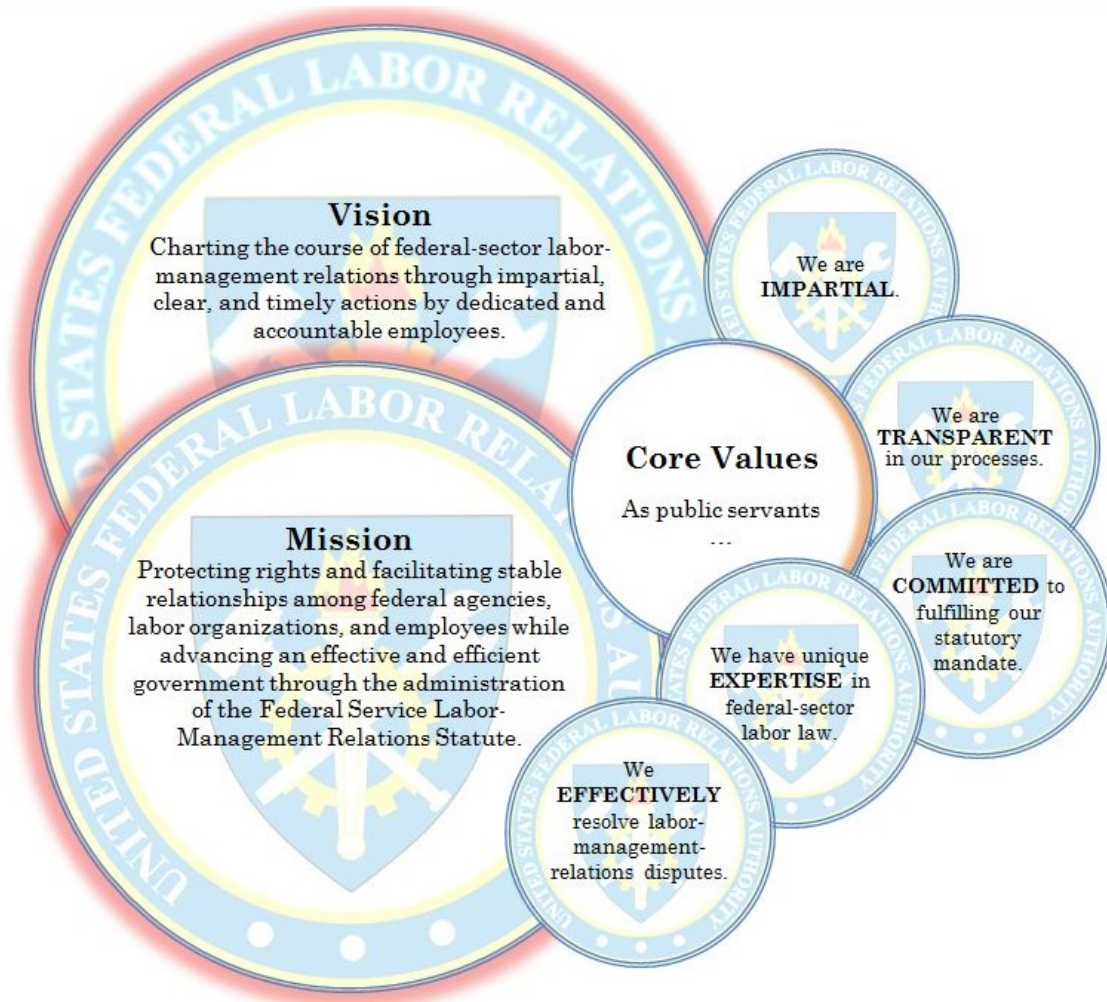
The FLRA also polled internal stakeholders concerning substantive portions of this document. Eighty-three percent (83%) of internal-stakeholder respondents affirmed that the strategic goals in this strategic plan are important or “essential” to the Agency’s mission. An even higher percentage of internal-stakeholder respondents opined that the strategic objectives and strategies in this document will help to achieve those goals. More than ninety percent (90%) of external federal-employee respondents agreed.

In addition to tabulated input, internal and external stakeholders offered more than 500 narrative comments after reviewing substantive portions of this document. In light of the entirety of stakeholder input, FLRA leadership concluded that this strategic plan will appropriately guide the Agency for the next several years. The broad range of stakeholder input also will help Agency staff to implement this plan in a way that helps stakeholders perceive that the FLRA is successfully achieving its mission.

