

**Council of Federal Executive Secretariats**  
**January Council Meeting**  
**January 10, 2012**  
**General Services Administration**  
**1275 First Street NE, Room 201**

**Committee members present:** See below.

**Others present:** Cynthia Metzler, GSA Chief Administrative Services Officer; Bob Stafford, GSA Tenant Solutions Director

**Welcoming remarks.** 9:15 a.m. Eric Wachter, chair of the Council of Federal Executive Secretariats for 2012, welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the year, thanked Tracy Catoe from the Department of Education for her leadership as 2011 chair, thanked GSA for serving as host of the January meeting and introduced Eleni Martin, vice chair of the council.

**Welcome/introduction.** 9:20 a.m. Martin thanked everyone for coming to GSA and introduced Metzler. Metzler welcomed the council to GSA and thanked them for all the great work that they do. Martin then introduced Stafford, the keynote speaker. Stafford serves as the tenant solutions director at GSA and on the 1800 F Street transformation team. This team is working on transforming GSA's F Street headquarters. Two-thirds of the building is under construction, and it is being designed to function as a mobile work space with 50 percent less space. A building that held 2,000 people now will hold 4,000. GSA is a leader in telework, which also will help in this regard.

During the question-and-answer discussion, Stafford explained that while travel and vacation time can be planned, they cannot plan for sick time when it comes to planning for space needs and that it is one of the factors they are taking into consideration. He also talked about how one of the big factors in this process is the human factor, in that employees who are used to particular space will be transitioning into shared space. If GSA cannot complete its mission and if employees cannot complete their work, the project will not be a success.

**Best practice – interagency transfer letters.** 10:10 a.m. Wachter initiated a group discussion about the process for transferring White House referrals to another agency and other correspondence to another agency. After the discussion, Wachter said he would type up a written policy, which is attached, that summarized the discussion. The group would review it prior to the February meeting and would amend it, approve it or both at the February meeting.

**Council committees.** 10:35 a.m. After break the council reconvened to discuss the establishment of committees to assist and guide the council in its work this year. The council decided on four committees: membership, plain writing, technology and website. Members expressed interest in joining certain committees by signing a list that was distributed. Wachter said he would email the members further information about the committees.

**White House update.** 10:45 a.m.

**Old business/new business.** 11 a.m. Wachter reminded the group that the February meeting would be at the Red Cross and asked for a volunteers to host the March meeting. Christine Brown said that USAID would most likely be able to host but would confirm with Wachter later.

The council decided that the best practice for the February meeting would be on plain writing, and a few members praised Katherine Spivey's presentation and requested that she present on plain writing. Martin said she would like into Spivey's availability.

Peter Lee from the Department of Treasury offered that Treasury probably could host in April or May. Wachter said that he would leave that for the membership committee to determine.

The council decided to move the November meeting from November 6 because it is Election Day. The November meeting will be held on November 8 instead.

**Open floor.** 11:25 a.m. Tony Waterloo from the Department of Labor queried the council about how the members handle the processing of invitations, whether the executive secretariats do this or whether the political staff in the scheduling or other offices process them. After some discussion there was uncertainty about the records retention schedule for invitations. Wachter said he would find and answer and share with the council at the February meeting.

**Adjourn.** 11:30 a.m.

**Council of Federal Executive Secretariats  
January Council Meeting Attendees**

| <u>First Name</u> | <u>Last Name</u> | <u>Agency</u> | <u>Position</u> |
|-------------------|------------------|---------------|-----------------|
|-------------------|------------------|---------------|-----------------|

|           |                  |             |   |
|-----------|------------------|-------------|---|
| Patrice   | Allen-Gifford    | DHS         | Associate Executive Secretary                     |
| David     | Aten             | IRS         |   |
| Gloria    | Barrett          | DOL         | Senior Analyst                                    |
| Vivian    | Beamon           | DOJ/EDUST   | Management & Program Analyst                      |
| Dynna     | Bigby            | FDA/ES      | Program Manager                                   |
| Ann       | Brewer           | NIH/HHS     | Director, Executive Secretariat                   |
| Christine | Brown            | USAID       | Lead Correspondence Analyst                       |
| Michael   | Bruhn            | DOD         | Executive Secretary                               |
| Dennis    | Bumpass          | SBA         | Executive Secretary                               |
| Raychel   | Bush             | NCTC        | Deputy Executive Secretariat                      |
| Gemma     | Button           | VA          | Deputy Executive Secretary                        |
| Tracy     | Catoe            | DOEd        | Deputy Director, CCCU                             |
| Michael   | Coogan           | DOE         | Writer/Editor                                     |
| Shileta   | Cox              | DOE/WH      | Policy Analyst                                    |
| Jennifer  | Epps             | GSA         | Congressional Correspondence Specialist           |
| Ron       | Etheridge        | SBA         | Records Management                                |
| Octavia   | Gorham-Greenhill | DOE         | Policy Analyst                                    |
| Luke      | Harman           | Treasury    | Correspondence Analyst                            |
| Marjorie  | Harter           | USDA        | Sr. Writer - Editor                               |
| Marcia    | Hines            | DOJ         | Records Manager                                   |
| Mary      | Jefferson        | FAA         | Director, Executive Secretariat                   |
| Crystal   | Jones            | WHO         | Records Analyst                                   |
| Zina      | Kornegay         | ATF         | Executive Secretary                               |
| Bennie    | Lawson           | DOD         | Chief Correspondence Mgt.                         |
| Peter     | Lee              | Treasury    | Interim Deputy Executive Secretary                |
| Galen     | Main             | White House | Assistant Director, Agency Liaison                |
| Eleni     | Martin           | GSA         | Director, Executive Secretariat                   |
| Jason     | Monroe           | SBA         | Team Leader                                       |
| Pat       | Morgan           | HUD         | Chief, Correspondence Branch, Executive Secretary |
| Diane     | Reinke           | HHS/OIG     | Writer - Editor                                   |
| Paulette  | Saunders         | VA          | Chief Correspondences                             |
| Jynell    | Spriggs          | IRS         | Chief Correspondence Officer                      |
| Pat       | Street           | MCC         | Executive Secretary                               |
| Andrew    | Tarpgaard        | FAA         | Team Leader                                       |
| Joseph    | Tezak            | DHS/CBD     | Director, Executive Secretariat                   |
| Sheaya    | Thomas           | DOJ         | Analyst/Executive Secretary                       |
| Mike      | Tropauer         | CDC         | Deputy Executive Secretary                        |
| Eric      | Wachter          | EPA         | Director, Executive Secretariat                   |
| Tony      | Waterloo         | DOL         | Supervisor of Operation                           |
| Sharnett  | Willis           | EPA         | Staff Assistant                                   |

**Council of Federal Executive Secretariats  
February Council Meeting  
February 7, 2012  
American Red Cross National Headquarters  
430 17<sup>th</sup> Street, NW  
Board of Governors Hall**

**Council members present:** See below.

**Others present:** Linda C. Mathes, Chief Executive Officer, American Red Cross National Capital Region. Katherine Spivey, Plain Writing Launcher, General Services Administration.

**Welcoming remarks.** 9:15 a.m. Eric Wachter, chair of the Council of Federal Executive Secretariats, welcomed everyone to the February meeting, thanked Mike Robbins from the American Red Cross and thanked the American Red Cross for serving as hosts for the meeting.

**Welcome/introduction.** 9:20 a.m. Robins welcomed the council to the American Red Cross National Headquarters and introduced Mathes.

**Keynote Speaker.** 9:21 a.m. Mathes welcomed the council and spoke about the history of the Board of Governors Hall, the headquarters building, the Red Cross and the American Red Cross. She noted that the American Red Cross responds to 70,000 disasters each year and at least 500 fires in the Washington metropolitan area. Mathes explained that the American Red Cross has five major areas of service: helping disaster victims; connecting the Armed Forces with their families; teaching lifesaving skills; collecting, testing and supplying blood across the nation; and partnering in international services. She explained that 44-50% of blood donations in the United States come from American Red Cross donations and that more than 15 million people each year gain lifesaving skills through the American Red Cross. Mathes expressed her gratitude for donations through the Combined Federal Campaign.

**Best practice – plain writing.** 9:55 a.m. Spivey discussed plain language and the Plain Writing Act of 2010 with the council. She gave an abridged PowerPoint presented and offered to share the full version of the presentation with the council. Wachter said he would email the file to the council. Spivey stated that plain writing is a style of writing that helps readers find information and helps readers understand the information. If documents do not do both, then they are not written plainly. She shared some techniques that writers can use to reach readers, such as including headers, tables and bullets and using words people use every day. People do not respond if they do not understand; write in plain language to get a bigger response.

