

APPENDIX B. HC QUARTERLY ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT (QAR)

USDA QUARTERLY ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT (FY03 QTR 3)

Mission Area/Agency/DA: Foreign Agricultural Service

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STATUS of Strategic Human Capital Management

Instructions: For each Human Capital Improvement Goal, please mark an "X" to report the general progress your agency has made relative to the established timelines of each action strategy.

In addition, please provide a brief narrative on the steps the agency expects to take toward making progress. If any, identify best practices, current or future challenges that may impede your progress, and potential solutions to overcome those challenges. The narrative you provide may be used to facilitate discussions at HCAT Team meetings, HC forums, HRLC meetings, etc. Best practices identified will be shared with other agencies via the HC Web site. OPM's *Human Capital Assessment and Accountability Framework* can be used as a reference.

1. Strategic Alignment and Human Capital Planning: Institute a practice of systematic human capital management that is aligned with the USDA and agency strategic plans, and integrated with budgets.

1.A.1.0 Completed/Ongoing Progressing No Progress

Develop (i.e., either by developing a unique agency plan or adopting and modifying the Department's HC Plan) and begin implementing an HC Plan that includes a communications component. The agency plans should be developed by human resources (HR) in collaboration with agency leaders and managers and integrated with agency strategic plans to identify mission-critical and HC issues. **Timeline: 2nd Qtr FY03 with ongoing activities; 4th Qtr FY03 first HC Plan due with a review to be conducted the 1st Qtr of each FY**

STATUS: FAS has fully adopted the USDA HCP for FY03-07. As part of the communication component, the QAR and Scorecard for the agency was posted on the Human Resources intranet site during the third quarter along with the link to the USDA Human Capital Plan. In addition the agency's Human Capital Council has reviewed the HCP and the Accountability System. FAS has identified the responsible person(s) to facilitate each of the QAR / Scorecard items, thus ensuring full implementation of the HCP.

1.A.2.0 Completed/Ongoing Progressing No Progress

Align human capital plan elements with agency strategic plan/annual performance plans. **Timeline: 1st Qtr FY03 start discussion with ongoing activities**

STATUS: FAS is in the process of finalizing mission related HR initiatives for its 5-Year Strategic Plan and its FY04 and FY05 Annual Performance Plans. In the meantime, many of the HR major initiatives, i.e., Workforce Planning, Succession Planning, Recruitment / Retention Planning, and Implementing Projects continue to support the FAS mission.

1.A.3.0 Completed/Ongoing Progressing No Progress

Set priorities for resources and funding in accordance with the agency human capital plan. **Timeline: 3rd Qtr FY03, review 3rd Qtr of each FY**

STATUS: As a result of the tentative alignment to the FAS Strategic and Annual Performance Plans, HR is positioned to integrate its budget to the resources and investments needed to accomplish agency specific HR initiatives and the associated Implementing Projects. In addition, the activity costs of traditional HR services will be aligned with the mission goals. In utilizing the results of the preliminary Workforce Plan, Human Capital investments for FY05 Budget Year are currently under review.

1.A.4.0 Completed/Ongoing Progressing No Progress

Participate in Departmentwide collaboration efforts by providing representatives for working groups and forums, and sharing best practices. **Timeline: 1st Qtr FY03 with ongoing activities**

STATUS: HR representatives have been provided for USDA HCP development and implementation. Current participation includes the Recruitment Plan, the Workforce Planning Guidance, the Succession Planning Guidance, and e-Training.

2. Workforce Planning and Deployment: Institute a Departmentwide practice of conducting workforce planning that enables the Department and our agencies to efficiently and effectively deploy the workforce, as well as prevent skills gaps.

2.A.1.0 Completed/Ongoing Progressing No Progress

Agency leadership and human resources staff collaborate to conduct workforce planning using the Departmentwide model. **Timeline:** Begin effort in 3rd Qtr FY03; complete 4th Qtr FY03

STATUS: Human Resources completed its preliminary Workforce Analysis in the 3rd Quarter. Using a derivative of the USDA model, HR collaborated with the agencies' Deputy Administrators to identify skills gaps in Mission Critical Occupations (current and future) and to assess the 'bench-strength' of our future leaders. The initial results revealed skills gaps in 9 Mission Critical Occupations and continuity concerns for 8 Leadership Positions. This data is currently being incorporated into Recruitment Plans, Diversity Plans, Training & Development Programs and Retention Plans; and will be used to drive HR Implementing Projects over the next few years.