Reviewers from the Office of Management and Budget suggested refinement in one area, which was adopted. The OMB reviewers otherwise favorably reviewed the FLRA’s new strategic plan. The strategic plan document was finalized after submitting it to congressional reviewers for input and recommendations.



Vision and Values



The FLRA’s vision statement expresses our aspirations, our hopes, and what we believe we can do in ways that no other agency can. This vision drives us and guides us to achieve the goals and objectives designed to accomplish our mission.

Charting the course of federal-sector labor-management relations ...

The FLRA’s vision statement begins with the unique characteristic that distinguishes the FLRA from all other entities. Congress established the FLRA to administer the Statute and provide leadership in establishing policies and guidance relating to federal-sector labor-management relations. In this role, we strive to offer the very best leadership for all stakeholders in the outcome of our work.



... through impartial, clear, and timely actions ...



**FLRA Chairman
Colleen Duffy Kiko**

The FLRA primarily offers such leadership and guidance through impartial, clear, and timely actions that are necessary and appropriate to effectively administer the provisions of the Statute. In federal-sector labor-management relations, this includes determining appropriate units for labor-organization representation, determining exclusive recognition of labor organizations, and resolving ULP allegations, exceptions to grievance-arbitration awards, issues relating to the duty to bargain in good faith, and negotiation impasses.

... by dedicated and accountable employees.

We are proud to be a committed and responsible workforce that consistently acts in a manner that reflects the public interest's demand for the highest standards of employee performance and the efficient accomplishment of government operations.

The FLRA's core values contain lasting beliefs and shared ideals that help guide our actions. As public servants,

1. ***We are IMPARTIAL.***
2. ***We are COMMITTED to fulfilling our statutory mandate.***
3. ***We are TRANSPARENT in our processes.***
4. ***We have unique EXPERTISE in federal-sector labor law.***
5. ***We EFFECTIVELY resolve labor-management-relations disputes.***

These values help enable the FLRA vision statement and give deeper meaning to our goals and objectives.



Strategic Goals

FLRA Strategic Goals

Strategic Goal #1	Strategic Goal #2	Strategic Goal #3
<p>We will ensure quality, timely, impartial, and consistent investigative and decision-making processes with determinations that are clearly articulated.</p>	<p>We will develop and provide tools and resources to enable the parties to prevent or more effectively and efficiently resolve their labor-relations disputes and improve their labor-management relationships.</p>	<p>We will manage our resources effectively and efficiently, and recognize that our dedicated workforce is critical to the prevention and resolution of labor-relations disputes.</p>

Strategic Objectives

<p>a. Establish and attempt to surpass (1) case-processing productivity goals, and (2) timeliness measures that are meaningful to the parties.</p>	<p>a. Maintain and expand educational resources on www.flra.gov.</p>	<p>a. Ensure that the FLRA’s performance-management systems are synchronized with and support the Agency’s strategic goals.</p>
<p>b. Ensure excellence in investigations and clearly articulated written work products by establishing and surpassing case-processing quality goals that build upon the Agency’s longstanding traditions of impartiality and consistent determinations that are effectively enforced.</p>	<p>b. Identify and offer targeted assistance to parties with significant labor-management challenges.</p>	<p>b. Continue to expand the FLRA’s technological capabilities to enable employees to deliver mission results more effectively and efficiently.</p>
	<p>c. Maintain and expand our external training programs to enable the parties to better understand their rights and obligations under the Statute.</p>	<p>c. Recruit, retain, and develop a diverse, respected workforce in an environment that fosters employee input and satisfaction and makes the best use of FLRA resources.</p>



STRATEGIC GOAL 1: WE WILL ENSURE QUALITY, TIMELY, IMPARTIAL, AND CONSISTENT INVESTIGATIVE AND DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES WITH DETERMINATIONS THAT ARE CLEARLY ARTICULATED.

