

EMPLOYEE ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING SUMMARY

Monday, November 3, 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Cafeteria Glass Conference Room, Rampton Complex

PRESENT: Carlos Braceras, Executive Director
Shane Marshall, Deputy Director
Amber Mortensen, Region Two
Becky Hjelm, Project Development
Brandi Trujillo, Operations
Carlos Rodriguez, HR Manager
Cherissa Wood, Operations
Chris Ransom, Region One
Cindy Manchego, Administration
Daniel Allred, Region Four
Denece Sheppick, Region Two
Ivan Hartle, Project Development
Jake Brown, Region Two
Jason Davis, Operations Director
Liz Olschewski, Administration
Rob Wight, Construction Director
Ryan Halverson, Region One
Tawnya Lang, Operations
Tonia Wall, Region Three
Diane Josie, Executive Assistant

The meeting began at 1:05 p.m. Shane thanked everyone for their attendance. All members of the group introduced themselves.

1. FOLLOW UP ITEMS

Performance Award Report

ASI Limits

Discretionary Increase Report

Shane distributed a hand out to the attendees. He reviewed the information on the handout. He said Region One and Project Development were short on some of the awards because of the budget. There are a little over 1,600 employees in the Department.

2. OVERTIME

Carlos introduced this item. He asked if anyone remembered who suggested this discussion item. One of the EAC members clarified the question. She said they were getting complaints

from contractors because the inspectors were being split up. Some asked about starting the work week differently. Another issue is shift differential.

Rob said he knows there are a few jobs where there may be different inspectors. There is not a policy. They have discussed overlapping shifts in some cases. He said if that's not happening, it needs to happen at the Resident Engineer level. They may need to run split shifts. He said methodologies need to be developed to address this issue. Right now there is not a direction other than there needs to be some hand off. The EAC member said that doesn't work very well. Another EAC member said some of the inspectors are working very long hours. Rob said he thinks this may be happening on a specific type of project. He said he thinks there is a concern that needs to be addressed and they need to talk about methods to make this process smoother. The EAC member said she thinks the newly expanded crew size will help address the situation. Rob will talk with the EAC member later to get further information regarding this issue.

One EAC member said he thinks the Department is losing a lot of experience. He said the Trans Tech IIIs and IVs feel it's their responsibility to train the new Trans Techs. Rob said Lori Economy is the new Maintenance trainer and she has some great ideas such as a mentoring program and just-in-time training.

Shane mentioned the high turnover rate contributes to this issue. He said it will take leadership on their part to resolve the situation.

Carlos Rodriguez addressed the issue regarding the start of the work week. The work week starts on Saturday at 12:01 a.m. It would be difficult to change that. DHRM made an agreement with the Department of Labor several years ago regarding the start of the work week.

Carlos Rodriguez said UDOT has policies regarding on-call for snow removal. One EAC member said the person who is not scheduled but called into work should be compensated differently than one who is scheduled to work the weekend. There is shift differential for night work. A couple of EAC members wanted to know why there isn't shift differential for weekend work. Shane said when discussing this question, they didn't think of this scenario. He said he and Carlos will give it more thought.

FUTURE DISCUSSION ITEM: Carlos and Shane will address shift differential for weekend work at a future meeting.

Carlos said another issue was paying overtime. Carlos Rodriguez said some people would come into the office to get overtime when it wasn't an emergency. One EAC member said a concern he heard was that when employees can't work overtime they are told to hire a consultant which costs twice as much. Shane said when they addressed the overtime issue a few years ago the intent was to manage the overtime rather than to eliminate it altogether. However, the message turned into "no overtime." Carlos pointed out it's important to make good decisions with the public's money. One EAC member said the station supervisors determine how critical an issue is before addressing it if overtime is involved. Carlos said it's important to ask those questions and document the reasons for the overtime.

Carlos said he thinks UDOT needs to have the call-outs for snow removal from the Utah Highway Patrol funneled through a decision maker at the TOC.

3. COMMUNICATING MEETING INFORMATION TO GROUPS

One EAC member asked the other members how they are communicating the information from these meetings to their groups. One member said she has the information in Google drive for the employees in her group to access, and the minutes are posted by the break rooms. Another member said they have created a Google form that employees can use to submit items for the meetings.

One member said he shares the information from the meetings with their Region Director. He said he gets anonymous letters with issues to be addressed. Another member said she sends out the agendas and meeting minutes.

One of the EAC members said a positive thing is that employees' questions are being answered.

Carlos asked if setting up a way to submit questions anonymously would be a good idea. The EAC member said they are capable of doing that with the Google form they've created.

ACTION ITEM: The EAC member will send a copy of his Google form to Carlos and Shane to review.

One of the EAC members explained the Interchange program. It's a platform used in team and project environments to communicate ideas and track resources. This program could be useful in sharing information to employees.