**Committee Reports.** 10:39 a.m. After break the four committee chairs gave reports. Wachter introduced the technology committee and shared the results of the conference call the committee held. The committee members talked about what correspondence tracking systems they used and the need to survey what other agencies are using to track correspondence and summarize the findings in a report to the council. This report will provide direction for the technology committee and assist in a meeting with OMB.

Christine Brown asked the members of the plain writing committee to introduce themselves and told the council that the best starting point was to do a short survey of the council members. She suggested that information be included on the council website and that the committee give short presentations at the council meetings. Brown welcomed any suggestions and asked the council to take time answering the survey when it is sent out.

Vivan Beamon and Dynna Bigby spoke for Tracy Catoe, who is the website committee chair and who was not present at the meeting. The website committee was not able to have a conference call but shared ideas through email. It plans to:

- Update the schedule for the year;
- Update the council membership list;
- Make a list of members who are inactive;
- Add the meeting minutes;
- Post the guest speakers presentation and best practice presentation;
- Invite agencies to join;
- Post link to departments websites;
- Include profiles of agencies;
- Update the style guide on the resource page;
- Update the correspondence guide to use for plain language;
- Add White House guidelines;
- Update the charter (it was noted that the charter is updated); and
- Council summaries are outdated.

Wachter asked how accessible the website site since it is behind a firewall. Dynna answered that Tracy is working on making it public

Patrice Allen-Gifford introduced the membership committee and reported that the committee would like to think about what a council member is and what it should be. It discussed the idea that one senior-level person represent each agency and subagencies when it comes to voting or speaking for his or her agency. No one would be excluded from participating, however. The membership committee aims to service the chair and assistant the chair in finding out who the members are and encourage nonparticipating agencies to join. The committee would actively help support meetings by doing some of the leg work to help the chair by, for example, finding hosts for meetings and best practice topics.

After Allen-Gifford completed her report, Wachter asked about the March meeting that Brown is hosting at USAID. He asked if anyone had any suggestions for a best practice topic. Handbooks, the structure of different executive secretariat offices and correspondence challenges were some of the suggestions. Allen-Gifford said the membership committee would discuss these ideas. Wachter said he would email the council a report that USDA prepared last year on what some offices do.

**White House Update.** 11:10 a.m.

**Old Business/New Business.** 11:25 a.m. Wachter suggested that the council table the discussion on transfer letters until next month so that the council had more time to review the draft policy. Wachter explained that he will be sending out a survey in the next two weeks and would share the feedback. Diane Reinke asked what the survey is about, and Wachter explained that it was designed so that council members and nonmembers could provide feedback to help guide the council. Wachter stated that Gemma Button had emailed him about a policy on joint letters, similar to what was drafted for transfer letters. Wachter suggested that the council could work on that at a future meeting after a number of attendees expressed support for such a policy. Wachter asked for volunteers to serve on an executive committee he would like to establish. The executive committee would advise the chair and the committee chairs.

**Open Floor.** 11:37 a.m. Wachter opened the floor. Mary Jefferson suggested that the White House could be a resource by sharing any mailing lists of executive secretariat offices they have. These lists would help the council communicate increase participation. Main said she would share her list with Wachter.

**Adjourn.** 11:40 a.m.

**Council of Federal Executive Secretariats February Meeting Attendees**

| <u>First Name</u> | <u>Last Name</u> | <u>Agency</u> | <u>Position</u>                                |
|-------------------|------------------|---------------|--|
| Anatta            |                  | DOC           | Editor   |
| Patrice           | Allen-Gifford    | DHS           | Associate Executive Secretary                  |
| Kathryn           | Alvarez          | Treasury      | Correspondence Specialist                      |
| Gloria            | Barrett          | DOL           | Senior Analyst                                 |
| Vivian            | Beamon           | DOJ/EDUST     | Management & Program Analyst                   |
| Dynna             | Bigby            | FDA/ES        | Program Manager                                |
| Ann               | Brewer           | NIH/HHS       | Director, Executive Secretariat                |
| Andrew            | Brown            | SBA           | IT Specialist                                  |
| Christine         | Brown            | USAID         | Lead Correspondence Analyst                    |
| Dennis            | Bumpass          | SBA           | Executive Secretary                            |
| Gemma             | Button           | VA            | Deputy Executive Secretary                     |
| Frances           | Campbell         | WHO           | Supervisor - Document Tracking Unit -ORM       |
| Tara              | Chipman          | DOJ/ATF       | Chief, Executive Secretariat                   |
| Michael           | Coogan           | DOE           | Writer/Editor                                  |
| Cynthia           | Douglas          | HHS           | Cause Specialist                               |
| Julie             | Fandsen          | FDA           | Junior Policy Analyst                          |
| Tim               | Feeney           | DOI           | Writer/Editor                                  |
| Clarence          | Finney           | DOS           | Director, Office of Correspondence and Records |
| Myra              | Freeman          | WHO           | Records Analyst                                |
| Saralene          | Green            | DOJ           | Management Analyst                             |
| Marcia            | Hines            | DOJ           | Records Manager                                |
| Mary              | Jefferson        | FAA           | Director, Executive Secretariat                |
| Zina              | Kornegay         | ATF           | Executive Secretary                            |
| Galen             | Main             | WHO           | Assistant Director, Agency Liaison             |
| Keshia            | McDaniel         | DOL           | Supervisor Executive Secretariat               |
| Patricia          | Nolan            | DHS           | Senior Liaison Officer                         |
| Laura             | O'Neill          | HHS           | Management Analyst                             |
| Diane             | Reinke           | HHS/OIG       | Writer - Editor                                |
| Paulette          | Saunders         | VA            | Chief Correspondences                          |
| Linda             | Smiroldo Herda   | MCC           | Director of Speechwriting & Editorial Services |
| Jynell            | Spriggs          | IRS           | Chief Correspondence Officer                   |
| Pat               | Street           | MCC           | Executive Secretary                            |
| Andrew            | Tarpgaard        | FAA           | Team Leader                                    |
| Joseph            | Tezak            | DHS/CBD       | Director, Executive Secretariat                |
| Chris             | Vanes            | GOP           | Senior Analyst                                 |
| Eric              | Wachter          | EPA           | Director, Executive Secretariat                |
| Tony              | Waterloo         | DOL           | Supervisor of Operation                        |
| Sharnett          | Willis           | EPA           | Staff  |

**Council of Federal Executive Secretariats**  
**March Council Meeting**  
**March 6, 2012**  
**U.S. Agency for International Development**  
**1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW**

**Council members present:** See below.

**Others present:** Matthew Johnson, USAID Bureau for Legislative and Public Affairs. Benjamin Rhodeside, Professional Staff of Chairman Daniel K. Akaka (D-HI), Subcommittee on Oversight of Government Management, the Federal Workforce, and the District of Columbia, U.S. Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

**Welcoming remarks.** 9:10 a.m. Eric Wachter, chair of the Council of Federal Executive Secretariats, welcomed everyone to the March meeting, thanked Christa White, Connie Miconi and Christine Brown from USAID for hosting the meeting.

**Welcome/introduction.** 9:15 a.m. White welcomed the council to USAID and talked about the 50-year-old agency founded by President John F. Kennedy after he witnessed the aftermath of World War II. It is celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary along with the Peace Corps. USAID operates in five regions of the world and in 79 countries and has saved hundreds of millions of lives from famine and disease. White introduced Matthew Johnson.

**Keynote Speaker.** 9:20 a.m. Johnson helped USAID launch in September its first ever awareness campaign. The goal of FDW is to raise awareness and relief of drought, war and famine in the Horn of Africa countries of Kenya, Ethiopia and Somalia. Millions have been affected by drought, war and famine in these countries. USAID had never run an ad campaign in the U.S., and FWD was the first. The target audiences were faith-based communities, youth, universities and corporations among others. The campaign was to help people understand and show how they could help. Key partners included Youtube, Google and Facebook. Various events and celebrity endorsements led to an enormous response that reached millions of people through social media.