This strategic goal concerns the core statutory activities of the FLRA. The Statute charges the FLRA with responsibility for protecting rights and facilitating stable labor-management relationships in the federal sector. To achieve that mandate, the FLRA must provide the federal labor-management community with quality, timely, impartial, and consistent investigations and determinations. Further, the FLRA must convey those determinations clearly and enforce them effectively. This goal must be achieved throughout all FLRA components to attain the level of success that should be expected of the Agency.

Strategic Objectives

a. Establish and attempt to surpass (1) case-processing productivity goals, and (2) timeliness measures that are meaningful to the parties.

Parties often have time-sensitive interests at stake in matters pending before the FLRA. Delays in the resolution of those matters can impede the ability of the parties to fulfill their missions effectively and efficiently. So, to properly serve the federal labor-management community and accomplish the FLRA’s own mission, the Agency must satisfy internal case-processing productivity goals that enable it to investigate and resolve cases in a timely fashion.

Parties are best served when they have a clear understanding of how long it might take the FLRA to process cases. The FLRA therefore will set its standards for timeliness in a way that gives parties a reasonable expectation as to the duration of the FLRA determination process. This requires the use of simple, straightforward metrics for understanding how long it might take to resolve a given matter before the Agency.





Strategies

The FLRA will use the following strategies to achieve this objective:

- 1) Update the methods to measure productivity and the metrics to measure overall timeliness of matters pending before the FLRA.
- 2) Regularly measure productivity and the overall status of case-processing timeliness in each FLRA component, and update strategies as necessary to address unforeseen or unplanned events.
- 3) Update realistic metrics and methods that the Agency uses to track the internal progress of matters before the FLRA to make them clear, relevant, meaningful, and widely known to the federal labor-management community.

Contributing Components

- All FLRA components.

Performance Goals

- 1) Use updated metrics to measure productivity and overall timeliness of matters pending before the FLRA.
- 2) Regularly measure productivity and overall case-processing timeliness in each FLRA component; modify strategies as necessary to address unforeseen or unplanned events.
- 3) Track and publically report progress of matters before the FLRA that the federal labor-management community considers clear, relevant, widely known, and meaningful.





b. Ensure excellence in investigations and clearly articulated written work products by establishing and attempting to surpass case-processing quality goals that build upon the Agency's longstanding traditions of impartiality and consistent determinations that are clearly articulated.

Excelling at the FLRA's core functions requires the Agency to perform thorough investigations and produce clearly articulated written products. From informal communications, to FLRA determinations, to information on the FLRA website, the FLRA's written work is one of the primary means by which the Agency communicates with parties and the federal labor-management community.

The FLRA's ability to achieve its mission depends on its ability to issue impartial and consistent determinations that are clearly articulated. Even *the appearance* of partiality can cause parties to lose trust in the FLRA's determinations, and ultimately, in the FLRA as an institution.

Strategies

The FLRA will use the following strategies to achieve this objective:

- 1) Periodically update the metrics that the FLRA uses to assess quality of investigations and written work products.
- 2) Periodically update methods that the FLRA uses to maintain and improve the quality of FLRA investigations and written work products, including FLRA staff training and internal educational resources.
- 3) Periodically assess external perceptions of the FLRA's impartiality and factors that affect those perceptions; take action, if deemed appropriate, to ensure external perceptions of FLRA impartiality.

Contributing Components

- All FLRA components.

Performance Goals

- 1) Conduct high-quality investigations and produce high-quality written work products.



- 2) Implement effective methods to maintain and improve the quality of FLRA investigations and written work products, including FLRA staff training and internal educational resources.
- 3) Ensure external stakeholder confidence in the FLRA’s impartiality.

STRATEGIC GOAL 2: WE WILL DEVELOP AND PROVIDE TOOLS AND RESOURCES TO ENABLE THE PARTIES TO PREVENT OR MORE EFFECTIVELY AND EFFICIENTLY RESOLVE THEIR LABOR-RELATIONS DISPUTES AND IMPROVE THEIR LABOR-MANAGEMENT RELATIONSHIPS.

The FLRA is specifically empowered and obligated to “provide leadership in establishing policies and guidance” related to matters arising under the Statute. 5 U.S.C. § 7105(a)(1). Educating parties regarding statutory obligations promotes the FLRA’s mission of

protecting rights and facilitating stable labor-management relationships while advancing an effective and efficient government. The FLRA accomplishes this goal first through its written determinations and by providing parties with quality educational resources through



the FLRA’s website; by identifying, and offering targeted assistance to, parties with significant labor-management challenges; and by offering external training to federal agencies and labor organizations regarding their rights and obligations under the Statute.