Jason Davis said there are Operations employees in every area of the state, Complex, MTF, and Aeronautics buildings. He said it is challenging for them to get the information out to the different areas. The EAC members from Operations said they use email to get the information out to the employees.

4. TEAM BUILDING AND MORALE ISSUES

Carlos wanted to know the status of morale and if there are ways to make improvements. The members said they think morale is gradually increasing. They agreed it's very important.

One EAC member said it's harder in the Regions. The loss of overtime was a big issue because of the low wages. The changes implemented by the Legislature have a big impact as well. He said employees are seeing a lot of positive things from these meetings.

One EAC member felt that Annual Conference helped improve morale. She heard positive comments from her group.

Carlos mentioned that employees can meet with him or Shane to discuss issues at any time. They can contact Diane or Monica to schedule a meeting.

One EAC member said one benefit she appreciates is being able to have a flexible schedule. She thinks we need to focus on the positive things. The group discussed some of the other benefits such as the sick leave bank, the amount of annual and sick leave, and tuition reimbursement. Shane mentioned if we make promises to our employees such as flexible schedules and training opportunities, we need to be sure we can follow through.

One EAC member mentioned the difference in wages between FTEs and TLs. He asked why TLs can't be paid the same as FTEs. Another member said you get a better quality TL if you pay them better. Some candidates get paid more in unemployment than working as a TL. Carlos and Shane said they thought it would cause a morale issue if TLs were paid as much as FTEs. The EAC member pointed out the difference is that FTEs get paid benefits and TLs don't get paid benefits.

Jason said he has been told that our new hires don't get the same benefits. He asked if there should be a different pay scale for new employees.

Carlos Rodriguez said they can look at the wages for TLs and consider what they want to do.

5. TRAINING AND CONFERENCES

One EAC member said that some of the software purchased by the Project Development group has included free training. However, the training is held out of state.

Shane explained the new out of state travel approval process. The group leaders (Randy Park, Jason Davis, and Cory Pope) approve the out of state travel for their groups. Shane approves the out of state travel for the Regions. He said employees need to justify the reason for the training to their leaders. Carlos said we want to be sure we don't send too many employees on out of state travel.

One EAC member said she got a question from someone in her group that needed to travel out of state for training to maintain a certification required for their job. The travel was denied. Jason said a question he asks when out of state travel is requested is if there are other locations that are closer or if the training is available on line.

Jason said the leaders are responsible to report to Carlos and Shane what training employees have attended and why on a quarterly basis.

6. LEARNING FROM OTHER STATES

An EAC member mentioned in-state training. Employees from Regions Three and Four don't get to see as much as Region Two. He thinks the Department would benefit if we could get some of the supervisors from the southern part of Utah to come to Regions One and Two. Jason said the area supervisors meet each year to share information.

An EAC member mentioned the DTS people who work with her group and the training they

need. Carlos said we need to incorporate the need for DTS employee training into the UDOT/DTS Service Level Agreement that is signed on a yearly basis. Carlos mentioned these requests should be included in the PMT meetings.

7. DEPARTMENT SAFETY INITIATIVE

Jason referred to the safety initiative that Carlos mentioned in his speech at the UDOT Annual Conference. The decision was made to modify the Zero Fatalities goal to zero crashes, injuries, and fatalities. In order to accomplish this, statewide Behavior Based Safety (BBS) training will be conducted for employees. Tim Rodriguez has been working hard to set up the training for all the groups. Jason said the largest number of workers compensation claims come from office employees.

He said a test group of employees attended the eight hours of training. The test group said all employees need to be under the same rules and concept. All employees need to know the safety protocol for all areas. He said the intent of the training is to foster a culture where everyone is responsible for safety.

The Department is looking at a reduction of 29 percent in injury rates after the first year, and 72 percent fewer injuries after five years. Carlos said he attended a safety forum and heard that 80 percent of injuries occur at home. He hopes this training will help at home as well as at work.

8. LEARNING ORGANIZATION

Shane said they are trying to fully develop UDOT U and combine maintenance and construction training. They have decided to make learning a priority for the organization. They will hire a Chief Learning Officer who will report to Shane. They want to develop a learning curriculum for each position in the Department. Their goal is to send a message to employees that they care about their learning and success.

9. FUTURE DISCUSSION ITEMS

Carlos asked the group for any future discussion items. He said any of the EAC members can send them to Diane.

Flexible Schedules

This item was not addressed during this meeting. It will be addressed at the next meeting.

Performance Plans

Supervisors and managers don't feel like the current Performance Plans work. They don't like the pass/fail option because it doesn't help to motivate employees.

Team Building Exercise

What opportunities do we have for team building activities, such as retreats, rope courses, etc.

Employee Opportunities

This item is to address an issue where an employee has earned a business degree, but is pigeon-holed in Maintenance because of lack of experience. UDOT encourages employees to get their education and move around but this employee feels it doesn't happen.

The meeting adjourned at 3:05 p.m.