**Committee Reports.** 9:50 a.m. Patrice Allen-Gifford reported to the Council that the Meetings and Membership Committee talked about focusing on setting up best-practice sessions for the council meetings and contacting council members for ideas. The committee discussed having more than one person present a best practice so that it is a more collaborative effort. Tracy Catoe updated the Council on the Website Committee and the work that was done on the site. The URL changed to [www.exesec.gov](http://www.exesec.gov) and minutes and presentations were set to be posted. The committee also discussed developing language to invite other agencies to join the Council, post agency links, post profiles of agencies and working to have White House guidelines on the website. The committee also discussed having the site reviewed for plain writing. Christine Brown updated the Council on the Plain Writing Committee. The committee provided Eric Wachter with five questions to include on the council survey. The results of the survey would provide the committee with direction. Wachter reported that the Technology Committee was awaiting results of the survey it had sent out to the agencies about correspondence tracking systems. It would share the results in a report when it was complete.

**White House Update.** 10:15 a.m.

Before the break, Wachter passed out the results of the member survey in case members wanted to glance over it during break, which ran from 10:25-10:40 a.m.

**Old Business/New Business.** 10:40 a.m. The best-practice speaker was running behind schedule so the Council moved ahead on the agenda. Wachter stated that a host was still needed for the April meeting and to contact Patrice. Wachter then talked about the member survey. Some questions were mandatory, while others were not. Forty-eight members responded, which equated a 25-percent response rate. Wachter was asked if a breakdown existed of which agencies responded, and he said he would send that information out. The members reviewed a few of the responses

The Council started a discussion of the proposed transfer letter policy and reviewed that they had first discussed it in January but at the February meeting had tabled the follow-up discussion until the March meeting. Ann Brewer said that the guidelines were very good and touched on every subject. She could not find any holes in the process and recommended that agencies take them back to implement. Tracy Catoe said that she had already used the policy six times since January and that it worked beautifully.

**Best practice.** Benjamin Rhodeside arrived at approximately 11 a.m. He explained that he wanted to attend the Council meeting and ask for feedback on the Plain Writing Act of 2010. The Council shared some ideas with Rhodeside. He asked about expanding the act to include regulations, which are currently exempt. Wachter explained that not many of the executive secretariats process regulations.

**Open Floor.** 11:25 a.m. Wachter opened the floor. Ann Brewer said she is looking for someone to join her office on a detail and that the position has the potential to become a permanent position. Galen Main said her office was looking for applicants to the White House Correspondence Summer Program. Wachter said he would email the members information on the program.

**Adjourn.** 11:30 a.m.

#### **Council of Federal Executive Secretariats February Meeting Attendees**

| <u>First Name</u> | <u>Last Name</u>  | <u>Agency</u> | <u>Position</u>                    |
|-------------------|-------------------|---------------|------------------------------------|
| Patrice           | Allen-Gifford     | DHS           | Associate Executive Secretary      |
| Kathryn           | Alvarez           | Treasury      | Correspondence Specialist          |
| Tyler             | Bakanas           | Treasury      | Intern                             |
| Thomas            | Bakoski           | NGA           | Director, Executive Secretariat    |
| Gloria            | Barrett           | DOL           | Senior Analyst                     |
| Vivian            | Beamon            | DOJ/EDUST     | Management & Program Analyst       |
| Dynna             | Bigby             | FDA           | Program Manager                    |
| Ann               | Brewer            | HHS/NIH       | Director, Executive Secretariat    |
| Christine         | Brown             | USAID         | Lead Correspondence Analyst        |
| Raychel           | Bush              | NCTC          | Deputy Executive Secretariat       |
| Amy               | Bunk              | NARA          |                                    |
| Tracy             | Catoe             | DOEd          | Deputy Director, CCCU              |
| Michael           | Coogan            | DOE           | Writer/Editor                      |
| Marlene           | Dortch            | FCC           | Secretary                          |
| Ron               | Etheridge         | SBA           | Correspondence Analyst             |
| Clarence N.       | Finney Jr.        | DOS           | Director, Correspondence & Records |
| Erma              | Freeman-Austin    | DOJ           | Management Analyst                 |
| Myra              | Freeman           | WHO           | Records Analyst                    |
| Carlos            | Garcia-de-Quevedo | FBI           | MAPA                               |



|                |                |          |   |
|----------------|----------------|----------|---|
| Chyna          | Green          | DOJ/USMS | Executive Secretary                               |
| Mark           | Hannafin       | USAID    |   |
| Marjorie       | Harter         | USDA     | Sr. Writer - Editor                               |
| Mary           | Jefferson      | FAA      | Director, Executive Secretariat                   |
| Crystal        | Jones          | WHO      | Records Analyst                                   |
| Christa        | Kizito         | FDA      | PSS   |
| Zina           | Kornegay       | ATF      | Executive Secretary                               |
| Bennie         | Lawson         | DOD      | Chief Correspondence Mgt.                         |
| Terry (Anatta) | Layton         | DOC      | Senior Writer/Editor                              |
| Peter          | Lee            | Treasury | Interim Deputy Executive Secretary                |
| Ronnie         | Lockhart       | SSA      | Senior Executive Analyst                          |
| Galen          | Main           | WHO      | Assistant Director, Agency Liaison                |
| Eleni          | Martin         | GSA      | Director, Executive Secretariat                   |
| Keshia         | McDaniel       | DOL      | Correspondence Analyst                            |
| Connie         | Miconi         | USAID    | Deputy ES   |
| Jason          | Monroe         | SBA      | Team Leader                                       |
| Pat            | Morgan         | HUD      | Chief, Correspondence Branch, Executive Secretary |
| Joy            | Muhammad       | VA       | Program Specialist                                |
| Dana           | Pritchett      | SSA      | Executive Operations, Analyst                     |
| Fiona          | Reeves         | WHO      | Deputy Director                                   |
| Diane          | Reinke         | HHS/OIG  | Writer - Editor                                   |
| Paula          | Sind-Prunier   | NTSB     | Branch Chief                                      |
| Jynell         | Spriggs        | IRS      | Chief Correspondence Officer                      |
| Pat            | Street         | MCC      | Executive Secretary                               |
| Ian            | Squires        | HHS      | Writer/Editor                                     |
| Andrew         | Tarpgaard      | FAA      | Team Leader                                       |
| Joseph         | Tezak          | DHS/CBD  | Director, Executive Secretariat                   |
| Linda          | Trigeiro-Pabst | FBI      | Unit Chief, Executive Secretariat                 |
| LaTasha        | Tucker         | VA       | Executive Writer                                  |
| Annette        | Vietti-Cook    | NRC      | Secretary   |
| Miriam         | Wallace        | DOJ      | Conv. MNGN. Analyst                               |
| Tony           | Waterloo       | DOL      | Supervisor of Operation                           |
| Eric           | Wachter        | EPA      | Director, Executive Secretariat                   |
| Christa        | White          | USAID    | Director  |
| Sharnett       | Willis         | EPA      | Staff   |

**Council of Federal Executive Secretariats  
April Council Meeting  
April 3, 2012  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Ariel Rios Federal Building  
Rachel L. Carson Great Hall**

**Council members present:** See below.

**Others present:** Janet McCabe, Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator, Office of Air and Radiation, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Kristina Friedman, Special Assistant, Office of Air and Radiation, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

**Welcome.** 9:15 a.m. Eric Wachter, chair of the Council of Federal Executive Secretariats, welcomed everyone to the April meeting and to the EPA. He described the EPA Office of the Executive Secretariat and its four units: correspondence, FOIA, records and CMS. He introduced Cynthia Gaines, the correspondence team leader and said that there are seven members of correspondence team, three in CMS, three in FOIA and two in records. The office processes about 10,000 pieces of correspondence per year and has two writer-editors on staff.

**Best practice – White House Casework Referral Process.** 9:22 a.m. Galen Main from the White House explained the referral process. Correspondence is reviewed by the mail analysis unit and then divided into foreign policy, economy, education, energy and environment. The correspondence is sent to the agency liaison or policy letter response. The agency liaisons decide if and which agency should respond and then sends it via email. The agencies respond directly to the constituent, if appropriate, and blind copies the White House on the response. The White House will attach the email to the case file and then close it out. Main then answered some questions from the attendees. Volunteers read the mail, divide it and enter the data. Sometimes volunteers come from different agencies. For some referrals, the White House will send a policy response which says what the Administration is doing. Her office still accepts faxes but they go directly into the processing system.

Kathryn Alvarez from the Department of Treasury explained the process once Treasury receives White House referrals. Correspondence is received in a group email account, divided by subject to the policy office for review and then sent a response. When a response is made via email, an email is sent back to the Treasury group email account. The case is closed when the response is sent back to the White House via email. In 2011 about 45 percent of Treasury's general public correspondence received was from the White House casework. Treasury mainly handles housing issues such as loans and foreclosures, which the Treasury Homeownership Preservation Office deals with directly by working with mortgage lenders.

