



COALITION OF FEDERAL OMBUDSMAN

MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Date/Time: February 11, 2015, 1:30pm – 2:30pm

Location: Conference Call Only

Agenda:

1. Guest Speakers David Pritzker, Deputy General Counsel and Connie Voglemann, Attorney Advisor from Administrative Conference of the United States Office of the Chairman, (ACUS)
2. Interagency Alternative Dispute Resolution Working Group (IADRWG) update
3. Upcoming training and opportunities

Highlights:

1. Bill Mauer, COFO vice chair opened up the meeting introducing the guest speakers. David Pritzker, Deputy General Counsel and Connie Voglemann, Attorney Advisor from Administrative Conference of the United States Office of the Chairman, (ACUS) are proposing to conduct a study of federal ombudsman [or the role of federal ombudsman] and make recommendations to the President, Congress, departments and agencies. The purpose of this study is twofold, the first is ensuring that the previous recommendations made in the ACUS report “*The Ombudsman a Primer for Federal Agencies,*” over two decades ago are valid now and the second is to seek out best practices in the federal ombudsman community that impact the efficiency of government. Mr. Pritzker and Ms. Vogel are currently in the process of reaching out to the ombudsman community for feedback and suggestions to inform the research proposal that will be put forth for approval to the ACUS governing board in February / March 2015.

During the meeting, the following ideas were provided as possible areas for research.

- How do ombudsman offices identify systemic concerns?
- What are the do's and don't's - “lines of reporting” for an ombudsman office?
- How to quantify success of the Ombudsman program? (Costs benefit analysis.)

A working group consisting of representatives from various ombudsman organizations - IOA, USOA, ABA ADR and Ombuds group, COFO has formed to bring forth suggestions to present to ACUS for their research. Wendy Kamenshine, will convene the working group.

2. Albert Conerly (COFO member and liaison to the Interagency Alternative Dispute Resolution Working Group, IADRWG) provided an update to the group on a presentation

that was part of the *ADR Lunchtime Series* - “Unconscious Bias in the ADR Process (January 29, 2015).” The speakers Charles Petit and Dr. Lester Hoffman mentioned we all have biases, which we are often unaware of and as a result these unconscious biases impact behavior in the workplace. A few considerations were provided to address unconscious bias. One can first acknowledge that we all have biases, second is to increase self awareness and pay attention, and finally, since biases can impact or appear to impact decision-making in the workplace be transparent about factors in decision-making and communicate about processes used. For more information <http://www.adr.gov/pdf/jan2015-flyer.pdf>

3. Upcoming opportunities
 - a. International Ombudsman Association conference will be April 19 – 22, 2015 in Atlanta, Georgia For more information <http://www.ombudsassociation.org/home.aspx>

Attendees (by phone only):

Emily Albertson, Federal Reserve Board
Mollie Berg, National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency
Andrea Brown, Department of State
Albert Conerly, Department of Health and Human Services, FDA
Joanne Dea, USDA
Scott Deyo, National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency
Tasha Fleming, Department of Justice, BP
Steve Gadziola, Department of Homeland Security, FEMA
Claire Heffernan, Department of Homeland Security, TSA
Wendy Kamenshine, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau
Mark Kashden, Center for Disease Control, OCOO/OCG
Bridgette Kilkenny, Treasury
Noreen Kinnavy, International Broadcasting Bureau
Marcia Larkins, Department of Human and Health Services, FDA
Matthew Lascell, Department of Defense, NCIS
Mona Lease, Student
Karen Leichtnam, D.C. Superior Court
Katie Manderson, Department of State
Bill Mauer, Department of Energy
Carrie McGuire, Office of Government Information Services, NARA
Tracy McNeil, U.S. Securities Exchange Commission
Ruth McWilliams, National Aerospace and Space Administration
Celeste Merrix, Department of Homeland Security, FLETC
Chauncenette Morey, Department of Justice
David Pritzker, Administrative Conference of the United States

Sara Roberts, Department of Homeland Security, TSA
Julie Smith, Department of State
King Stablein, U.S> Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Connie Vogelmann, Administrative Conference of the United States
Guy Weber, Department of Defense, NGA
Diane Wellborne, City of Dayton
Lisa Witzler, Department of Health and Human Services, NIH
Kahill Palmer, ANII Group

Minutes prepared by: Andrea Brown and Noreen Kinnavy