Strategic Objectives

a. Maintain and expand educational resources on www.flra.gov.

Offering high-quality educational resources through the FLRA website is a key component of promoting stability in the federal labor-management community. Parties who are better informed about rights and obligations under the Statute are less likely to pursue frivolous matters or defenses, and they are more likely to approach their labor-management relations in a manner that is consistent with the Statute.

In April 2016, the FLRA launched a totally redesigned website featuring all-new substantive content, a convenient training-registration tool, a visually engaging design, simplified global navigation, and improved usability and search functions. The Agency will continue to build on this achievement by exploring ways to supplement and enhance the educational resources on its website, such as expanding parties' access to statutory and other training, including the development of online training modules that replicate the in-person trainings that the FLRA currently provides. It will also include opportunities for parties to access live statutory training sessions on the FLRA website by utilizing technology and techniques that encourage interaction with remote participants.

Strategies

The FLRA will use the following strategies to achieve this objective:

- 1) Review and regularly update the educational resources currently posted on the FLRA website to ensure that they accurately reflect governing case law and procedures.
- 2) Develop online training modules that the parties can utilize in addition to live, in-person training, including resources that educate the parties on the labor-management aspects of situations commonly arising in government operations (e.g., agency reorganizations, office moves, furloughs).
- 3) Develop, post, and maintain current case digests on the FLRA website that briefly summarize recent Authority decisions.



**FLRA Member
Ernest DuBester**



Contributing Components

- All FLRA components.

Performance Goals

- 1) Routinely review and update educational resources on the FLRA website.
- 2) Develop a growing library of online training modules on the FLRA website.
- 3) Develop and maintain case digests of new Authority decisions on the FLRA website.

b. Identify and offer targeted assistance to parties with significant labor-management challenges.

In situations where parties experience labor-management challenges, targeted assistance can promote stable labor-management relationships by educating the parties regarding their statutory rights and obligations. It can also promote effective and efficient government by assisting parties in addressing their disputes without necessarily resorting to formal filings.

Targeted assistance can take many forms, including offering training to parties on particular topics that have given rise to frequent ULP charges, negotiability disputes, or arbitration exceptions. Other types of assistance might be most appropriate for parties experiencing broader labor-management challenges. For parties involved in complex representational matters, targeted assistance can include conducting conferences with the parties to assist them in identifying and, if feasible, resolving relevant issues.





Strategies

The FLRA will use the following strategies to achieve this objective:

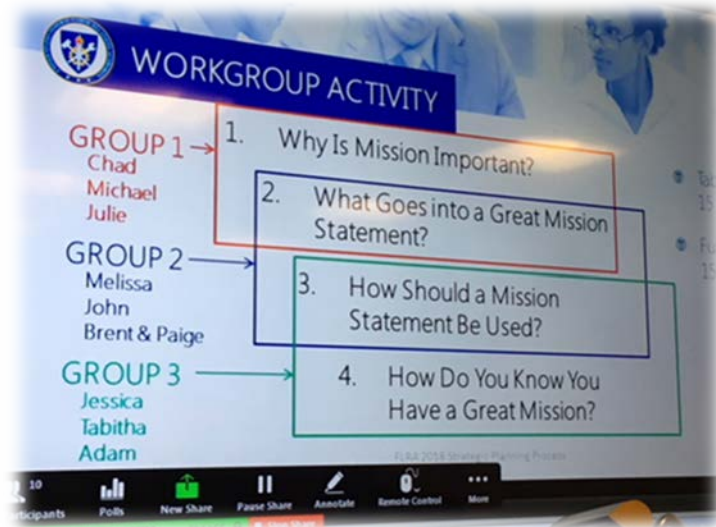
- 1) Develop, implement, and assess methods to identify and evaluate parties with significant labor-management challenges that could benefit most from an offer of targeted assistance.
- 2) Identify other agencies, such as the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, to which the FLRA may refer the parties for assistance, when appropriate.
- 3) On a cross-component basis, and resources permitting, develop targeted-assistance programs and related materials; offer them to parties experiencing significant labor-management challenges to help protect rights and facilitate stable labor-management relationships; and assess the effectiveness of these programs.