Clarence Finney from the Department of State was not able to attend so James McAndrews from Treasury presented for Clarence. State's process is similar to Treasury's in that casework is received in a group email account, divided by subject to the appropriate bureau to review, sent a response and entered into the database Everest. A copy of the response is processed thru the database; the case is closed and sent back to the White House as a reply to the incoming casework email. In 2011 about seven percent of State's general public correspondence received was from the White House casework. State mainly deals with entry into the U.S., visa issues and adoptions. The correspondence and records team tracks and archives referrals to ensure signed responses are received and logged for future retrieval.

Catherine Dugan from the Department of Homeland Security explained that DHS' Executive Secretariat Mail Analysis Office receives the emails from the White House. ESEC saves the email in the shared drive and gives a copy to the appropriate ESEC correspondence team. The team member enters the letter into a tracking system (IQ) and assigns it to the appropriate DHS component for response. The component enters the response into the tracking system and sends it back to ESEC, which then emails the response back the White House from the tracking system and closes the case.

**White House Update.** 9:45 a.m.

**Committee Reports.** 9:50 a.m. Ann Brewer presented for the meetings and membership committee. The committee did not meet but discussed the membership roster. Tracy Catoe and Ann worked on getting all the names of the agencies. The committee would like to get the email list down to one or two people per agency so that everyone is not getting the email and that it is going to the right people. Some agencies are still not checking their general executive secretariat email boxes. In response to a question about not feeling comfortable sending email to the general office email addresses for fear of its not being checked, Eric Wachter said he would send an email to everyone on the list requesting the correct email address. He said he would have this list available by the May meeting. The committee reports were suspended upon the arrival of the keynote speaker.

**Keynote Speaker.** 10 a.m. Wachter introduced Janet McCabe, who has been at the EPA since the end of 2009. The Office of Air and Radiation has been very busy during the Obama administration. Before speaking about the Mercury and Air Toxics Rule, which is an important rule that requires power plants to reduce toxic air, McCabe explained that the 40-year old Clean Air Act is an incredible law, and we are very lucky to have it in this country as it reduces tens of thousands of heart attacks and other health conditions. It has turned out to be very cost effective, contrary to repeated industry claims. This country has been a leader in pollution control. The mercury rule is 20 years in the making. The utility sector is one of the biggest causes of pollution, particularly mercury and nickel. Mercury and nickel can affect the lungs and get into brain cells. The mercury rule will require power plants to install pollution controls to reduce the emissions of mercury and other air toxics

**Committee Reports, continued.** 10:53 a.m. After a 15-minute break following the keynote speaker, the committee reports resumed. Brewer said the meetings and membership committee is working on best-practice presentations for the year and hosts for June and the rest of the year. The May meeting will be held at Treasury, and there are no meetings in July and August.

Christine Brown reported that the plain-writing committee has had two conference calls. The committee discussed the results of plain-writing questions on the membership survey and will be working on items based on the survey. The topics in which people were most interested are best practices and training. The committee will be posting the latest information on Plain Writing Act on the website. Julie Frandsen volunteered to take the lead with the website committee in creating a Plain Writing Act section and posting resources such as the NIH training and SSA video on the website. Brown asked that if anyone had any training site they think would be a good resource to please email it to Brown so it can be included.

Tracy Catoe reported that the website committee had a conference call but she missed it because of an ill-timed fire drill. The committee is continuing to post seals and logos for each agency on the website. The committee is trying to capture what each executive secretariat office does and provide links. Most recent documents from the meetings will be posted on the site.

Eric Wachter reported that the technology committee is still collecting responses for the correspondence survey. There has been a good response, particularly from agencies that do not participate in the council meetings. There are few bigger agencies that have not yet responded, and David Aten is going to help with them. The committee expects to have the results of the survey to share at the May meeting.

Wachter also said that he received volunteers for the executive committee and that the committee had an initial call to discuss the results of the member survey and some things to improve the meeting, such as name tags and host agency descriptions.

**Old Business/New Business.** 11:06 a.m. Wachter asked if anyone had any thoughts about the results of the member survey now that they had more time to read it. Ann Brewer thought there was a good response to the survey.

Wachter said that he had tabled the end of the discussion from last meeting about transfer letters. Pat Morgan said she had some concerns about turnaround time but cleared up this issue by sending out emails directly to the agencies. Wachter asked that members email him if they continue to get hard-copy transfers, and he will send those agencies copies of the policy. Galen asked the council not to forward contact information along to constituents. Wachter said he would add this to the policy and send it out again.

Wachter was asked about the status of the contact list. He explained that there been some problems receiving the list but they he would have a completed list for the May meeting. Main also said she had some contacts as well if people needed them.

Wachter asked members to start thinking about summer luncheon options.

Wachter said that Gemma Button could not make the meeting but wanted to some initial thoughts on jointly signed letter guidelines, similar to the transfer letter policy. The council brought up concerns about how to handle when an under secretary signs and the order of logos and signatures. Wachter said the council would have a more thorough discussion at the May meeting.

**Open Floor.** 11:20 a.m. No comments or questions.

**Adjourn.** 11:20 a.m.

### **Council of Federal Executive Secretariats February Meeting Attendees**

| <u>First Name</u> | <u>Last Name</u> | <u>Agency</u> | <u>Position</u>           |
|-------------------|------------------|---------------|---------------------------|
| Kathryn           | Alvarez          | Treasury      | Correspondence Specialist |
| David             | Aten             | IRS           | Acting Director           |
| Gloria            | Barrett          | DOL           | Senior Analyst            |
| Kim               | Bradley          | SBA           | Director                  |
| Ann               | Brewer           | NIH/HHS       | Director                  |
| Christine         | Brown            | USAID         | Lead Corresponce Analyst  |
| Tracy             | Catoe            | DOEd          | Deputy Director           |
| Michael           | Coogan           | DOE           | Writer/Editor             |
| Catherine         | Dugan            | DHS           | Senior Liaison Officer    |
| Tim               | Feeney           | DOI           | Writer/Editor             |
| Julie             | Frandsen         | FDA           | Junior Policy Analyst     |

|           |                  |             |                                    |
|-----------|------------------|-------------|------------------------------------|
| Matt      | Gewtil           | VA          | Executive Writer                   |
| Ann Marie | Gogniat          | USDA        | Writer Editor                      |
| Kimberly  | Hughes-Valentine | DHS         | Senior Liaison Officer             |
| Galen     | Main             | White House | Assistant Director, Agency Liaison |
| Jean      | Maybee           | DOI         | Chief of Staff                     |
| James     | McAndrews        | Treasury    | Correspondence Specialist          |
| Pat       | Morgan           | HUD         | Correspondence Branch Chief        |
| Elizabeth | Olson            | EOP/WHO     | Director                           |
| Dana      | Pritchett        | SSA         | Executive Operations, Analyst      |
| Diane     | Reinke           | HHS/OIG     | Writer-Editor                      |
| Geraldine | Taylor           | FCC         | Management Analyst                 |
| Joseph    | Tezak            | DHS/CBD     | Director                           |
| Eric      | Wachter          | EPA         | Director                           |
| Sharnett  | Willis           | EPA         | Staff                              |
| Darlene   | Yuhas            | EPA         | Writer/Editor                      |

**Council of Federal Executive Secretariats**  
**April Council Meeting**  
**May 1, 2012**  
**Department of the Treasury**  
**1500 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW**  
**Cash Room**

**Council members present:** See below.

**Others present:** Mark Mazur, deputy assistant secretary, Office of Tax Analysis, Department of the Treasury.

**Welcome.** 9:15 a.m. Eric Wachter, chair of the Council of Federal Executive Secretariats, welcomed everyone to the May meeting and thanked Peter Lee and the Department of the Treasury for serving as hosts of the May meeting in the ornate Cash Room.

**Introduction.** 9:16 a.m. Peter Lee introduced Mark Mazur, deputy assistant secretary of the Office of Tax Analysis, to discuss tax reform.

**Keynote Speaker.** 9:18 a.m. Mazur explained the five elements of the President's business tax reform plan. Eliminate dozens of tax loopholes and subsidies, broaden the base and cut the corporate to 28 percent. Strengthen American manufacturing and innovation; refocus the manufacturing deduction and use rate on manufacturing to no more than 25 percent. Strengthen the international tax system including establishing a new minimum tax on foreign earnings. Simplify and cut taxes for America's small businesses. Restore fiscal responsibility and not add a dime to the deficit.

