

U.S. Office of Personnel Management's 2014 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey Results for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

The Office of Personnel Management's Employee Viewpoint Survey results are used to gauge the attitudes and perceptions of employees in key work experience areas that drive satisfaction and commitment, ultimately boosting morale, productivity and capacity for mission success. The EPA views EVS results as a crucial and ongoing input to our broad human capital planning processes; results are used to create agency action plans focused on improving the EPA's work environment.

I. HOW THE SURVEY WAS CONDUCTED

OPM administered its 2014 Employee Viewpoint Survey from April 29 to June 6, 2014, via email invitations that provided individual survey links to participants. OPM's sampling method surveyed 7,172 (approximately 47%) of the agency's full and part-time, permanent employees who were onboard as of December 31, 2013.

II. RESPONSE RATE

Of the 7,172 employees receiving an invitation, 3,863 responded, resulting in a response rate of 54%. The robust response rate and low margin of error (plus or minus 1%) provide a high degree of confidence in the final results.

III. INTERPRETATION

Overall, the results garnered from the 2014 EVS confirmed that the agency is holding steady after a 2013 drop attributed to fiscal constraints, sequestration and furloughs that appeared to have negative consequences for morale and productivity. Some challenges identified through this year's survey still relate to budget constraints, such as insufficient resources to accomplish the agency's mission and enable our agency to hire, develop and retain skilled employees. Despite these challenges, the EPA still performed well in comparison to government wide averages, especially in terms of Work/Life programs, such as Alternate Work Schedules and providing meaningful work related to the agency's mission.

A. 2014 EVS: HIGHEST PERCENT POSITIVE ITEMS

For 2014, 27 questions had positive ratings of 65% or more, which OPM categorizes as agency *strengths*. Positive ratings are a sum of all positive categories: Strongly Agree & Agree or Very Satisfied & Satisfied.

5 HIGHEST PERCENT POSITIVE ITEMS

| EVS Question | EPA Average | | 2014 Federal Average |
|--|-------------|------|----------------------------|
| | 2013 | 2014 | |
| 7. When needed I am willing to put in the extra effort to get a job done. | 95% | 96% | 96% |
| 50. In the last 6 months, my supervisor has talked with me about my performance. | 87% | 88% | 77% |
| 8. I am constantly looking for ways to do my job better. | 88% | 88% | 90% |
| 13. The work that I do is important. | 86% | 85% | 90% |
| 28. How would you rate the overall quality of work done by your work unit? | 87% | 85% | 82% |

B. 2014 EVS HIGHEST PERCENT NEGATIVE ITEMS

Eleven questions had negative ratings of 35% or more, which OPM categorizes as *challenges*. Negative ratings are a sum of all negative categories: Strongly Disagree & Disagree or Very Dissatisfied & Dissatisfied.

5 HIGHEST PERCENT NEGATIVE ITEMS

| EVS Question | EPA Average | | 2014 Federal Average |
|---|-------------|------|----------------------------|
| | 2013 | 2014 | |
| 33. Pay raises depend on how well employees perform their jobs. | 56% | 59% | 54% |
| 9. I have sufficient resources to get my job done. | 51% | 49% | 39% |
| 23. In my work unit, steps are taken to deal with a poor performer who can't or will not improve. | 46% | 48% | 45% |
| 21. My work unit is able to recruit people with the right skills. | 47% | 48% | 33% |
| 67. How satisfied are you with your opportunity to get a better job in your organization? | 41% | 44% | 39% |

C. LARGEST INCREASES AND DECREASES SINCE 2013

While a number of EVS questions decreased by one or two points during this year's survey, results generally remained steady from 2013. The largest 2014 increases and decreases are shown below. Understanding these aspects of the survey allows the agency to recognize improvements and areas for future attention.

| Increased the Most | 2013 EPA | 2014 EPA | +/- |
|---|---------------------|---------------------|------------|
| Considering everything, how satisfied are you with your pay? (Q.70) | 55% | 62% | +7 |
| When needed I am willing to put in the extra effort to get a job done. (Q. 7) | 95% | 96% | +1 |
| In the last six months, my supervisor has talked with me about performance? (Q.50) | 87% | 88% | +1 |
| I know what is expected of me on the job. (Q. 6) | 75% | 76% | +1 |
| Decreased the Most | 2013 EPA | 2014 EPA | +/- |
| My organization's senior leaders maintain high standards of honesty and integrity. (Q. 54) | 53% | 45% | -8 |
| Physical conditions (noise, temperature, lighting, cleanliness) allow employees to perform their jobs well. (Q. 14) | 73% | 68% | -5 |
| My senior leaders generate high levels of motivation and commitment in the workplace. (Q. 53) | 36% | 31% | -5 |
| The workforce has the job-relevant knowledge and skills necessary to accomplish organizational goals. (Q. 29) | 68% | 63% | -5 |
| Supervisors work well with employees of different backgrounds. (Q. 55) | 65% | 60% | -5 |

D. 2014 EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT INDEX

The *Employee Engagement Index* defines an engaged employee as “...one who is immersed in the content of the job and energized to spend extra effort in job performance.” The index looks at questions that cover most, if not all, of the conditions likely to build employee engagement (e.g., leadership, opportunity to use skills, supportive supervisors). The Index identifies three subcomponents components that lead to an engaged workforce: Leaders Lead, Supervisors and Intrinsic Work Experiences (see chart below).

| | <i>EPA</i> | | <i>Federal Average</i> | |
|----------------------------------|-------------|-------------|------------------------|-------------|
| | 2013 | 2014 | 2013 | 2014 |
| Employee Engagement Index | 64% | 63% | 64% | 63% |
| Leaders Lead | 50% | 47% | 53% | 50% |
| Supervisors | 74% | 74% | 70% | 71% |
| Intrinsic Work Experiences | 68% | 68% | 69% | 68% |

E. GLOBAL SATISFACTION INDEX

OPM created the *Global Satisfaction Index* to provide a more comprehensive indicator of employees’ overall work satisfaction. The index is a combination of employees’ satisfaction with their jobs, pay and organizations and is based on the results from four EVS questions (see chart below).

| | <i>EPA</i> | | <i>Federal Average</i> | |
|---|-------------|-------------|------------------------|-------------|
| | 2013 | 2014 | 2013 | 2014 |
| Global Satisfaction Index | 60% | 60% | 59% | 59% |
| I recommend my organization as a good place to work.* | 66% | 63% | 63% | 62% |
| How satisfied are you with your job?* | 63% | 61% | 65% | 64% |
| How satisfied are you with your organization?* | 55% | 52% | 56% | 55% |
| How satisfied are you with your pay? | 55% | 62% | 54% | 56% |

* One of the three questions used to compute the Partnership for Public Service’s Best Places to Work in the Federal Government rankings.