Contributing Components

- All FLRA components.

Performance Goals

- 1) Identify and evaluate parties with significant labor-management challenges.
- 2) Refer appropriate parties to suitable resources.
- 3) Implement highly effective targeted assistance programs and associated materials.



c. Maintain and expand our external training programs to enable the parties to better understand their rights and obligations under the Statute.

Agency components have traditionally provided training on statutory principles governing ULPs, representational issues, negotiability disputes, and arbitration exceptions. Providing such external training to federal agencies and labor organizations regarding their rights and obligations under the Statute directly promotes the FLRA’s mission of protecting rights and facilitating stable labor-management relationships while advancing an effective



and efficient government. For this reason, it is essential that the FLRA maintain and, where possible, expand these external training programs.

Strategies

The FLRA will use the following strategies to achieve this objective:

- 1) Continue to develop and deliver high-quality in-person training opportunities, including basic and advanced statutory training, and training on unit determination and representational matters, negotiation impasses, federal-sector grievance-arbitration appeals, and negotiability matters.
- 2) Develop, maintain, and improve additional ways to offer external training, including real-time participation from remote locations, recorded modules available through the FLRA website, videos hosted on remote sites like YouTube, podcasts that users can download, recordings of segments of in-person training, audio recordings, and other participant-friendly best practices as they become available.
- 3) Develop, deliver, and assess the effectiveness of training regarding procedures for filing and processing FLRA cases.

Contributing Components

- All FLRA components.

Performance Goals

- 1) Exceed an annual target number of highly rated in-person training programs for a target number of participants concerning the full range of statutory matters.
- 2) Find additional ways to deliver real-time and pre-recorded external trainings that have been successfully developed and implemented utilizing appropriate technology and participant-friendly best practices.
- 3) Exceed an annual target number of highly rated training programs for a target number of participants regarding procedures for filing and processing FLRA cases.





STRATEGIC GOAL 3: WE WILL MANAGE OUR RESOURCES EFFECTIVELY AND EFFICIENTLY, AND RECOGNIZE THAT OUR DEDICATED WORKFORCE IS CRITICAL TO THE RESOLUTION OF LABOR-RELATIONS DISPUTES.

We honor the trust that the public has placed in us to use Agency resources wisely on behalf of the American taxpayer. Recognizing that trust, the FLRA has always focused its resources on carrying out its mission. We will continue to do so.

The core of the FLRA's mission is to resolve labor-relations disputes. The FLRA will continue to achieve that goal by employing committed, experienced professionals.



The FLRA developed a cross-component working group to meet the goals articulated in Executive Order No. 13781 (March 13,

2017), *Comprehensive Plan for Reorganizing the Executive Branch*, and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Memorandum M-17-22 (April 12, 2017), *Comprehensive Plan for Reforming the Federal Government and Reducing the Federal Civilian Workforce*. Guided by internal and external input, this working group offered FLRA leadership a set of recommendations to improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability of Agency operations. The FLRA expects to maximize its resources by reducing travel, training, and mail costs through the increased use of teleconferencing, utilization of in-house and interagency training, and implementation of fully electronic case files.

The FLRA will continue to explore ways to manage its workforce effectively and efficiently. A key component of that commitment is to continue developing our IT systems, with the goal of enabling FLRA employees to spend more time on mission-critical, substantive work. The FLRA will also reexamine its performance-management systems to ensure that they align with the goals in this plan, that individual employee standards reflect organizational goals, and that the Agency appropriately recognizes employee achievements in support of these goals. Finally, the FLRA will continue to encourage employee growth, development, and innovation.



Strategic Objectives

a. Ensure that the FLRA's performance-management systems are synchronized with and support the Agency's strategic goals.

At the foundation of this strategic plan is the FLRA's renewed commitment to developing the most effective ways to evaluate Agency performance, as well as the contributions of the Agency's components and individual employees. To do this, employee performance-management targets will be adapted to support Agency goals. This will help ensure that the evaluation of FLRA employees will include consideration of how well they assist the Agency to achieve its strategic and performance goals.