Mazur then described how many corporations are paying lower tax rates than the average taxpayer. During the past 25 years other countries have lowered their corporate tax rate, while the U.S. has stay the same, making the American's corporate tax rate one of the highest. One of the reasons for tax reform is to make the U.S. more competitive with the rest of the world so more people will do business with the U.S. Mazur answer questions from the council.

**Committee Reports.** 9:50 a.m. Tracy Catoe reported that the website committee has received logos from 30 agencies. Some outdated information was deleted from the site to reclaim space that is needed for more current information. The committee would like to receive from each agency by the end of June a two-to-three-line summary what each office does. Patrice Allen-Gifford reported that the meetings and membership committee would like to receive suggestions for best-practice presentations for future meetings. It would like to hear from members what they would like to discuss. Christine Brown reported that the plain writing committee discussed setting aside about 15 minutes at each meeting to discuss a plain-writing-related topic. Brown said she would email Wachter with a list of the topics for future meetings. Wachter reported that the technology committee has the mostly finalized results from the survey of agencies' correspondence tracking systems. He said they are still hoping to get the results from a few larger agencies and distributed copies of the survey results to the council.

**White House Update.** 10:05 a.m.

**Best practice – Office spotlight.** 10:30 a.m. After break, Rebecca Ewing, the new executive secretary at Treasury, thanked everyone for coming and gave an overview of the Treasury executive secretariat office. The staff of 13 members is divided into four parts: DES has two people, the correspondence units has five people, the policy component is two people and the ESPU is four people. The office is

responsible for responsiveness, timeliness and accountability of the secretary's documents from beginning to end. Ewing described the very large volume of secretary paper her office produces in the form of daily and other briefing books, action and decision memorandums, *Federal Register* documents and other memorandums and materials. The secretary has testified before Congress 65 times in fewer than three-and-one-half years, and her office has prepared 130 testimonies, 175 preparation sessions, 49 preparation books and 65 sets of QFRs. They also prepare 15 books per year for major international events, 5-7 major policy speeches per year and 10-12 domestic trip books per year. Ewing described the correspondence and casework loads of her office: Congressional letters, VIP letters, White House letters, interagency correspondence and general public letters. They also handle FOIA records and record management.

**Old Business/New Business.** 11:27 a.m. Wachter distributed copies of the new council directory. He explained that he had emailed to the council the Excel file of the directory last night and envisioned the directory as a living and breathing document. He asked members to email him updates as they become available and said he would periodically distribute updated copies. Wachter clarified that the directory will not be placed on the council website.

Wachter suggested that the council table the discussion on jointly signed letters until the June meeting to ensure that there is enough time to discuss it. Gemma Button, who wrote the draft guidelines, agreed.

**Open Floor.** 11:37 a.m. Ronnie Lockhart asked about the encryption of personally identifiable information in transfer letters and whether the policy should be amended to note this. Bennie Lawson said that DOD requirements also call for encryption. Wachter said his agency policy requires only that PII be included in an attachment, not in the body of an email. Most agencies indicated they do not require encryption.

**Adjourn.** 11:40 a.m.

### **Council of Federal Executive Secretariats May Meeting Attendees**

| <u>First Name</u> | <u>Last Name</u> | <u>Agency</u>           | <u>Position</u>                    |
|-------------------|------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Deborah           | Alexander        | DOJ                     |                                    |
| Patrice           | Allen-Gifford    | DHS                     | Associate Executive Secretary      |
| Vivian            | Beamon           | DOJ/EDUST               | Management & Program Analyst       |
| Valerie           | Boyd             | National Security Staff |                                    |
| Andrew            | Bozek            | DOD                     |                                    |
| Ann               | Brewer           | NIH/HHS                 | Director, Executive Secretariat    |
| Christine         | Brown            | USAID                   | Lead Correspondence Analyst        |
| Gemma             | Button           | VA                      | Deputy Executive Secretary         |
| Tracy             | Catoe            | DOEd                    | Deputy Director, CCCU              |
| Michael           | Coogan           | DOE                     | Writer/Editor                      |
| Cynthia           | Douglas          | HHS                     |                                    |
| Clarence N.       | Finney Jr.       | DOS                     | Director, Correspondence & Records |
| Myra              | Freeman          | WH/Record Mgt.          | Records Analyst                    |
| Marjorie          | Harter           | USDA                    | Sr. Writer - Editor                |
| Harold            | Henderson        | DOC                     |                                    |
| Marcia            | Hines            | DOJ                     | Records Manager                    |
| Kimberly          | Hughes-Valentine | DHS                     | Senior Liaison Officer             |

|           |             |             |                                    |
|-----------|-------------|-------------|------------------------------------|
| Mary      | Jefferson   | FAA         | Director, Executive Secretariat    |
| Cherie    | Jones       | ICE         |                                    |
| Crystal   | Jones       | WHO         | Records Analyst                    |
| Zina      | Kornegay    | ATF         | Executive Secretary                |
| Bennie    | Lawson      | DOD         | Chief Correspondence Mgt.          |
| Terry     |             |             |                                    |
| (Anatta)  | Layton      | DOC         | Senior Writer/Editor               |
| Ronnie    | Lockhart    | SSA         | Senior Executive Analyst           |
| Galen     | Main        | White House | Assistant Director, Agency Liaison |
| Jean      | Maybee      | DOI         | Chief of Staff                     |
| Pat       | Morgan      | HUD         | Chief, Correspondence Branch       |
| Allison   | Neubauer    | CFPB        |                                    |
| Elizabeth | Olson       | EOP/WHO     | Director                           |
| Jeff      | O'Neill     | FDA         |                                    |
| Diane     | Reinke      | HHS/OIG     | Writer - Editor                    |
| Andrew    | Tarpgaard   | FAA         | Team Leader                        |
| Geraldine | Taylor      | FCC         | Management Analyst                 |
| Annette   | Vietti-Cook | NRC         | Secretary                          |
| Eric      | Wachter     | EPA         | Director, Executive Secretariat    |
| Dorothy   | Ward        | DOJ         |                                    |
| Sharnett  | Willis      | EPA         | Staff                              |
| Tina      | Wimbush     | VA          |                                    |



**Council of Federal Executive Secretariats**  
**June Council Meeting**  
**June 5, 2012**  
**United States Department of State**  
**2201 C Street, NW Washington, DC**

**Council members present:** See below.

**Others present:** Natalie R. Jones, deputy chief of protocol, Department of State

**Welcoming remarks.** 9:14 a.m. Eric Wachter, chair of the Council of Federal Executive Secretariats, welcomed everyone to the June meeting and thanked Clarence Finney and the Department of State for serving as hosts for the meeting.

**Welcome/introduction.** 9:16 a.m. Finney welcomed the council to the Department of State and introduced Stephen Mull, executive secretary at the Department of State.

**Keynote Speaker.** 9:20 a.m. Stephen Mull welcomed the council and spoke about the functions of his office. Line officers advance the secretary, travel with her, serve as liaisons with the White House and compiled the national security calendar. The operation center is staffed 24 hours and handles telephone coverage, the secretary's activities and crisis management. The new tracking system Everest is online. There is also an existing Poems tracking system that supports 800 people. The correspondence office also handles the secretary's schedule, her briefing materials and plays a large role in administration transitions.

**Best practice.** 9:40 a.m. Clarence Finney gave a presentation on Everest, which is the successor to 30-year-old Stars system. Everest was built by the Office of the Executive Secretariat; six full-time staffers worked on the project. More than 70 offices are using the new system, and they send out at least 10, 000 packages. Stars was being used by only the line and the executive secretariat's office. Everest is a SharePoint-based system. It cannot search old documents from the Stars system but they are working on it.

**White House Update.** 10:20 a.m.

**Committee Reports.** 10:42 a.m. After a short break the membership committee chairs gave reports. Patrice Allen-Gifford reported that the meetings and membership committee is looking for a host for the September meeting. Tracy Catoe asked that each agency submit a two-to-three line summary of what your agency does by June 22<sup>nd</sup> so that the website committee can post them on the website.

**Order of Precedence.** 10:45 a.m. Natalie Jones spoke to the Council about the order of precedence, the basis of it and how it is used. The order changes from administration to administrator, and she brought copies of the Obama Administrator order of precedence. Wachter said he would distribute copies to the Council. In response to questions, Jones explained that once a person received the courtesy title *Honorable*, he or she retains that for life, and that he or she should not refer to himself or herself as *Honorable*.

**Joint Letters.** 11:15 a.m. The Council discussed the draft joint letters guidelines that Gemma Button composed. Wachter said he would draft up a final set of guidelines based on the conversation and distribute the guidelines before the September meeting.

