External Review of “Project Aim 2020” for the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission

BACKGROUND

In June 2014, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) embarked on Project Aim 2020 to enhance the agility, performance, efficiency, and effectiveness of the agency. Project Aim 2020 is being conducted by a team of NRC staff whose purpose is to provide recommendations to the Commission for improving the current and projected performance of the NRC. The Project also seeks to provide more concrete and specific projections of the workload for the agency five years out under a range of scenarios, and to recommend appropriate agency resource levels and workforce staffing that align with the projected future workload. These improvements will enhance the NRC’s ability to plan and execute its mission. The team will establish the foundation to improve NRC’s operational excellence, agility, and culture, while also refining the basis for agency planning through 2020 and beyond.

In August 2014, the Project Aim 2020 Team began conducting an agency-wide assessment, which included a survey, interviews of internal and external stakeholders and the facilitation of 24 focus groups with NRC staff. Each focus group reviewed future scenarios to identify gaps, obstacles, redundancies, and processes to improve the NRC’s agility, effectiveness, and efficiency. Using the information gathered from the focus groups, survey and other interviews, the NRC team is developing a set of strategic recommendations that will be incorporated into an implementation roadmap. The recommendations and roadmap will be part of the “Project Aim 2020 Report” that will be submitted to the Commission at the end of December 2014. The Academy was selected by NRC to evaluate both the NRC’s project process used to prepare the report, and also the report itself.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

NRC contracted with the Academy to produce two reports. The first will be an assessment of the NRC Project Aim 2020 Team’s process to execute the agency-wide assessment, and suggest how the agency might enhance such efforts in the future. The second report will evaluate the final “Project Aim 2020 Report,” which details the NRC Project Aim 2020 Team’s recommendations and implementation roadmap to enhance NRC’s ability to plan and execute its mission while adapting in a timely, proactive, effective, and efficient manner to a dynamic environment. The Academy study team will receive input from six individuals who will participate in a Focus Group.
FOCUS GROUP

Dan Blair,* President and CEO, National Academy of Public Administration (since 2011). Former positions with the U.S. Postal Regulatory Commission: Chairman, Commissioner; former positions with the U.S. Office of Personnel Management: Deputy Director, Acting Director; Senior Counsel to Senator Fred Thompson, U.S. Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs; Staff Director for Representative John McHugh, House of Representatives, Subcommittee on the Postal Service; Minority General Counsel, House of Representatives, Committee on Post Office and Civil Service.

Jonathan Breul,* Adjunct Professor, Georgetown University (since 1996). Former Executive Director, IBM Center for The Business of Government, and Partner, IBM Global Business Services; Former positions with U.S. Office of Management and Budget: Senior Advisor to the Director for Management; Chief, Evaluation and Planning Branch, General Management Division; Senior Management Analyst. Former Senior Grants Policy Specialist, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Management and Budget, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.


Rusty Mikel, Expertise in applying scenario thinking and strategic planning to global issues; programmer and systems analyst before joining NSA as a cryptanalyst; Booz Allen & Hamilton supporting NSA; IIT Research Institute; TASC supporting intelligence agencies and the Director of National Intelligence on alternative analysis and strategic thinking.

Nancy Potok,* Deputy Director, Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce (since 2003). Former Associate Director, Demographic Programs, U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce; Deputy Undersecretary for Economic Affairs, Economics and Statistics Administration, U.S Department of Commerce; Chief Operating Officer, McManis & Monsalve Associates. Former Senior Vice President and Director, Economics, Labor and Population Department, National Opinion Research Center (NORC); Former positions with the U.S. Census Bureau: Principal Associate Director and Chief Financial Officer, Associate Director for Administration/Controller. Former Deputy Assistant Director for Finance and Budget, Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts; Budget Examiner, U.S. Office of Management and Budget; Presidential Management Intern, U.S. Department of Transportation; Staff Intern, Senate Transportation Appropriation Subcommittee, U.S. Senate.

Myra Shiplett,* Distinguished Fellow, Project on National Security Reform and President, RandolphMorgan Consulting, LLC; Senior Consultant, Bluelaw International; Senior Consultant, KnowledgeBank, Inc. (since 2010). Former Project Director and Senior Consultant, National Academy of Public Administration; Director, Center for Human Resources Management, National Academy of Public Administration; Director, Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts; Director of Administration, Federal Housing Finance Board; Associate Director for Passport Services and Associate Director for Human Resources, Department of State; Assistant Director for National Security and International Affairs, Office of Personnel Management; Director of Personnel; Federal Trade Commission; Staff member, Norfolk Naval Shipyard in Portsmouth, VA, U.S. Department of the Navy.

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