

Employer Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes
February 13, 2014

DRS Team Members Present:

Mike Ricchio, Chairperson
Amanda Persell, Administrative Assistant
Ana Malaier, Financial Reporting
Brian Berghoff, Senior Policy and Rules Analyst
Danielle Hiatt, Member Accounts Receivable
Dave Nelsen, Legal/Legislative Services Manager
George Dodd, Office Support Supervisor
Greg Deam, Project Manager
Jennifer Dahl, RSD Assistant Director
Kareen Morlan, Accounts Receivable
Karla Phillips, Management Analyst
Kumano Creed, RSD Team Leader
Larry Bona, Employer Support Services
Lorna Linden, Education and Outreach
Marcie Frost, Director
Mario Cruz, Employer Auditor
Melanie Piccin, Employer Support Services
Sharon Houseman, Accounts Receivable Manager
Shawn Merchant, PSID Assistant Director

Employer Members Present:

Kimberly Fleming, King County
Sheryl Gordon, Green River Community College
Colleen Martin, Washington State Patrol
John Boesenberg, State Board of Community & Technical Colleges
Nicole Perkins, King County
Helen Sick, Department of Social & Health Services

Employer Members Present via Conference Call:

Barbara Cox, Port of Tacoma
Katy Dwyer, University of Washington
Loni Shorten, Port of Tacoma
Maureen Kwant, WSIPC
Gail Davila, City of Bellevue
Heather Mam, Pierce County
Chandra Winston, Port of Seattle

Welcome

Chairman Ricchio welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for attending.

Director's Update

DRS Director, Marcie Frost, gave an update on what's been happening at DRS. Director Frost spoke on the Team Member, Employer, Customer and Stakeholder satisfaction initiatives that DRS has been working very hard to achieve. These initiatives began in 2010 and continue today, with DRS striving to improve daily.

In addition to the four areas of focus related to satisfaction, DRS also strives to be a vigilant resource steward. Mark Feldhausen has come before the EAC before to share CEM/Benchmarking data. DRS pays a lot of attention to this data. Click [here](#) to see current results of the interviews conducted by the four groups and the benchmarking data.

The department continues to collect data and will use it to develop long term plans. DRS' goal is to provide the best service possible.

For more information about DRS' journey to maximize team member, employer, customer and stakeholder satisfaction, please contact [Mike Ricchio](#).

Legal/Legislative Update – Dave Nelsen

Dave Nelsen, Legal/Legislative Services Manager, gave an update on what's happening in the Legislature. Click [here](#) to see the Legislative Summary.

Gail Davila of the City of Bellevue asked if SSB 5851 (Optional Defined Contribution Plan for Public Employees) requiring all DRS employers to offer the state's Defined Contribution Plan was going to pass.

The bill did not make it out of House Appropriations before the cutoff. DRS does not anticipate it moving anywhere this legislative session.

Legal Update:

There has been no word on what the Supreme Court may decide. Decisions are issued on Thursdays, but DRS doesn't know which Thursday it will be. Once the decision is issued, there is a 20 day period during which both parties can file a Motion for Reconsideration, following which the court will consider the motions and issue a Final Mandate. The Final Mandate constitutes "legal certainty" for purposes of whether or not people are going to be able to have access to the 2008 ERFs, if the decision is that those ERFs will be removed. If the ERFs are removed, plan choice for TRS and SERS members will also be removed. Newly hired members will be mandated into TRS or SERS Plan 3. Watch the [DRS website](#) for any updates.

Kimberly Fleming of King County asked if DRS has noticed a spike in retirements. King County has noticed a spike due to the uncertainty of this court case.

Yes, however, DRS cannot draw a direct correlation between the increased retirements and the potential for the 2008 ERFs going away. Every year, DRS sees an increase in retirements.

Please contact [Dave Nelsen](#) with any questions.

Employer Reporting Application Update – Shawn Merchant

Shawn Merchant, Assistant Director of the Policy and Strategic Initiatives Division, gave an update on the Employer Reporting Application (ERA) project. Click [here](#) to see the ERA presentation.

If you would like to be on a work group for the Employer Reporting Application with the Department of Retirement Systems, please contact [Mike Ricchio](#).

Education & Outreach – Lorna Linden

Lorna Linden, Resource, Education & Outreach Manager, spoke to the group about what the DRS Education & Outreach team offers. Click [here](#) to see Lorna's presentation.

Kimberly Fleming of King County asked if an employer has a very specific need, or specific time frame when they would want one of the services offered by the Education & Outreach team, would they contact the individual that works the area indicated on the map, or would they contact Lorna directly.

An employer can contact either the representative indicated on the map or they may contact Lorna directly, who will then contact the representative. Should the representative be unavailable to attend an event, every effort will be made to have a peer go in their place. The team will always do their best to try to meet the needs of the employer.

The Education & Outreach team is looking for feedback from employers on what subjects they would like to see in the trainings and how to get the information out to employers.

Please contact [Lorna Linden](#) with any suggestions or questions.

LEOFF Independent Contractor Project Update – Greg Deam

Greg Deam, Project Manager, joined the meeting to give an update on the LEOFF Independent Contractor project. Click [here](#) to see the presentation.

Please contact [Employer Support Services](#) with any questions.

Open Discussion

Kimberly Fleming of King County asked for the status of the request that was made to standardize MRV requests that are sent to employers. Currently, requests are sent by email and by USPS. When emailed they can come as a PDF or in Word. She requested that the requests be sent in Word so that employers can fill in the fields as necessary, since they cannot edit a PDF.

DRS has hired one individual to do a 6 month study of the whole process. If it is easier for the employer to have DRS send MRVs out in Word, DRS is happy to do that. George Dodd, RSD Office Assistant Lead, will go back to his team and team leaders and request that MRVs are sent out in Word. It is the intention of the Department to automate all requests sent to employers, standardize the way they are sent, and keep track of it. The goal is to eliminate duplicate requests.

Kumano Creed, RSD Team Leader, suggested to the group that when an employer is hiring a Return To Work retiree or has an employee that is going through the retirement process and expresses plans to be a Return to Work retiree, that the employer recommend that the retiree contact DRS to ensure that they separate and return to work in the proper way to avoid an Independent Contractor audit finding.

Kimberly Fleming stated that King County has now included a form in their Independent Contractor packet that they are required to complete in order to win the contract.

Chairman Ricchio shared that DRS has updated the website with information on [Governmental Accounting Standards Board changes](#) that are upcoming for 2014/2015. This is primarily around how liabilities are reported. There is a lot of information out there, and DRS is working to pull all of that together into one place. The Department sent out a survey to employers asking how they complete their financials and what they need to know in order to comply with the new GASB regulations. This information will help to narrow the scope of the information on the website to what is useful to employers. If you don't find the information you need on our website, please feel free to contact DRS.

Closing

Next meeting will be May 8, 2014 at the Department of Retirement Systems.