2.A.2.0 Completed/Ongoing Progressing No Progress

Develop and implement workforce restructuring plans, with program manager involvement, that incorporates competitive sourcing solutions and resource savings related to e-Government efficiencies. **Timeline:** 4th Qtr FY02 with ongoing activities to be completed in 1st Qtr FY07

STATUS: Workforce restructuring is under consideration during the Agency's Strategic Plan enhancements.

2.A.3.0 Completed/Ongoing Progressing No Progress

Provide updates to the Department on restructuring plans. **Timeline:** Begin 4th Qtr FY02, reporting in 1st Qtr FY03, activities to be completed 1st Qtr FY07

STATUS: Restructuring updates have not been requested from the Department in the 3rd Quarter. However, FAS continues to review their organizational structures to identify opportunities for improvement.

3. Accountability System: Ensure USDA human resource programs are strategically aligned, effective, efficient, and in compliance with applicable laws and regulations (e.g., Veteran's Preference Act, Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO), Merit System Principles) and the PMA using a Departmentwide accountability system.

3.A.1.0 Completed/Ongoing Progressing No Progress

Participate in the development of USDA's HRM Accountability Program. **Timeline:** Begin 4th Qtr FY02, completion 1st Qtr FY03

STATUS: FAS continues to provide a representative in the application of the USDA HCP companion document, the Accountability System Plan. A review of this plan is scheduled in the 4th Quarter.

3.A.2.0 Completed/Ongoing Progressing No Progress

Systematically evaluate agency programs using processes, tools, and schedules contained in the USDA Accountability Program. **Timeline:** 2nd Qtr FY03 with ongoing activities

STATUS: FAS has completed the Quarterly Activity Reports and associated Scorecard according to the USDA HCP; and will be communicated through the agency's human capital council and the intranet.

3.A.3.0 Completed/Ongoing Progressing No Progress

Provide quarterly reports via the HC Plan reporting system on progress toward USDA Accountability Program goals and actions (once the reporting system is developed). **Timeline:** 4th Qtr FY02 with ongoing activities

STATUS: FAS has submitted the Quarterly Activity Reports and associated Scorecards according to the USDA HCP.

4. Talent Management: Align recruitment and retention strategies with workforce planning efforts to enhance the effectiveness of these efforts and close critical position and competency gaps.

4.A.1.0 Completed/Ongoing Progressing No Progress

Develop and align agency-specific recruitment and retention plans with workforce planning and deployment plans; focus on mission-critical positions as well as existing and projected competency gaps. **Timeline: 4th Qtr FY03 with a review the 4th Qtr of each successive FY**

STATUS: As a result of a preliminary Workforce Analysis skills gaps for Mission Critical Occupations and continuity strategies for Leadership Positions were identified. This data is currently being incorporated into Recruitment Plans, Diversity Plans, Training & Development Programs and Retention Plans; and will be used to drive agency specific initiatives and HR Implementing Projects over the next few years.

4.A.2.0 Completed/Ongoing Progressing No Progress

Train recruiters and supply the necessary materials to effectively represent the agency and USDA. **Timeline: Began in FY02 with ongoing activities**

STATUS: FAS provided recruitment competency training to members of the FAS Recruitment Committee and the Civil Rights Special Emphasis Program Managers who assist with recruitment outreach activities. HR has developed and distributed the "Make A Strategic Career Move" compact disc as part of its overall Recruitment Plan.

4.A.3.0 Completed/Ongoing Progressing No Progress

Continue to explore and promote the use of HR flexibilities to recruit and retain employees and emphasize planning for their use in the budget cycle. **Timeline: Began in FY02 with ongoing activities**

STATUS: FAS strategically uses available flexibilities to meet its recruitment and retention goals. An assessment of the use of flexibilities will be conducted in 4Q to determine specific actions.

4.A.4.0 Completed/Ongoing Progressing No Progress

Increase the use of senior leaders and program managers in recruiting activities, especially those focused on meeting diversity goals and filling mission-critical and competency-gap positions (e.g., at the university level and PMI program). **Timeline: 3rd Qtr FY03 with ongoing activities**

STATUS: As a result of the Workforce Analysis completed in the 3rd Quarter, senior leaders have identified several recruiting activities to incorporate into the Recruitment and Diversity Plans. For example, HR and program managers will establish relationships with additional agricultural colleges to secure candidates whose skills will help close the skills gaps identified in the Workforce Analysis. FAS also co-hosted a Career Advancement Fair for Employees (CAFÉ) on April 16 where employees received information from agency experts regarding career development tools, mentoring, on-line educational resources, skills assessment, resume writing and interviewing tips. The FAS Recruitment Committee composed of managers and special emphasis program managers will work with HRD to develop the FY 04 Recruitment Plan.