**Adjourn.** 11:30 a.m.

**Council of Federal Executive Secretariats June Meeting Attendees**

| <b><u>First Name</u></b> | <b><u>Last Name</u></b> | <b><u>Agency</u></b> | <b><u>Position</u></b>                 |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|--|
| Brian                    | Alderman                | Treasury             | Intern                                 |
| Patrice                  | Allen-Gifford           | DHS                  | Associate Executive Secretary          |
| William                  | Bacon                   | OHS/USCIS            | Acting Deputy, Executive Secretariat   |
| Gloria                   | Barrett                 | DOL                  | Senior Analyst                         |
| Vivian                   | Beamon                  | DOJ/EDUST            | Management & Program Analyst           |
| Ann                      | Brewer                  | NIH/HHS              | Director, Executive Secretariat        |
| Christine                | Brown                   | USAID                | Lead Correspondence Analyst            |
| Gemma                    | Button                  | VA                   | Deputy Executive Secretary             |
| Ronald                   | Campbell                | HHS/CDC              | Director Executive Secretariat         |
| Constance                | Carter                  | USCIS                | Acting Executive Secretariat, Chief    |
| Tracy                    | Catoe                   | DOEd                 | Deputy Director, CCCU                  |
| Dolores                  | Cole                    | HUD                  | Director, Executive Secretariat        |
| Michael                  | Coogan                  | DOE                  | Writer/Editor                          |
| Katherine                | Edwards                 | Treasury             | Intern                                 |
| Clarence N.              | Finney Jr.              | DOS                  | Director, Correspondence & Records     |
| Carlos                   | Garcia-de-Quevedo       | FBI                  | MAPA                                   |
| Chyna                    | Green                   | USMS                 | Executive Secretary                    |
| Marjorie                 | Harter                  | USDA                 | Sr. Writer - Editor                    |
| Marcia                   | Hines                   | DOJ                  | Records Manager                        |
| Mary                     | Jefferson               | FAA                  | Director, Executive Secretariat        |
| Debra                    | Keene                   | DOS                  | S/ES - CK Operation Supervisor         |
| Zina                     | Kornegay                | DOJ/ ATF             | Executive Secretary                    |
| Terry (Anatta)           | Layton                  | DOC                  | Senior Writer/Editor                   |
| Peter                    | Lee                     | Treasury             | Interim Deputy Executive Secretary     |
| Thanh                    | Lo                      | USMS                 | Program Analyst                        |
| Iris                     | Lucio                   | USDA                 | Deputy Executive Secretariat           |
| Galen                    | Main                    | White House          | Assistant Director, Agency Liaison     |
| Samuel                   | Martin                  | Treasury             | Intern                                 |
| Steven                   | Mull                    | DOS                  | Executive Secretary                    |
| Brandon                  | Oliver                  | Treasury             | Intern                                 |
| Elizabeth                | Olson                   | EOP/WHO              | Director                               |
| Jeff                     | O'Neill                 | FDA                  | Deputy Director, Executive Secretariat |
| Dana                     | Pritchett               | SSA                  | Executive Operations, Analyst          |
| Siena                    | Reeves                  | WHO                  | Deputy Director                        |
| Michael                  | Robins                  | American Red Cross   | Federal Relations Liaison              |
| Karlye                   | Smith                   | DHS/TSA              | Writer/Editor                          |
| Ian                      | Squires                 | HHS                  | Writer/Editor                          |
| Andrew                   | Tarpgaard               | FAA                  | Team Leader                            |
| Joseph                   | Tezak                   | DHS/CBD              | Director, Executive Secretariat        |
| Ruby                     | Thomas                  | DOS                  | Program Assistant                      |
| Annette                  | Vietti-Cook             | NRC                  | Secretary                              |
| Eric                     | Wachter                 | EPA                  | Director, Executive Secretariat        |

Tony  
Sharnett

Waterloo  
Willis

DOL  
EPA

Supervisor of Operation  
Staff

**Council of Federal Executive Secretariats**  
**September Council Meeting**  
**September 11, 2012**  
**The National Institutes of Health**  
**Natcher Conference Center, Building 45, Room D**  
**Bethesda, MD**

**Council members present:** See below.

**Others present:** Dinora Dominguez, Chief, Patient Recruitment and Public Liaison Section, the National Institutes of Health; David Rosenmarkle, Program Manager for Executive Learning, Office of Learning & Workforce Development, Department of Energy; Jason Smith, Department of Health and Human Services.

**Welcoming remarks.** 9:15 a.m. Eric Wachter, chair of the Council of Federal Executive Secretariats, welcomed the members to the September meeting and thanked Ann Brewer and the National Institutes of Health for serving as hosts for the meeting.

**Welcome/introduction.** 9:16 a.m. Brewer welcomed the council to the National Institutes of Health.

**Best practice.** 9:18 a.m. Patrice Allen-Gifford from the Department of Homeland Security introduced David Rosenmarkle to discuss leadership development and employee training. He spoke about the programs at DOE and the work that they are doing with HUD. They will be offering the workshops live streaming in the internet and will reach up to 40,000 people. Rosenmarkle explained that the speakers participate *gratis* because his office has no budget for the programs. The January speaker will have an international background. Allen-Gifford then led a discussion of the Council about the various trainings that the members and their staff have taken and training opportunities.

**Keynote Speaker.** 9:50 a.m. Brewer introduced Dinora Dominguez, who opened by talking about the Mark O. Hatfield Clinical Research Center. With 242 beds, the clinical center opened in 2004 and accepts patients from all over. She spoke about the clinical-trial process with patient volunteers and the need for healthy volunteers also to participate in clinical trials. Dominguez described the outreach effort made to recruit volunteers and described the volunteer process. She finished her keynote by answering some questions from the members.

**White House Update.** 10:27 a.m.

**Old Business/New Business.** 10:45 a.m. After a short break, Wachter announced that Allen-Gifford, who has served as chair of the meetings and membership committee and as a member of the executive committee in 2012, agreed to be nominated for the vice-chair vacancy created when Eleni Martin from the General Services Administration retired from federal service this summer. Allen-Gifford was the only nominee. Without objection, Allen-Gifford was installed as vice chair for the remainder of 2012, after which she will be the chair for 2013. Wachter distributed the final version of the jointly signed letters guidelines that the Council discussed at the June meeting, and the Council approved the guidelines. Wachter said he would distribute it to the full Council.

**Plain Writing Presentation.** 10:50 a.m. Brewer, along with Jason Smith from the Department of Health and Human Services, demonstrated the web-based plain writing training course she developed at the NIH. Brewer told about how a medical school in Ireland called to ask if they could use the training

course. Smith informed the members that the source code for the training is available for agencies who would like to customize the training and to contact him at [Jason.Smith@hhs.gov](mailto:Jason.Smith@hhs.gov) for more information.

**Committee Reports.** 11:15 a.m. Christine Brown, chair of the plain writing committee, talked about the three presentations the committee put together for the September, October and November meetings. Allen-Gifford, chair of the meetings and membership committee, reported that the committee did not meet during the summer, that HUD and the Federal Aviation Administration will serve as hosts for the October and November meetings and that a best-practice topic is needed for the November meeting. Tracy Catoe, chair of the website committee, said that the committee did not meet during the summer but that it still needs executive summaries for the web site. Wachter, chair of the technology committee, reported that the committee did not meet during the summer.