Strategies

The FLRA will use the following strategies to achieve this objective:

- 1) Continually evaluate FLRA performance-management systems to achieve, and recognize contributions towards, the Agency's strategic goals.
- 2) Provide in-house training to help the FLRA workforce gain a better understanding of the connections between individual employee performance goals and the Agency's strategic goals and objectives.
- 3) Encourage and solicit employee innovation to achieve the Agency's strategic goals.



Contributing Components

- All FLRA components.

Performance Goals

- 1) FLRA employees perceive that the Agency's performance-management systems, and their individual performance plans, directly align with achieving this strategic plan.
- 2) FLRA employees have a clear understanding of how their individual achievement contributes to achievement of Agency priorities and successful implementation of FLRA strategic goals.



- 3) FLRA employees perceive that their performance recognition and rewards are also directly linked to their contribution to the successful achievement of the FLRA's strategic goals.

b. Continue to expand the FLRA's technological capabilities to enable employees to deliver mission results more effectively and efficiently.

The FLRA's IT systems have provided, and will continue to provide, a key means by which the FLRA will more effectively and efficiently deliver quality services and increase internal efficiencies. For example, the Agency has connected all FLRA offices in ways that improve internal communication, and FLRA staff works more efficiently by using a cloud-based document management system that allows for simplified document management and internal collaboration.

The Agency also recently launched a new and improved version of its eFiling system that provides a more intuitive, user-friendly customer experience. This improved eFiling experience allows the parties to submit ULP, representation, arbitration, and negotiability filings in an electronic format and easily access FLRA services, which enables FLRA employees to take timely and quality actions. The Agency is currently using the same software and agile methodology to develop a more user-friendly electronic case-management system. The FLRA will integrate these three systems—document management, eFiling, and case management—to fully implement electronic case file capability throughout the Agency.



**FSIP Chairman
Mark A. Carter**

Thereafter, as resources permit, the FLRA will continue to enhance and leverage these technological capabilities. For example, the logical next step after fully implementing electronic case files is to encourage the widest uses of eFiling and to serve FLRA-generated case documents on the parties electronically—saving time, human-capital resources, and postage costs.

Strategies

The FLRA will use the following strategies to achieve this objective:

- 1) Improve and enhance the FLRA electronic case-management system and integrate it with the electronic document management system and eFiling system in order to



fully implement electronic case file capability throughout the Agency. Thereafter, encourage the widest use of eFiling and electronically serve FLRA-generated case documents on the parties.

- 2) Continue to effectively implement and manage other IT systems to help the FLRA more effectively and efficiently deliver services.
- 3) Implement methodologies to determine how to improve the usefulness of technological enhancements and their positive impact on the internal and external customer experience.

Contributing Components

- All FLRA components.

Performance Goals

- 1) Implement a new and improved FLRA electronic case-management system. Integrate the case-management system with the FLRA document management and eFiling systems in order to fully implement electronic case file capability throughout the Agency.



- 2) FLRA employees and parties understand how to make the most effective use of the FLRA's electronic systems.
- 3) Enhance the positive impact of technological advancements on the customer experience.



c. Recruit, retain, and develop a diverse, respected workforce in an environment that fosters employee input and satisfaction and makes the best use of FLRA resources.

The FLRA's charge to uphold and administer the Statute relies on its employees. Accordingly, the FLRA's success relies on the expertise and engagement of its workforce. A key component of attracting and retaining an effective workforce is creating a positive work environment in which employees see themselves as stakeholders and innovators. The FLRA will continue to assess the skills and training needs of its workforce, and it will seek new, cost-effective ways to cultivate employee development and commitment. The FLRA will provide opportunities for experienced employees to share their institutional knowledge by providing internal training and through other means. The FLRA's continued focus on human-capital development will help ensure continued mission accomplishment and leadership of the federal-sector labor-management relations program.



Strategies

The FLRA will use the following strategies to achieve this objective:

- 1) Recruit and retain a diverse and respected work force with federal-sector labor-management expertise; periodically review succession planning initiatives; develop nontraditional resources and other appropriate means for employee education and development.
- 2) Conduct internal employee surveys to monitor and address employee morale and engagement issues to continue the FLRA's culture of respectful problem-solving with its workforce.
- 3) Use technology and telework options where appropriate to promote employee efficiency and a healthy work-life balance, which in turn enables our workforce to better serve the public.