5. Leadership Development and Succession Planning: Ensure leadership continuity and development through workforce planning and analysis, and optimal use of available tools and resources throughout the Department, to better achieve mission requirements.

5.A.1.0 Completed/Ongoing Progressing No Progress

Include the leadership function (i.e., managers, supervisors, and SES cadre) in the workforce planning and analysis process to identify agency-specific position and competency requirements. **Timeline: 2nd Qtr FY03**

STATUS: Human Resources completed its preliminary Workforce Analysis in the 3rd Quarter. Using a derivative of the USDA model, HR collaborated with the agencies' Deputy Administrators to identify skills gaps in Mission Critical Occupations (current and future) and to assess the 'bench-strength' of our future leaders. The initial results revealed skills gaps in 9 Mission Critical Occupations and continuity concerns for 8 Leadership Positions. This

data is currently being incorporated into Recruitment Plans, Diversity Plans, Training & Development Programs and Retention Plans; and will be used to drive HR Implementing Projects over the next few years. In addition, FAS completed the FY03 Washington Placement Plan that assigns returning overseas personnel into DC positions providing developmental opportunities, promotions, etc.

5.A.2.0 Completed/Ongoing Progressing No Progress

Develop agency-specific succession plans using a Departmental framework and toolkit. **Timeline: Begin 4th Qtr FY03, completion 1st Qtr FY04**

STATUS: The Workforce Analysis completed in the 3rd Quarter has identified fundamental succession needs, especially in leadership positions. The Training Plan is under development to include a progressive Leadership Development Program to ensure leadership continuity. The Succession Planning Guidance offered by the Department is under review.

6. Knowledge Management and Employee Development: Ensure that the USDA captures and shares knowledge, and develops employee competence to better perform the Department's mission.

6.A.1.0 Completed/Ongoing Progressing No Progress

Actively participate in the USDSA eGovernment content/knowledge management effort, and implement Department's knowledge management strategy when complete. **Timeline: 2nd Qtr FY03**

STATUS: FAS has a representative on the USDA e-Learning initiative where knowledge management is under consideration.

6.A.2.0 Completed/Ongoing Progressing No Progress

Develop and/or implement a training strategy linked to workforce planning and deployment efforts that addresses standards for technology investments. **Timeline: 4th Qtr FY03**

STATUS: As a result of the Workforce Analysis completed in the 3rd Quarter, the Training Plan is under development to include a progressive Leadership Development Program that ensures leadership continuity. In addition, skills gaps in the Mission Critical Occupations will be addressed, in part, by enhancing existing programs and developing new ones. A FAS representative on the USDA E-Learning team will coordinate IT investments where applicable. In addition, FAS has had annual skills assessments for each employee, linked to the IDP's, since 1997. The skills descriptions are updated as necessary, especially in light of new technology acquisitions and new e-gov mandates prior to each year. The aggregated data from the assessments is reviewed in creating the annual training plan.

6.A.3.0 Completed/Ongoing Progressing No Progress

Participate in and support implementation of the ongoing eGovernment enterprise-wide efforts to establish a learning management system; implement the Department's Learning Management System (LMS) when available. **Timeline: Began in FY02 with ongoing activities**

STATUS: FAS has participated in the e-learning team's work since the outset. Because of its size, FAS is not an early adopter of the LMS, but has asked to be included in the design revision team. We are also beginning the process of examining vendors for e-learning content in order to decide whether and which licenses to purchase through Go-learn for such training.

6.A.4.0 Completed/Ongoing Progressing No Progress

Assess the impact of agency training strategies on closing competency gaps and meeting business goals. **Timeline: Begin in 4th Qtr FY04, with ongoing activities**

STATUS: Skills gaps of Mission Critical Occupations and continuity concerns for Leadership Positions have been identified as a result of the FY03 Workforce Analysis. The formulae to determine and measure progress regarding Skills Gap Rate and Leadership Pool Ratio are in development.

7. Performance Management: Ensure the performance appraisal system is aligned with Departmental/organization mission accomplishment and is linked to employee development and recognition programs, ultimately improving individual and organizational performance.