**Adjourn.** 11:30 a.m.

### **Council of Federal Executive Secretariats September Meeting Attendees**

| <u>First Name</u> | <u>Last Name</u> | <u>Agency</u> | <u>Position</u>                    |
|-------------------|------------------|---------------|------------------------------------|
| Patrice           | Allen-Gifford    | DHS           | Associate Executive Secretary      |
| Michelle          | Ayers            | Treasury      | Review Analyst                     |
| Vivian            | Beamon           | DOJ/EDUST     | Management & Program Analyst       |
| Dynna             | Bigby            | FDA           | Project Manager                    |
| Celeste           | Bosken           | NIH           | Policy Monitor                     |
| Ann               | Brewer           | NIH/HHS       | Director, Executive Secretariat    |
| Christine         | Brown            | USAID         | Lead Correspondence Analyst        |
| Shannon           | Burden           | NIH           | Policy Monitor                     |
| Tracy             | Catoe            | DOEd          | Deputy Director, CCCU (call-in)    |
| Michael           | Coogan           | DOE           | Writer/Editor                      |
| Joe               | Durheim          | White House   | Senior Analyst                     |
| Julie             | Frandsen         | FDA           | Junior Policy Analyst              |
| Harold            | Henderson        | DOC           | Executive Secretary                |
| Terry             | Layton           | DOC           | Senior Writer/Editor               |
| Galen             | Main             | White House   | Assistant Director, Agency Liaison |
| Pat               | Morgan           | HUD           | Chief, Correspondence Branch       |
| Alison            | Newbauer         | CFPB          | Deputy Executive Secretary         |
| Dana              | Pritchett        | SSA           | Executive Operations, Analyst      |
| Andrew            | Tarpgaard        | FAA           | Team Leader                        |
| Joseph            | Tezak            | DHS/CBD       | Director, Executive Secretariat    |
| Eric              | Wachter          | EPA           | Director, Executive Secretariat    |
| Kathy             | Weil             | FDA           | Policy Analyst                     |
| Sharnett          | Willis           | EPA           | Staff                              |

**Council of Federal Executive Secretariats**  
**October Council Meeting**  
**October 2, 2012**  
**U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development**

**Council members present:** See below.

**Others present:** Maurice Jones, HUD deputy secretary.

**Welcoming remarks:** 8:45a.m. Eric Wachter, chair of the Council of Federal Executive Secretariats, welcomed the Council to the October meeting and thanked HUD for serving as hosts.

**Welcome/introduction.** 8:50a.m. Dolores Cole, HUD executive secretariat director, welcomed everyone and introduced Maurice Jones, HUD's deputy secretary.

**Overview of HUD** – Maurice Jones talked about the work that HUD does. It tries to prevent homelessness, fights for fair housing across the country, helping the poor get into housing they can afford and helping first time home buyers. After Jones' address Dolores Cole showed a video about what HUD executive secretariat does. Following the video, the Council had a discussion about the operations of the HUD office.

**Best Practice.** 9:40 a.m. Eric Wachter led a discussion about paperless practices. He spoke about the efforts at the EPA to make the Administrator's daily reading file an electronic document and the process through which he implemented it. He spoke about updating the EPA's correspondence manual, which included narrower margins to save paper. The EPA's FOIA and records processes also have moved to become more electronic. Patrice Allen-Gifford from DHS spoke about the process by which DHS receives letters from Congress. They have implemented a CongressToDHS@ email formula to receive letter. The Council thought this process is worth exploring for greater use among agencies. Bennie Lawson from DOD talked about how the DOD mail room scans in all mail and distributes the mail electronically throughout DOD.

**White House Update.** 10:45 a.m.

**Old Business/New Business.** 10:50 a.m. Eric Wachter thanked Patrice Allen-Gifford for filling in September the unexpired term of the vice chair created when Eleni Martin from the GSA retired from federal service in July. He announced that nomination and voting for the 2013 vice chair will begin in November, and the new vice chair will be announced at the December meeting. He reminded the Council that the November meeting will be November 8, not on November 6 because of Election Day. At the November meeting the Council will start looking for hosts for the 2013 meetings.

**Plain Language.** 10:55 a.m. Terry Layton, senior editor at the Department of Commerce, gave a presentation on plain writing. Terry asked how many already have plain writing programs and what it is. What is the Plain Writing Act of 2010? What does that require agencies to do? The number-one goal is to make sure readers can understand what they are reading the first time they read it. The second goal is for the reader to be able to find the information, to arrange the document according to the reader. If the reader does not need to know it, get rid of it. Government writers tend not to write for the reader but for themselves. They write because of fear and use big words lest people think they are not intelligent.

**Committee Reports.** 11:10 a.m. Patrice Allen-Gifford, chair of the meetings and membership committee, asked for best practice topics. Tracy Catoe, from the Department of Education and chair of the website committee, asked if everyone would submit their summaries.

**Adjourn.** 11:15 a.m.

**Council of Federal Executive Secretariats October Meeting Attendees**

| <b><u>First Name</u></b> | <b><u>Last Name</u></b> | <b><u>Agency</u></b> | <b><u>Position</u></b>             |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------------|
| Deborah                  | Alexander               | DOJ                  | Records Manager                    |
| Patrice                  | Allen-Gifford           | DHS                  | Associate Executive Secretary      |
| Dorota                   | Bagwell                 | DHS                  | Correspondence Coordinator         |
| Vivian                   | Beamon                  | DOJ/EDUST            | Management & Program Analyst       |
| Ann                      | Brewer                  | NIH/HHS              | Director, Executive Secretariat    |
| Raychel                  | Bush                    | NCTC                 | Deputy Chief                       |
| Tracy                    | Catoe (via phone)       | DOEd                 | Deputy Director, CCCU              |
| Dolores                  | Cole                    | HUD                  | Director, Executive Secretariat    |
| Michael                  | Coogan                  | DOE                  | Writer/Editor                      |
| Cynthia                  | Douglas                 | HHS                  | Analyst                            |
| Tim                      | Feeney                  | DOI                  | Writer/Editor                      |
| Rose                     | Folsom                  | HHS/OIG              | Director                           |
| Ann Marie                | Gogniat                 | USDA                 | Writer/Editor                      |
| Chyna                    | Green                   | USMS                 | Executive Secretary                |
| Marjorie                 | Harter                  | USDA                 | Sr. Writer - Editor                |
| Eugenia                  | Happis                  | HUD                  | FOIA Assistant                     |
| Marcia                   | Hines                   | DOJ                  | Records Manager                    |
| Mary                     | Jefferson               | FAA                  | Director, Executive Secretariat    |
| Bennie                   | Lawson                  | DOD                  | Correspondence Management Chief    |
| Terry (Anatta)           | Layton                  | DOC                  | Senior Writer/Editor               |
| Vicky                    | Lewis                   | HUD                  | Deputy Director                    |
| Thanh                    | Lo                      | USMS                 | Program Analyst                    |
| Galen                    | Main                    | White House          | Assistant Director, Agency Liaison |
| Daren                    | Miles                   | FDA                  | Policy Analyst                     |
| Pat                      | Morgan                  | HUD                  | Correspondence Branch Chief        |
| Cindy                    | O'Connor                | DHS/ICE              | Senior Writer/Editor               |
| John                     | Payne                   | White House          | Analyst                            |
| Thanh                    | Pham                    | DOJ                  | Analyst                            |
| Dana                     | Pritchett               | SSA                  | Executive Operations, Analyst      |
| Paula                    | Sind-Prunier            | NTSB                 | Executive Secretariat              |
| Ian                      | Squires                 | HHS                  | Writer/Editor                      |
| Andrew                   | Tarpgaard               | FAA                  | Team Leader                        |
| Joseph                   | Tezak                   | DHS/CBD              | Director, Executive Secretariat    |
| Eric                     | Wachter                 | EPA                  | Director, Executive Secretariat    |
| Tony                     | Waterloo                | DOL                  | Supervisor of Operation            |

**Council of Federal Executive Secretariats**  
**November Council Meeting**  
**November 8, 2012**  
**Federal Aviation Administration**

**Welcoming remarks.** 9:15a.m. Eric Wachter, chair of the Council of Federal Executive Secretariats, welcomed the Council to the November meeting and thanked Mary Jefferson and the Federal Aviation Administration for serving as hosts.

**Welcome/Introduction.** 9:22a.m. Mary Jefferson, FAA executive secretariat director, welcomed everyone and introduced David Weingart, FAA chief of staff. Weingart welcomed the Council to the FAA, spoke about how important their offices are and thanked them for all the great work that they do.

**Keynote Speaker.** 9:35 a.m. Kimberly Graber, from DOT's Office of the Assistant General Counsel for Aviation Enforcement and Processing, gave a presentation about the Passenger Bill of Rights. She offered an overview of the Aviation Enforcement Office and its authority. Among the rules she explained are the 3-hour tarmac delay rule for U.S. domestic flights, baggage fees, 24-hour cancellation right, international flights. In a lively question-and-answer session, Graber explained other topics, including the September 11 fee on airline tickets.

**White House Update:** 10:25 a.m.

**Best Practice:** 10:51a.m. After a short break, the Council had a group discussion about how the agencies handle awards certificates and scout letters. Mary Jefferson stated she had the Administrator approve a standard scout letter so they have the letters ready for autopen for the award ceremonies. Eric Wachter said that the EPA also has a standard letter and that one person handles the letters. They received 1,700 scout letters last year. Other agencies receive around 3,000. The Department of Labor developed cards that the secretary signs. They mail out about 5,000 per year. Galen Main said the White House has the same process. The Department of State's public affairs office handles scout letters, Girl Scout letter and also Texas royal rangers.

