

In my last message, I remarked upon the many fine attributes that are identifiable among you, as Federal Air Marshals, and particularly noted your participation in Hurricane Katrina and the non-combatant evacuation of U.S. citizens and others from Lebanon as hallmarks of our Service, to date.

Most recently, we are engaged in providing enhanced security for international flights, and you have tirelessly responded with dedication and commitment as you entered into harm's way in order to protect the affected passengers and crews. You have selflessly demonstrated characteristics that any law enforcement organization would be proud to claim and have acted in a manner that reflects great credit upon yourselves and our organization. Your actions define what will become a standard among the best traditions of the Federal Air Marshal Service.

In recognition of your efforts, Secretary Chertoff and Assistant Secretary Hawley have publicly recognized your response to the terrorist threat and acknowledged your professionalism and dedication.

These three events – Hurricane Katrina, Lebanon, and the United Kingdom threat, clearly define the continued evolution and maturation of our organization. Each event is different from the other, and, yet, each required an aggressive response, borne out of preparation through training, a sense of professionalism, and your individual and collective willingness to accept responsibility, act decisively, and work effectively, independent of daily, direct supervision.

It is our respect for these characteristics and our confidence in our workforce that lead us to announce several changes recommended by the Working Groups and regularly supported by Federal Air Marshals and supervisors in our listening sessions, dinners, and office visits.

In furtherance of this process, I believe it is important that we introduce, develop, and memorialize a means through which your issues, concerns, suggestions, and recommendations can be identified and addressed. To that point, the Working Groups are generating work products that are exceptional in their breadth of scope, clarity of detail, and quality of recommendations.

As we strive to be inclusive in our decision making, the working groups, web access, and surveys provide a capability that allows workforce participation and gives you ownership in the process.

As we are responsive to recommendations, you receive the benefit of the change or new policy, as well as the responsibility to act with accountability, individually and collectively. At the end of the day, this is your organization and how you conduct yourselves ultimately becomes the standard by which others judge us, and by which we assess each other professionally.

Effective September 1st, the following changes will be formalized through policy, directive, or interim guidance:

The Standards of Dress Policy will be amended to allow you to dress at your discretion, recognizing that the manner of dress should allow you to blend in and not direct attention to yourself, as well as be sufficiently functional to enable you to conduct your law enforcement responsibilities, and effectively conceal your duty equipment.

Changes to the Standards of Dress Policy are the result of conversations with your supervisors, working groups, listening sessions, dinner groups, and during office visits.

The Designated Hotels During TDY Mission Deployment Policy will be amended to allow you to select and book reservations at the hotels of your choice, provided that you forward your hotel information electronically in advance of reaching your destination and remain within the economic and related guidelines to be published. However, as noted in the survey, we reserve the opportunity to convert to a more transparent hotel booking process in support of promoting anonymity during check-in, which has been consistently raised as an issue, if/when we are able to create such a process and provided that the process is prudent in the larger context of associated issues.

Effective on or about September 15th, a Voluntary Transfer Policy will be established with parameters that identify the scope of availability and elements for consideration for voluntary transfer. However, in the interest of managing expectations, please understand that while the policy will establish guidelines and some number of transfers are anticipated, the policy, the number of offices available, and the office locations will likely not satisfy everyone's interests.

Changes to the Hotel Policy and establishment of a Voluntary Transfer Policy are the direct result of the Workforce Satisfaction, Recruitment, and Retention Working Group and their recently completed survey. The results of the survey will be forthcoming, and, at that time, we will provide additional information on the status of each matter addressed.

Many of the original Working Groups have completed their reports, and we anticipate that we will have the opportunity to present recommendations for consideration for a sustained period of time. Also, new Working Groups have recently been formed, and we anticipate that, as your willingness to offer suggestions for consideration continues, additional Working Groups will be periodically formed to address them.

As you know, the working group process has identified other significant issues, such as FAM boarding procedures, which unfortunately do not lend themselves to simple solutions or immediate, unilateral decisions. However, please be assured that addressing these issues continues to be a high priority for us and that we are committed to the effective management of the working group process.

Please also continue to forward your issues, concerns, suggestions, and recommendations to the Working Group web site and to the anonymous web site that should become available, on or about September 1st, as we require your active participation in institutionalizing a process that allows you to be represented and positions us to work together toward resolving issues, where possible, and, where not, explaining the associated circumstances that exist in opposition to enactment.

For your review, a list of completed, active, and on deck Working Groups is available on the FAMS Intranet ([link](#)).

We also owe you the results of our portion of the TSA 2006 Organizational Satisfaction Survey, and our Workforce Planning and Management Office is preparing that message for release.

In closing and in consideration of your past and present efforts and accomplishments, I remain absolutely confident that we have a dedicated workforce, which is unwaveringly committed to its mission, and so professional in its predisposition toward building an organization that will be well respected and sustainable over time, that we can entrust these changes, and more, to your care.

Thank you and, as you continue to take pride in and remember who you are, you provide all of us in the Federal Air Marshal Service the foundation from which to work to build an enduring, well respected federal law enforcement organization that will well serve your and the Nation's interests.

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