7.A.1.0 Completed/Ongoing Progressing No Progress

Link the performance management system (including performance appraisal, awards and recognition, and developmental needs) with organizational mission accomplishment for all employees starting with managers. When the linkage is established, educate and/or communicate to employees about the linkage. **Timeline: Begin 4th Qtr FY03, completion 1st Qtr FY04 with ongoing activities**

STATUS: FAS implemented the revised SES Performance Appraisal System. FAS SES position incumbents are reviewing the strategic plan to develop specific Performance Goals and Indicators. This effort is in support of the Department's OBPA initiative, Program and Performance Integration.

7.A.2.0 Completed/Ongoing Progressing No Progress

Work with OHRM to assess the effectiveness of the agency performance management system (including performance appraisal, awards and recognition programs, and related development strategies), and ensure the system addresses performance distinctions. **Timeline: Begin 4th Qtr FY03, completion 2nd Qtr FY04**

STATUS: FAS has two distinct performance management systems, one for the Foreign Service, one for the Civil Service. Because management was unhappy with the existing Civil Service system it is has determined to change to a pass-fail system through which it expects to be able to give better feedback to its employees, ultimately providing better performance distinctions. Impact and implementation must be negotiated with the bargaining unit.

8. Diversity Management, Equal Employment Opportunity, and Civil Rights: Ensure a diverse workforce with the necessary skills to accomplish the USDA mission and strategic goals.

8.A.1.0 Completed/Ongoing Progressing No Progress

Ensure that diversity, civil rights, and EEO are properly aligned with and incorporated, as appropriate, into all strategic planning initiatives and annual performance plans. **Timeline: 1st Qtr FY04**

STATUS: FAS OCR has a presence in the FAS Strategic Plan and the FY03 Annual Performance Plan with appropriate Performance Goals and Indicators. The FAS Recruitment Plan development includes input from the agency's OCR.

8.A.2.0 Completed/Ongoing Progressing No Progress

Incorporate diversity targets in workforce planning; continue to focus on attracting, hiring, developing, and advancing applicants and employees who are members of under-represented and socially disadvantaged groups. Ensure compliance with civil rights and EEO laws, merit systems principles, veteran's preference, and prohibited personnel practices. **Timeline: 1st Qtr FY04**

STATUS: No change in 3rd Quarter. Diversity targets have been identified by OCR and the RCLF/CLF will be the common metric. In the development of the Workforce Plan, Recruitment Plan and Affirmative Employment Plan, appropriate data are assessed routinely as are the compliance factors.

8.A.3.0 Completed/Ongoing Progressing No Progress

Participate in Departmentwide information collection and sharing to facilitate compiling and disclosing data used in assessing compliance with civil rights, EEO, and related reporting requirements. **Timeline: 2nd Qtr FY03**

STATUS: FAS participates fully in Departmentwide information collection and data sharing as required. For example, Department-provided RCLF/CLF data is distributed to key leadership by HR on a routine basis to focus on the agencies' employee demographics, especially diversity.

9. Labor and Employee Relations and Conflict Management: Prevent and successfully resolve employee disputes and maintain effective working relationships with labor organizations.

9.A.1.0 Completed/Ongoing Progressing No Progress

Incorporate basic Labor Management Relations (LMR) and labor contract administration training into new supervisor training or new labor contract orientation programs for supervisors and managers. **Timeline: Begun in FY02, completion 1st Qtr FY05**

STATUS: FAS provides LR training to new supervisors and provides as needed or as requested training to managers, i.e., HR orientation to new appointees. 'Changes to labor agreements' training is generally communicated by HR specialists to the individual manager. FAS makes labor relations training available to all supervisors, at least annually, through an inhouse course offered by a specialized vendor. It also provides a short training for Foreign Service Officers returning from overseas duty who will take on supervisory positions. When new collective bargaining agreements are negotiated, either training or memoranda explaining the changes are provided to managers.

9.A.2.0 X Completed/Ongoing Progressing No Progress

Establish an agency LMR strategy and plan that articulates program goals and actions the agency will take to address LMR issues and obligations that may arise in conjunction with agency program changes. **Timeline: Began FY02, completion 1st Qtr FY04**

STATUS: Material changes, if any, to the labor agreements relative to program changes are identified and communicated to management through HR.

9.A.3.0 Completed/Ongoing Progressing X No Progress

Participate in the development of the standardized electronic dispute record system and its eventual implementation. **Timeline: Begin 4th Qtr FY03, completion 3rd Qtr FY04**

STATUS: Departmental project has not begun at this time. FAS will have a representative on the developmental team.