The White House receives requests from agency HR departments informing them of a retirement and sends out a signed letter to certain retirees. HR departments from each agency send the White House information on retirees and years of service.

When the President travels, his advance office sends out standard thank-you cards. Patrice explained that at DHS the international affairs offices send long, detailed letters – sometimes as many as 20 letters – from trips.

**Committee Reports:** 11:25a.m. Patrice Allen-Gifford, chair of the meeting and membership committee, asked for suggestions for best practice topics for next year and is looking for hosts for next year's meetings. Tracy Catoe, from the Department of Education and chair of the website committee, said she is still waiting for everyone summaries.

**Old Business/New Business:** 11:28a.m. Eric Wachter apologized for not having the October minutes completed and said he would send them out with the November minutes. He also explained that the nomination and voting for the new vice chair will take place during the next month. There will be one vote per agency. He asked members to submit their names or to nominate others and he would follow up with them. The new vice chair will be announced at the December meeting.

**Adjourn.** 11:30 a.m.



## Council of Federal Executive Secretariats November Meeting Attendees

| <u>First Name</u> | <u>Last Name</u> | <u>Agency</u> | <u>Position</u>  |
|-------------------|------------------|---------------|--|
| Shiela            | Byane-Lisby      | HHS           | Office of Documents and Regulations<br>Management Director |
| Patrice           | Allen-Gifford    | DHS           | Associate Executive Secretary                              |
| Dorota            | Bagwell          | DHS           | Correspondence Coordinator                                 |
| Gloria            | Barrett          | DOL           | Senior Analyst   |
| Vivian            | Beamon           | DOJ/EDUST     | Management & Program Analyst                               |
| Ann               | Brewer           | NIH/HHS       | Director, Executive Secretariat                            |
| Tracy             | Catoe            | DOEd          | Deputy Director, CCCU                                      |
| Michael           | Coogan           | DOE           | Writer/Editor  |
| Clarence N.       | Finney Jr.       | DOS           | Director, Correspondence & Records                         |
| Marcia            | Hines            | DOJ           | Records Manager  |
| Mary              | Jefferson        | FAA           | Director, Executive Secretariat                            |
| Zina              | Kornegay         | DOJ/ ATF      | Executive Secretary  |
| Galen             | Main             | White House   | Assistant Director, Agency Liaison                         |
| Linda             | McCarty          | IRS           | Commissioner's Correspondence Branch Chief                 |
| Dana              | Pritchett        | SSA           | Executive Operations, Analyst                              |
| Fiona             | Reeves           | WHO           | Deputy Director  |
| Karlye            | Snowden          | DHS/TSA       | Writer/Editor  |
| Ian               | Squires          | HHS           | Writer/Editor  |
| Joseph            | Tezak            | DHS/CBD       | Director, Executive Secretariat                            |
| Eric              | Wachter          | EPA           | Director, Executive Secretariat                            |
| Tony              | Waterloo         | DOL           | Supervisor of Operation                                    |
| Pierre            | Whatley          | CFPB          | Assistant Executive Secretariat                            |
| Sharnett          | Willis           | EPA           | Staff  |

**Council of Federal Executive Secretariats  
December Council Meeting  
December 6, 2012  
The White House, EEOB, Indian Treaty Room**

**Council members present:** See below.

**Others present:** Doug Kramer, Deputy Assistant to the President and Staff Secretary; Brian McKeon, Deputy Assistant to the President, National Security Staff Chief of Staff and Executive Secretary; Kelly Adams-Smith, National Security Staff Deputy Executive Secretary.

**Welcoming remarks:** 9:23 a.m. Eric Wachter, chair of the Council of Federal Executive Secretariats, welcomed the members to the December meeting and thanked Elizabeth Olson and Galen Main for serving as hosts and setting up a tour.

**Welcome/Introduction:** 9:25 a.m. Elizabeth Olson, Special Assistant to the President and Director of Presidential Correspondence, welcomed everyone and introduced the staff members of her office.

**Keynote Speaker:** 9:29 a.m. Doug Kramer, Deputy Assistant to the President and Staff Secretary, thanked the agencies for their help and talked about his office.

**Keynote Speaker:** 10 a.m. Brian McKeon, Deputy Assistant to the President, National Security Staff Chief of Staff and Executive Secretary. Brian gave an overview of his position.

**Old Business/New Business:** 10:20 a.m. Eric Wachter announced the Peter Lee from the Department of Treasury was elected vice chair for 2013 and thanked Peter for agreeing to serve. Wachter thanked Eleni Martin, now retired from the General Services Administrator, for serving as vice chair for the first half of 2012 and Patrice Allen-Gifford from the Department of Homeland Security for finishing Eleni's term as vice chair. He said that Patrice and Peter will make a great leadership team in 2013. Wachter also thanked Gifford for her service as chair of the meetings and membership committee; Tracy Catoe from the Department of Education for serving as website committee chair; Christine Brown from USAID for serving as the plain writing chair; Ann Brewer for her advice and guidance and her work on the executive committee; and David Aten from the IRS for his help on the technology committee. Wachter reminded the Council that the next meeting will be held the second week of because of the New Year's holiday.

**Adjourn.** 10:30 a.m.

**Council of Federal Executive Secretariats December Meeting Attendees**

| <u>First Name</u> | <u>Last Name</u> | <u>Agency</u> | <u>Position</u>               |
|-------------------|------------------|---------------|-------------------------------|
| Deborah           | Alexander        | DOJ           |                               |
| Patrice           | Allen-Gifford    | DHS           | Associate Executive Secretary |
| Dorota            | Bagwell          | DHS           | Correspondence Coordinator    |

|           |              |             |  |
|-----------|--------------|-------------|--|
| Dynna     | Bigby        | FDA         | Program Manager                                |
| Andrew    | Bozek        | DOD         |  |
| Ann       | Brewer       | NIH/HHS     | Director, Executive Secretariat                |
| Christine | Brown        | USAID       | Lead Correspondence Analyst                    |
| Gemma     | Button       | VA          | Deputy Executive Secretary                     |
| Matt      | Cameron      | CFPB        |  |
| Michael   | Coogan       | DOE         | Writer/Editor                                  |
| David     | Clunie       | Treasury    | Deputy Executive Secretary                     |
| Cynthia   | Douglas      | HHS         |  |
| Tim       | Feeney       | DOI         | Writer/Editor                                  |
| Rose      | Folsom       | HHS/OIG     | Director                                       |
| Julie     | Frandsen     | FDA         | Junior Policy Analyst                          |
| Ann Marie | Gogniat      | USDA        | Writer/Editor                                  |
| Chyna     | Green        | USMS        | Executive Secretary                            |
| Marjorie  | Harter       | USDA        | Sr. Writer - Editor                            |
| Marcia    | Hines        | DOJ         | Records Manager                                |
| Marcy     | Huff-Taylor  | CFPB        |  |
| Mary      | Jefferson    | FAA         | Director, Executive Secretariat                |
| Zina      | Kornegay     | ATF         | Executive Secretary                            |
| Bennie    | Lawson       | DOD         | Chief Correspondence Mgt.                      |
| Terry     | Layton       | DOC         | Senior Writer/Editor                           |
| Shiela    | Lislay-Bigby | HHS         | Director, Documents and Regulations Management |
| Peter     | Lee          | Treasury    | Interim Deputy Executive Secretariat           |
| Thanh     | Lo           | USMS        | Program Analyst                                |
| Galen     | Main         | White House | Assistant Director, Agency Liaison             |
| Jean      | Maybee       | DOI         | Chief of Staff                                 |
| Allison   | Miller       | CFPB        |  |
| Elizabeth | Olson        | EOP/WHO     | Director                                       |
| Paula     | Sind-Prunier | NTSB        | Executive Secretariat                          |
| Ian       | Squires      | HHS         | Writer/Editor                                  |
| Pat       | Street       | MCC         | Director                                       |
| Amanda    | Supin        | CPFB        |  |
| Andrew    | Tarpgaard    | FAA         | Team Leader                                    |
| Geraldine | Taylor       | FCC         | Management Analyst                             |
| Joseph    | Tezak        | DHS/CBD     | Director, Executive Secretariat                |
| Annette   | Vietti-Cook  | NRC         | Secretary                                      |
| Eric      | Wachter      | EPA         | Director, Executive Secretariat                |
| Tony      | Waterloo     | DOL         | Supervisor of Operation                        |
| Sharnett  | Willis       | EPA         | Staff  |