Contributing Components

- All FLRA components.



Performance Goals

- 1) Internal and external survey respondents perceive that diverse and respected FLRA employees demonstrate expertise in federal-sector labor-management relations; minimal gaps exist in succession plans; and the Agency develops nontraditional resources for employee education and development.
- 2) The FLRA workforce expresses a stable and improving level of overall job satisfaction, as well as satisfaction with the manner in which internal problem-solving occurs.
- 3) FLRA managers and employees perceive that the Agency appropriately uses telework and technology to promote employee efficiency and a healthy work-life balance.





Major Management Priorities and Challenges

This strategic plan sets forth a long-term vision for modernizing the FLRA in key areas that will improve the Agency's ability to deliver mission outcomes, provide excellent service to the federal labor-management community, and effectively steward taxpayer dollars on behalf of the American people.

The FLRA will continue to focus on improving the Agency's effectiveness, efficiency, and accountability. The Agency also will continue to focus on transparency and the innovative use of IT and data-driven analysis, to maintain high levels of mission performance and employee engagement.



FLRA Member
James T. Abbott

While the FLRA is committed to increasing government-wide effectiveness and efficiency, and improving service to the federal workforce, there are challenges outside of the Agency's control that could pose a risk to overall mission delivery. These challenges include budget uncertainty and Presidential appointee vacancies.

For the past several years, there has been budget uncertainty throughout the Federal Government. This uncertain fiscal environment reduces the FLRA's flexibility in making resource decisions, such as hiring staff to fill vacancies, or investing in modernization of IT capabilities that will allow for more efficient case processing.

For quite some time, the FLRA has not had a full complement of Presidential appointees. This decreases the Agency's ability to process cases, to issue decisions, and to achieve its goals and measures.

The FLRA continues to make substantial progress in addressing and resolving challenges identified by its Office of the Inspector General (OIG). Specifically, over the last two fiscal years, the Agency has received clean audits for both its Privacy Program and Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA) compliance, while reducing existing open recommendations in both from thirteen down to one. The FLRA has also been successful in closing longstanding management challenges identified by the Inspector General. Detailed information about progress towards addressing OIG findings is reported annually in the Agency's Performance and Accountability Report (PAR).



Evidence Building

To develop this strategic plan, the FLRA used information from a wide range of sources, including a traditional environmental scan, Agency performance data, and OPM's Employee Viewpoint Survey. The FLRA obtains valuable information about the effectiveness of its program through its mission activities, such as trainings, stakeholder engagement, and responses to public inquiries.

The FLRA routinely collects evidence-based performance data to support decision making and to drive innovative approaches within the Agency. Using real-time data, the FLRA measures its performance against the FLRA strategic plan and develops strategies for effectively achieving the FLRA's mission and goals. Throughout the year, Agency leadership shares performance metrics and holds data-driven management meetings where meaningful discussions occur around program performance, areas for improvement, and best practices across components. Also, to continuously improve internal service delivery, the FLRA frequently evaluates its administrative services (IT, human resources, and financial management), using internal survey tools, where appropriate.

To the extent possible, the agency will embed data collection, analysis, and utilization within the design, management, and implementation of Agency programs and services so as to minimize new burdens on limited Agency resources.





Appendix (Abbreviations)

ADR	Alternative Dispute Resolution
ARB	Arbitration*
eFiling	Electronic-case-filing system
FLRA	Federal Labor Relations Authority
FSIP	Federal Service Impasses Panel, a component of the FLRA comprising seven part-time, presidentially appointed Members
Impasse	Negotiation Impasse*
IT	Information Technology
NEG	Negotiability*
OALJ	Office of Administrative Law Judges
OGC	Office of the General Counsel, a component of the FLRA led by a presidentially appointed, Senate-confirmed General Counsel
OIG	Office of the Inspector General
OMB	Office of Management and Budget
OPM	Office of Personnel Management
PAR	Performance and Accountability Report
REP	Representation*
The Agency	Federal Labor Relations Authority
The Authority	A component of the FLRA comprising three presidentially appointed, Senate-confirmed Members
The Statute	Federal Service Labor-Management Relations Statute
ULP	Unfair Labor Practice*

*A specific type of case filed with the FLRA.